

# Minutes of the Englishcombe Annual Parish Meeting, held at the Old Village School, on Thursday 26 April 2007.

Present: Cllrs Brian Huggett (Chairman), Simon Adams, Sue Barber, Margot Gray, Nicola Jefferies and Brian Scurlock, Cllr elect Andrew Scurlock, District Cllr Rosemary Todd, 17 members of the Parish electorate and the Clerks from Combe Hay and Dunkerton parishes.

Clerk: Chris Dell

1. Apologies for absence were received from Jan & Peter Bale, David & Debbie Bland, Christine and Joe, Desmond & Peggy Reay, Jennie Walker, and Jill & Leslie Wyatt.
2. The Chairman welcomed all those attending and extended a special welcome to the guest speakers, Roxanne Munn and PC Trevor Gardiner from the Radstock Neighbourhood Policing team, to District Cllr Rosemary Todd and to Peter Duppa-Miller and Alan Shamp, Clerks to Combe Hay and Dunkerton Parish Councils.

He introduced the Parish Councillors and Clerk and in particular Andrew Scurlock who is coming onto the Council on 3 May. He thanked Brian Scurlock, who had not stood for re-election, for his contribution to the Council.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20 April 2006. The minutes having been previously circulated to all Councillors and being available for inspection and perusal by all members of the Parish, were taken as read. Acceptance was proposed by Bill Davies and seconded by Brian Scurlock and agreed unanimously.
4. Neighbourhood Policing. Roxanne Munn introduced herself as PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) support and PC Trevor Gardiner as the Beat Manager for Bathavon West and Paulton. She indicated that two new PCSOs would be joining the team shortly and described the development and objectives of Neighbourhood Policing and how it would operate. She and Trevor then took questions and took part in discussion. They emphasised that the purpose of PCSOs was to become involved with the community and to deal with low level crime. They also covered various other issues raised including in particular that of communication with them, recommending the use of direct dial extensions and e-mail to avoid problems with the call centre, and also of the response to burglar alarms (where there is a very high probability of a false alarm unless there are other indications which suggest criminal activity).
5. Parish Report The Chairman presented his annual parish report. He thanked Councillors, the Ward Councillor and Clerk and parishioners for their support and friendship and commented on the workload on the council, including an increasing volume of consultative papers, planning applications and meetings of other bodies. The council had had its six regular meetings plus four additional meetings to deal with planning applications within the required timescales. He encouraged parishioners to attend council meetings.

He referred to the Parish Councils Airport Association and sought views on the proposed Bristol International Airport expansion from those present which showed some, though not overwhelming, concern about the number of aircraft overflying and poor access to the airport.

He referred to the parish website and newsletter and expressed his thanks to David Bland for producing them. He encouraged parishioners to visit the site regularly and made a plea for input for both the site and newsletter.

6. District Councillor's Report

Rosemary Todd commented on various issues which she had been involved with during her eight years as Councillor and were of concern to parishes like Englishcombe:

- Getting the 768 bus through the village
- Getting winter gritting on the road through the village
- The extension of the Ring & Ride scheme to Englishcombe and other parishes
- The Regional Spatial Strategy and Enquiry in Public, and in particular the debate over building on green belt land and where to build additional housing in B&NES
- B&NES Rural Programme
- Parish Plans in the context of the forthcoming Local Government Bill which should give greater freedom to parish councils.

She was not standing for re-election: the Chairman thanked her for the tremendous amount of support and assistance she had given the parish council, which was endorsed with acclaim, and presented her with a bouquet.

## 7. Financial Report

The Clerk referred to the Receipts and Payments account which was before those present. The Council's funds had increased from £2,621 to £3,426 over the year which was within £40 of the budgeted position. Unforeseen expenditure had been met out of the contingency built into the budget. As the Bank had stopped paying interest in the current account he had reactivated the deposit account transferring the bulk of the balance to that account. Council had approved a budget prepared on similar lines to the previous years', including a £250 contingency and a budget for training councillors and clerk, and with a precept increased by 2.5% in line with the inflation assumption. The budget projected a balance of £3,521 at 31 March 2008

He also commented on the position regarding Quality Council accreditation. The Council was not seeking accreditation as it considered some of the requirements 'over the top' for a small parish council but is seeking to comply with the requirements where relevant. While it already complied in many areas, some areas had been identified where development was needed including the production of a written Annual Report to the parish, which will be produced.

## 8. Matters Arising From the 2006 Annual Parish Meeting.

The Chairman referred to the Parish Plan, indicating that Cllr David Bland had offered to take this forward but had seen implementation of the website as a priority to provide a communications tool.

## 9. Roads, footpaths, drains and transport

- Ring and Ride. Chairman and Clerk are contacting those believed to be eligible to use the ring and Ride service
- Wilmington Lane. Chairman is trying to get an improvement to the condition of the lane.
- Footpath Haycombe Lane to Wilmington. Following the enquiry and appeal, this is now a restricted byway, open to horse riders but not to wheeled traffic including motor cycles and 4x4 vehicles. B&NES are carrying out remedial work.

## 10. Parish Activities

- *Salem Centre and Chapel* – Val Fenton spoke, referring to the continuation of events at the centre, ie Sunday services, bible study on Tuesdays, the Children's Club on Wednesdays, the Coffee Mornings on Thursdays at 10.30 and the Fun Weekend to be held on 23/24 June. Harvest Festival would be on the last Wednesday in September and the Men's Meal on the last Saturday in January
- *Parochial Church Council and Church* – Veronica Dell spoke, referring to the services every Sunday and the very well attended services on special days, in particular that at Harvest which had been followed by a very successful barn dance and the carol service. She referred to the continuing high level of giving by the Church to a variety of causes, concentrating on ones with a local connection.
- *Inter Village Quiz* - Bill Davies informed the meeting that there had been no quiz last year and that it appeared that there would be unlikely to be ones in the future..
- *Dormouse Survey*- The Chairman referred to a dormouse survey which was being carried out in the ex-Avon local authorities. Bill Davies had been in contact with those involved and it appears that there are indications that dormice may be present in Middle and Vernham Woods, the only place in the district.
- *Hedgerow Survey* – the survey initiated three years ago had not been completed. Bill Davies and the Clerk were collating the information available and made a request for volunteers to assist in completing the survey.
- *Sirius Wood* – Peter Hawkins reported that most of the trees had survived last year's drought although a few of the memorial trees looked doubtful, and the newly planted hedges looked good. The committee were looking to raise around £5,000 pa for maintenance of the wood.
- *Neighbourhood Watch* – This had largely been covered in the discussion with the police (see item 4 above). The Chairman reported that he and Bill Davies (Neighbourhood Watch coordinator) were looking to compile a register of keyholders so as to be able to deal with disruption caused by burglar alarms.
- *Tithe Barn* – the Chairman reported on behalf of Jennie Walker that the barn had been well used, including the Church events and meetings of Avon Local Council's Association and police liaison meetings. Several groups had visited the village and the barn in the past year and four such groups have booked this year so far. He also referred to the Heritage Weekend in early September

11. The Chairman thanked the Salem Chapel for the use of the Old School for Councils meetings throughout the year as well as for this meeting.

12. Bill Davies proposed and Peter Hawkins seconded a vote of thanks to the Parish Council which was endorsed with acclaim.

13. There was no other business and the meeting closed at 9.58pm.