

AMPNEY CRUCIS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2017 IN THE VILLAGE HALL, AMPNEY CRUCIS.

Present: Councillors Rosanna Armitage, Doug Crook, David Hardy, Neil Holt, Simon Holt and Tony Williams.

Presiding: Councillor Neil Holt

Clerk: Jayne Webster

Also present: Janet Campbell, County Councillor Shaun Parsons (part of meeting) and District Councillor David Fowles (part of meeting).

	ACTION
<p>1. Apologies for absence Councillors Raphael</p>	
<p>2. Declaration of Interests and gifts or hospitality given or received</p>	
<p>None</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017</p>	
<p>Resolution 11/17 <i>The Chairman proposed and the Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017, be signed and adopted.</i></p>	
<p>4. Matters arising from the meeting held on 9 November 2017</p>	
<p>4.1 The Chairman reported that the Parish Council has supported Preston Parish Council and objected to the proposed development at Kingshill Lane, primarily because of the impact such rapid incremental growth in the Cirencester area will have on local resources which are already under pressure. Councillor Parsons confirmed that he would not be supporting the application and welcomed the Parish Council's input which he will be able to draw upon when preparing his argument.</p>	
<p>The Chairman advised that CDC do not appear to be listening to Parish Councils' concerns regarding the growing strain on the facilities and infrastructure in Cirencester and felt that it was time CDC began to reassure parishioners with action, which would build confidence among communities.</p>	
<p>5. Reports from County and District Councillors:</p>	
<p>Report from Councillor Parsons: The Chairman advised that some villagers were concerned that Gigaclear intend to lay cables along the footpath between the Village Street and Church Lane, adjacent to the Preaching Cross. This could potentially negatively impact both the ancient monument and also the roots of adjacent trees. Councillor Parsons asked to be copied in on email exchanges with Gigaclear.</p>	
<p>In addition, Councillor Parsons advised that there had been improvements in the last 6 months regarding the repairing of potholes, however, it was up to Parishioners and Parish Councils to report all potholes to GCC for action.</p>	
<p>Report from Councillor Fowles: Councillor Fowles confirmed that the Local Plan would be submitted for central government sign-off at the end of March but this part of the process could take up to 2 years. He also advised that CDC were not increasing the Council Tax this year but would increase it in 2018/19 and 2019/20.</p>	
<p>CDC have extended the 'free after three' parking for the immediate future and there are plans for a feasibility study for decked parking in Cirencester.</p>	
<p>Finally, Councillor Fowles reported on the Abbey 900 Programme, which is a series of events in the town to commemorate the Abbey's 900 year history.</p>	
<p>6. Questions from the Public</p>	
<p>None.</p>	

7. Planning matters

7.1 Decisions

732	16/03241/FUL	Ampney Manor	Erection of new entrance gates & piers	CDC Permit
738	16/03767/FUL	Ampney Knowle Farm	Variation of condition 2 of application 16/00584/FUL	CDC Permit
741	16/04864/FUL	Fern Bank	1 st floor extension & single storey rear extension	Withdrawn
743	16/04645/FUL	The Old Studio	Single storey extension to side, garage conversion & external alterations	CDC permit
745	16/04932/FUL	The Old Mortar Mill	Erection of detached 2 bed dwelling	CDC permit
746	16/05092/LBC	Stone Gables	Retrospective application for internal works & pergola	CDC permit

A lengthy discussion regarding application 16/04932/FUL took place, firstly with Councillor Parsons during the first part of the meeting and then with Councillor Fowles. On both occasions, the Chairman explained that the Parish Council was not challenging CDC's decision to permit that application.

However, the Parish Council is very concerned about this decision on 3 counts:

Firstly, in that the Officer's Recommendation to Permit this application was contradictory, referenced developments in other parts of the District and elsewhere that were irrelevant in the context of this application, and was apparently a complete about face when compared to an earlier application for the same development that had been Refused.

Secondly, the Officer's Recommendation appeared to give a clear go-ahead for development of residential gardens in rural areas, by categorising them as "brownfield sites" with a presumption that such development would be permitted.

Thirdly, it would appear that there has been a breakdown in the normal planning process in that this application was permitted without seeking the Ward Councillor's views and agreement to progress under "delegated powers".

Councillor Fowles agreed to investigate and organise a meeting with the Senior Planning Officer and the Parish Council.

The Chairman urged this should be progressed as a matter of urgency, as the potential precedent set could influence the outcome of existing applications currently under consideration.

DF/NH

7.2 Outstanding applications

Applications previously discussed but still pending with CDC:				
731	16/02860/OUT	The Old Pump House, Siddington	Erection of 18 assisted living units and associated works	
New and revised applications:				
748	16/05309/FUL	Land at Backs Lane	Application of 2 semi-detached dwellings – ACPC objects	
750	16/05249/FUL	Ampney Park	Replace 2 gates on London Road & Church Lane (Retrospective) – ACPC objects	
751	16/05250/LBC	Ampney Park	LBC for replacement of 2 gates (Retrospective) – ACPC objects	
752	17/00220/LBC	The Old Rectory	LBC for glazed link extension – no comment	
753	17/00314/FUL	The Old Rectory	Application of glazed link extension – no comment	
754	17/00076/OUT	Land at Siddington Park Farm	Revised scheme for Care Retirement Community (see 15/12532/OUT) – ACPC to resend original comments	

Prior to the meeting the Parish Council sent responses to CDC regarding 16/04932/FUL and 16/05309/FUL objecting to both the proposed developments. See pages 1418 - 1424 of the minutes.

7.3 Tree Applications

749	17/00145/TCONR	The Malt House	Fell Redwood – CDC no objection
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7.4 To note the addition of reference to planning applications discussed at meetings on the website

The Chairman advised that a note has been added to the village website advising parishioners that the Parish Council meet to discuss planning applications as advertised on the agenda, and also to advise that where the Parish Council has made a submission on any given application, the details may be accessed through CDC’s Planning Portal.

8. Highways Matters

A417 Signage - The Chairman advised that he continues to liaise with Richard Gray, GCC and Andrew Parker-Mowbray from Gloucestershire Road Safety Partnership regarding the location of the Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) and wording of those signs. He reminded the meeting that payment for those signs had already been agreed by the Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office (PCCO), through the Police Commissioner’s Fund.

GCC have now produced a very detailed legal agreement which strongly limits the use (and also the potential impact) of the VAS and also impose significant management and administrative obligations on the Parish Council.

That legal agreement will need to be signed by the Parish Council, before GCC confirm their agreement to the PCCO, which is a condition of release of the agreed funding from the Police Commissioner’s Fund, and the signs can be purchased and installed.

The Chairman advised Councillor Parsons that the obligations imposed under the legal agreement do not reflect the fact that Parish Councillors are volunteers and cannot necessarily commit the amount of time and effort necessary to satisfy the agreement.

The Chairman also advised Councillor Parsons that he had challenged with GCC’s representative, some of the conditions imposed by the agreement, but had not received a satisfactory or rational response.

Councillor Parsons agreed that the required agreement would involve a huge amount of work by the Parish Council and agreed to investigate upon receiving all the relevant correspondence from the Chairman. The Chairman undertook to forward that to Councillor Parsons on 14th March.

Kerb erosion on Village Street – The Chairman asked Councillor Parsons whether the Community Offer ie GCC and Parish Councils split costs 50:50 would continue into the next financial year. Councillor Parsons advised that he did not know at this stage.

The Chairman advised that no alternative contractors had been approached yet regarding estimates for the proposed work. However, GCC have confirmed that as long as a contractor is insured and accredited for Highways works, the Parish Council could carry out the work without GCC’s involvement. The Chairman advised that he would, in any case ensure that the local Highways Manager would be kept advised on plans and progress.

Councillor S. Holt advised that he would contact the Head Teacher again regarding parking around the school and the resulting erosion of the grass verges in the vicinity of School Lane.

Finally, the Chairman agreed to contact GCC again about the drainage issues along Riding Lane, which has worsened during the last few weeks, apparently as a consequence of the Gigaclear installation works.

SP/NH

SH

NH

9. Financial Matters

9.1 Current financial position

Resolution 12/17 *The Chairman proposed and the Parish Council resolved that the financial statements prepared by the Responsible Financial Officer should be adopted by the Council as an accurate reflection of the Council's financial position on 26 February 2017.*

9.2 Transfer of payments

Resolution 13/17 *The Chairman proposed and the Parish Council resolved that £100.00 be transferred from the Lloyds Treasurers Account to the Imprest Account.*

9.3 Approval of payments

Clerk's expenses (£2.86) and Marston Hill Estate Services – burial ground extension work (£1,387.13).

Resolution 14/17 *The Chairman proposed and the Parish Council resolved that the above amounts, totalling £1,389.99, be approved and paid, including retrospective approval of payments made prior to meeting*

9.4 Review effectiveness of internal audit

Scope of internal audit

The Parish Council agreed that the scope and coverage of the work to be carried out by internal audit will be in accordance with proper practices guidance. Guidance suggests that the following items should be covered within the internal audit:

Internal Control	Suggested testing
Proper bookkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the cashbook maintained and up to date? • Is the cashbook arithmetic correct? • Is the cashbook regularly balanced?
a) standing orders and financial regulations adopted and applied; and b) payments controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the council formally adopted standing orders and financial regulations? • Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specific duties? • Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased? • Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted? • Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed? • Is S 137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?
Risk management arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity? • Do minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment? • Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?
Budgetary Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of it precept? • Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council? • Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?
Petty cash procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts? • Is petty cash expenditure reported to each council meeting? • Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?
Payroll Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions? • Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?

JW

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council • Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the council as an employer? 	
Income Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is income properly recorded and promptly banked? • Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification? • Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective? 	
Assets controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care? • Are the assets and Investments registers up to date? • Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register? 	
Bank Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there bank reconciliation for each account? • Is bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion? • Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation? • Is the value of investments held summarised on the reconciliation? 	
Year-end procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and payments or Income and Expenditure) • Do accounts agree with the cashbook? • Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts? • Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded? 	
Independence		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The internal auditor should be allowed direct access to the Council, through the Chairman when thought necessary by the auditor. • It was confirmed that the internal auditor has no other role within the Council. • The internal auditor's report should be made in his/her own name and addressed to the Council. 		
Competence		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is satisfied that the internal auditor is competent to carry out the work 		
Relationships		
<p>The responsibilities of the Clerk and the internal auditor should be defined in relation to risk management, internal control and fraud and corruption matters. The Chairman should be contacted in the event of any query.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors are clear on their responsibilities of the 'protection of the public purse' and within the internal audit framework. • The Council has a duty to draft and consider an annual internal audit plan 		
Audit planning and reporting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be an annual audit plan. The audit plan should refer to the processes the Council follows to ensure clear and accountable procedure. • The Council should approve the plan 		
Further details to be discussed in relation to the audit plan are shown below.		
Process to be reviewed	Current position	Action necessary
Agreement of financial activity at each meeting	Resolutions passed at each meeting	None
Agreement of bank reconciliation	Resolution passed at each meeting	None
Budget and precept process	Raised in November, agreed at Jan. meeting	None
Standing orders	Last agreed on 13 July 2015 See minutes, page 1302 – 04	None

Financial regulations	Last agreed on 13 July 2015 See minutes, page 1296- 1300.	None
Risk assessment	Last agreed on 9 Jan 2017 See minutes page 1410 – 13.	Reviewed annually
Assets register	Last agreed on 9 Jan 2017. See minutes page 1414.	Reviewed annually
Burial fees and conditions	Last agreed in Jan 2014. See mins p.1171	Review due upon completion of extension work.

The completion of the audit plan and the issues arising from it ensures that the review process has been completed.

Resolution 15/17 *The Chairman proposed and the Council resolved that the audit plan, as shown above, be adopted.*

Resolution 16/17 *The Chairman proposed and the Council resolved to agree that all five standards of the review process have been completed. By this process the effectiveness of the internal audit has been reviewed.*

9.5 Letter of appointment to be sent to internal auditor

Clerk to send appointment letter to Mrs Judy Smith.

JW

9.6 Further funding from GAPTC for Transparency Code

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council's application for funding for a computer and associated software has been approved by GAPTC and a cheque for £550 has been received.

10. Burial Ground

10.1 The Chairman advised that D A Cook have looked at the Lych Gate and advise that the coating on the wood should be removed, any rotten timbers replaced and all the wood should be preserved with Tung oil or equivalent. This would cost approximately £5,000. However, the Chairman suggested organising a working party to remove the coating during the summer, which would reduce the costs.

10.2 The Chairman reported that Mr Mark Binder had completed the cut through, fencing, hedging and most of the seeding in the new extension (see item 9.3). Councillor Williams agreed to organise a working party to seed the cut through and banks.

TW

The erosion of the grass verges at The Pleydells and The Pound were discussed and it was agreed that the Cottage Garden Services would provide an estimate for this work.

10.3 The Chairman advised that a quote to reduce the height and tidy the laurel hedge to the side of the new entrance to the extension had been received.

Resolution 17/17 *The Chairman proposed and the Parish Council resolved that Mr Martyn Adams should be employed to reduce the height of the laurel hedge in the Burial Ground and remove the waste at a cost of £100. This payment will be taken from the Burial Ground reserves.*

11. Village Update

11.1 Playground

Councillor S. Holt agreed to organise the transfer of payment for the inspection and was still in the process of putting together an action plan with the Playground Committee.

SH

11.2 Ampney Times

The reserves at 26th February 2017 are £590.31.

11.3 Footpaths

Councillor Hardy reported that the hedge along Riding Lane had been cut. He also advised that he would contact the landowner regarding the field containing ragwort.

DH

11.4 Preaching Cross

The Chairman and Councillor Williams have finalised the TPO applications which are being processed by CDC.

11.5 Village Clear Up

The clear up will take place on Saturday 18th March and will be advertised on the village notice boards and village network. CDC were unable to provide the necessary equipment, however, Councillor Fowles agreed to contact Ubico.

12. Correspondence received

- 12.1 Email from Fairford Air Tattoo inviting representatives from the Parish Council to attend the Annual Local Representatives Briefing on 25th May. Councillors S. Holt and Crook to attend.
- 12.2 Letter from Mr Grimmer expressing regarding the work of Gigaclear in the village. The Clerk is liaising with Gigaclear and Councillor Parsons has asked to be copied in on any correspondence.
- 12.3 Email from GAPTC inviting the Parish Council to an event to mark the launch of the new Police and Crime Plan 2017 -21. Noted by the Council.

13. Matters outstanding**14. Date, time and place of Annual Meeting**

Monday 8 May at 7.00 pm in the village hall.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.

DC/SH