

SOUTHILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 14TH JANUARY 2008 @ 7.00PM AT SOUTHILL LOWER SCHOOL

Present: Cllrs. Egar(Chairman), Ablett, Blackburn, Butcher, Fielder, Green, Hickman, Litchfield, Revelle, Rook, Taylor, County Councillor Scott, District Councillors Baines and Barker, the Parish Clerk and six members of the public.

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Cllr. Jones

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2007 were confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

a) Village Signs

The Chairman advised that the signs had now been delivered and installation would take place shortly at a cost of £65 plus VAT.

b) Vehicle Speeding in Broom

It was agreed with PC Holbrook that, for a trial period of two months, commercial vehicles which were driving 'inconsiderately' through the villages could be reported to him. The parishioners would need to be made aware of this and Cllr. Hickman would arrange communication as appropriate. There were, as previously stated, speeding problems in the whole of the parish and in particular the B658 through Stanford. Increased police presence was required, further vehicle activated speed signs were desirable and 'countdown signs' could be investigated. The criteria the County Council use for installing fixed speed cameras would be welcome information. The Clerk would continue to write to the County Council and police regarding these issues.

d) Stanford/Broom Quarry – potential expansion

Cllr. Egar declared an interest and vacated the Chair for this item. Cllr. Hickman declared an interest in his role as Secretary of the Stanford Broom Quarry Organisation. Cllr. Fielder reported that the decision on the potential expansion is expected to be taken by the County Council on 24th January 2008. It was his intention to attend the meeting and address it if possible outlining the Parish Council's objections as previously stated. If the site is approved at the meeting, County Councillor Scott will attempt to secure various landscape and highway improvements for the area together with other benefits for the Parish, as a whole.

4. Police Report

PC Holbrook was in attendance and advised Councillors of the latest crime figures affecting the Parish.

5. Parish Partnership Scheme

a) Stanford Road Junction Improvements

There had been no change in the County Council's position regarding the safety aspect of this scheme.

b) 2007/2008 Scheme

The pole for the vehicle activated speed sign close to the village hall in Southill is in position and it is anticipated that the display mechanism will follow shortly.

6. Special Interest Groups' Reports

a) School

There were 63 children in school, 54 full time and 9 part time. The new term had only just

begun and there was nothing specific to report.

b) Broom Quarry Liaison

There had not been a meeting of the group since the last Parish Council meeting. However it was considered that the area in Gypsy Lane where work was currently being carried out needed to be kept tidier than it was at present.

c) Grass Cutting

There was nothing to report at this time.

d) Halls and Playing Fields

i) Southill - the current problem with moles on the playing field was being dealt with by the school.

ii) Broom – Nothing to report

iii) Stanford – the Playing Field Association thanked the Parish Council for its recent grant. The AGM of the association takes place on 16th January, 7.30pm at the Green Man public house. Unfortunately there had been acts of vandalism on the playing field particularly around the toddler play area.

e) Community Liaison Forum

Cllr. Litchfield reported that the last meeting on 10th December 2007 considered highway matters, and in particular speeding, which was a constant problem in all villages throughout the County. Any instances of HGVs exceeding weight limits could be reported via email to colin.wilkinson@amey.co.uk. Waste collection and processing was also discussed. The next meeting will be on 10th March 2008, 7.30pm at Ickwell Village Hall.

f) Parish Council Website

There was nothing specific to report.

g) Communications

Cllr. Hickman reported that the Biggleswade Chronicle 'village reporters' were including various parish council items in their respective columns. Details of the Special Interest Group's ideas for better communication had been forwarded to all Councillors. Any views/comments on this item should be forwarded to the Councillors on the group and more detailed proposals will be presented to a future meeting of the Council.

7. Litter Pick

It was agreed that a spring litter pick would take place, possibly on 30th March at 11.00am. Cllr. Hickman will consult with other Councillors to agree and confirm the most suitable date. One Councillor from each village would co-ordinate. Cllr. Green will liaise with Mid Beds District Council and Cllr. Hickman will arrange publicity.

8. Bedfordshire County Council – Communities Fund

As the funding and maintenance of a fixed speed camera is not straightforward and the deadline for applying for the fund is 31st January 2008 it was decided that the second option previously agreed (a vehicle activated speed sign) should be the approved preference. The Clerk will complete the application forward and forward to the County Council.

9. Highway Maintenance

A number of residential hedges were overgrown and there were instances of vegetation growth in roads, particularly in Ireland. The traffic bollards at Broom crossroad were damaged and some kerbing stones on the green in Broom were missing. The speed roundels needed repainting and there were some missing road name signs in Stanford. Concern was expressed over the recent repairs to the footpaths in Bancroft Avenue and Birch Close, Broom which were extremely unsatisfactory and inadequate. The Clerk was asked to write to the County Council accordingly.

10. Planning Applications and Decisions

a) Applications considered

33 High Street, Broom

Two storey rear extension. Erection of detached garage and garden store with

games room above.

No objections

9 Birch Close, Broom

Two storey side extension following demolition of existing garage

Awaiting comments

Decisions – Approvals

Church of All Saints, Old Warden Road, Southill

Single storey side extension to provide meeting room, toilet and store.

1 Laburnham House, Old School Lane, Stanford

Two storey side/rear extension

Station Cottage, Old School Lane, Southill

Two storey side extension to replace existing single storey. Double garage to replace existing

Decisions – Refusals

None.

11. Financial Matters

a) Bank Balances

The Clerk reported bank balances as follows :

	£
Community Account	12,308.17
Business Premium Account	14,646.66

b) Payments

The following accounts have been received and were approved for payment :

		£
Southill Lower School	Hire of room	25.00
Southill Lower School	Contribution towards grass cutting & litter clearance of playing field	500.00
Southill PCC	Contribution towards 'Outlook' production	209.80
Southill PCC	Contribution towards churchyard mtce.	378.96
MJ Granger Grounds Mtce.	Grass cutting	223.25
Signs of the Times	Three village signs	2,842.33
P.D. Knightley	Clerk's duties & expenses Nov./Dec. 2007	839.33

c) Request for financial assistance – Whitbread Wanderbus

Approval was given to a grant of £250 for the Whitbread Wanderbus which provides community transport for the villages in the parish.

d) Precept for 2008/2009

The Chairman explained in some detail the various items contained in the estimates for 2008/09 making relevant comparisons with the probable result for 2007/08. He went on to explain that the Council balances were still relatively high and the proposed shortfall could be accommodated whilst still conforming to the agreed policy of retaining approximately one year's expenditure on reserve. Accordingly the Chairman proposed a precept for the coming year of £11,500 acknowledging that the inflationary increase was greater than the general level of inflation. After deleting the subscription of £30 to the Bedfordshire Playing Fields Association, the proposal was unanimously supported by all Councillors present. The Chairman also thanked the Clerk for his hard work throughout the year.

12. Correspondence

The Clerk reported on the correspondence. :

a) Beds. County Council - Footpath(28 and 30) temporary diversion now complete
Highways Annual Maintenance Survey - 2008

b) Mid Beds District Council - Standards Board – Bulletin 36

Forward Plan
Review of polling districts and places
Calendar of meetings
Chairman's Civic Reception 15th February 2008
Chairman's Charity Quiz Night 1st February 2008

c) General Correspondence -

Beds ATPC

Beds RCC

Tarmac

Buckingham Palace Garden Party

December edition of 'Network'

Published record of archaeological investigations at
Broom Quarry – 1996- 2008.

13. Next Meeting - Tuesday 11th March 2008, 7.00pm at Broom Village Hall

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.25pm.

At a general meeting before the Parish Council Meeting the following points were raised by the public :

- Serious concerns over speeding traffic on B658 through Stanford
- Possible quarry expansion will lead to more traffic in the parish, in particular heavy vehicles. Road improvements will be needed.