

WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES of the MEETING held on 8 July 2009
at WALFORD VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT Cllr F Myers in the Chair, Cllrs. SW Cole, SM Cole, M Downey, H Evans, P Heath
G Symonds, B Vine. A Whitlock; the Clerk, CEO HALC Mrs L Wilcox (speaker), 14 members of the public

APOLOGIES Cllrs L Freeman, M Thomas

SPEAKER Mrs L Wilcox, CEO HALC, spoke at WPC's invitation

QUALITY COUNCILS.

She said that certain benefits accrue to a quality council: greater credibility in eyes of local community, status showing that it is an effective and properly managed service; possible monetary advantages.

Certain tests need to be passed: electoral mandate of over 80% (100% at 2007 election); a qualified clerk; council meetings (at least 6 a year, preferably monthly) with public participation; parish plan (to be refreshed); annual report produced and sent to all residents; annual accounts to be audited without any notes of further action required. The accreditation lasts for 4 years. Help in completion of application is offered. The full Course should take about one year to complete. A PC would receive a special logo for their correspondence and perhaps some existing schemes such as PPP3 (rights of way) would be restricted to quality councils.

POWER OF WELLBEING This supersedes the section 137 arrangement whereby Parish councils can raise funds for a special purpose not normally allowed (eg WPC raised money this way for commemorative spoons for school-children in 2000). Currently the limit stands at £5.86 per elector. Under p o wb unlimited funds can be raised via the precept to benefit the parish, a local business or a person. (Ross Town Council is hoping to raise money for a cinema this way). To qualify, a parish needs to show that 80% are trained in the p o wb . a training course is provided for a council at a cost of £100 and each councillor would receive a personal accreditation.

In answer to questions: a councillor receives automatic dismissal if absent from all meetings/committees/other meetings for six months. Link between quality council and planning? Observations may carry more weight. Parish Plan can be refreshed with advice from Herefordshire partnership; would take about a year and £1500 grant can be obtained

It was proposed by SW Cole and seconded by P Heath that quality status should be pursued.

Unanimously in favour.

It was proposed by M Downey and seconded by G Symonds that the power of wellbeing be pursued.

Unanimously in favour.

It was proposed by SW Cole and seconded by H Evans that parish plan refreshment be pursued.

Unanimously in favour.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Wilcox for her attendance.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS Cllrs SW and SM Cole on PI Application 1223. They left the room

PLANNING APPENDIX C

Planning application no 1223 Cobrey farms, Coleraine. Review of Parish Council observation

The Chairman explained that the owner has the right to put caravans on a site and but has to remove them at end of season which would cause much disruption. If planning consent were obtained, conditions could be imposed. There had been a query over the status of the meeting of 11th June and the parish council debate. The meeting had been legally convened and publicised as normally undertaken on a particularly contentious planning application that aroused much public interest. Parish Council debate on their comment. The gathering together of the councillors at the end of the meeting for their consideration of the comment to be sent to HC This had been misinterpreted as a wish for secrecy whereas in fact the councillors had had to sit closely together in order to hear each other. As there had been a query about the validity of the meeting, the decision taken was to be reviewed at this meeting. The meeting was opened to the public to receive their comments

Mr Mummery. Everything was retrospective. The consent would prove a high cost advantage to the applicant since the cost of moving the caravans in and out of site and storage would be great.

G Symonds. Vans would be moved off site somewhere else in the parish. No. There were firms specialising in storage of vans in other areas.

Mr Gibbens P Council should do what most people want.

Mr Mummery If caravans were permitted, land would never return to agriculture.

B Vine. Season was forecast as 10 months. Could there be an alternative to caravans?

Mrs Gibbens. Plans refused in Nov 08. (Withdrawn while further reports were received from outside bodies) Will applicant comply with conditions set . Not known. History of non-compliance.

Mr Daniels Had there been enough publicity of this meeting? He was advised that it had been put on all notice-boards Mrs Almsdell suggested there should be voting papers issued to all residents. Councillors expressed the view that it would create precedent.

P Heath advised that all who objected to or supported the application should write personally to planning authority. Mrs Benwell said that transport was not separate from the caravan issue. Light pollution and noise were major problems

Chairman. Cannot control business traffic to farms.

Mrs Gibbens. Tourism badly affected in the area. Farming being favoured whereas more local income came from tourists.

Mr Holland The conditions set had not been sufficiently explained.

Mrs Walshaw. Enforcement should be forceful over any non-compliance

Mr Holland. Environmental Health Dept. should be brought in for enforcement

Mrs Gibbens The grassed areas referred to were football pitches and the noise that arose at weekends was pollution

G Symonds said that S&A Davies (Leominster) had had to take buildings down and start afresh

Mr Gibbens said that the firm was breaking the law

Mrs Merrick said that she had been around to neighbours on the application for factory units at Nelson's Garage and 300 letters were sent asking for houses instead. Petition succeeded,

M Downey said that the caravans would be permanent. Legally they should be moved away at end of season

Mrs Morgan said that had not been able to hear the chairman's remarks at the June 11th meeting and had taken the huddling together of the councillors as a sign that they did not want to be heard.

Mr Mummery This application constituted a change to factory farming.

The public speaking was closed.

The Parish Council voted 5 in favour of ratifying the decision made at the public meeting and 2 against.

One new planning application was considered

1227 DCSE2009/1319/F Paddocks Farm, Deep Dean. Single storey conservatory. It was decided that as no plans for existing elevations were included, it was impossible to assess the impact of the extension and thus to comment sensibly. The Clerk was requested to write to HC and say so.

MINUTES of the June 10th WPC meeting were approved and signed after Cllr Whitlock's presence was recorded.

The notes taken at the June 11th public meeting where the Cobrey Farms/Coleraine applications were considered and approved.

FINANCE – APPENDIX A

1. The clerk presented the Finance report for July 8th which was accepted
2. She added two items: the paying in of interest at £1.79 from Alliance and Leicester Bank to the account and the paying-in of the VAT refund cheque of £284.12 (The total amount had been allowed)

CORRESPONDENCE – APPENDIX B

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

1. A letter and map had been received from Herefordshire Council explaining the proposed new part-time flashing signals for 20mph limit and accompanying solar-powered roundels that flashed 20/40 as appropriate. It was decided that the auxiliary car-park near the Old Vicarage had not been marked or taken into account and it was asked that the limit signal be put 50m further south down the B4234 requested roundels. Clerk to contact Highways Dept.

2. One hard copy had been received of LDF Rural Settlement Hierarchy Background paper. Can be downloaded from www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf. Comments by 28th August.

REPORTS - APPENDIX D – further comments

1. **FOREST GREEN** Clerk said the registration papers were completed and awaiting approval of covering letter
2. **WA50** was still closed as not being safe. It was asked that a more forceful letter be sent to Herefordshire Council to remedy the situation immediately as their negligence in overseeing the development at this site had led to the present state. This much-used thorough-fare was greatly missed within the community. The currently open barriers should be secured.

PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

1. Mr O Lee said that he had heard nothing directly from HC about his request for some kind of speed limit on B4234 Kerne Bridge to Glos boundary road. The Clerk said that Ruardean Council had written a letter of support for the request to Herefordshire Council.

2. Mr Holland suggested that a new WA50 path be cut lower down the slope. It was pointed out that this would leave a dangerous bank above the footpath which could slide. He had not had replies to his emails. It was found that they had not reached their destination. The Clerk said that she had tested the web-site directions for contact to the council and the name indicated came straight through to her InBox. Mr Holland said that when people objected to a planning application a printed letter could be 'jumbled up' and then signed as separate petition letters.

ELECTION for a new councillor to take place 30th July. No poll cards had been issued. Clerk to ask if WPC could issue their own together with names of candidates and their own personal summaries. (Yes, was later answer)
Cllr Cole had discovered that the Electoral Services could send a letter without cost to the WPC to each dwelling. (Clerk later found that this measure had been omitted in the rush to publish all the EU Election papers and would be attended to)

STATE OF ROADS

1. Mr Barlow had requested by telephone that potholes on Bulls Hill be filled in urgently, from Wythall up to Forest Green but particularly after Westfield House. Clerk to request.

ITEMS FOR A FUTURE AGENDA

1. Quality Council status would be a permanent item

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 9th September at WALFORD VILLAGE HALL at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm :

Chairman

Date