

TISBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly

held in the Victoria Hall on 17th May 2011 commencing at 7 pm

Note: Item 11 was taken first.

1. Public Participation:

No issues were raised.

2. **Present:** P.Cnllrs P. Duffy (Chairman), J. Berkley-Matthews (RFO), Mrs J. Amos, T. Barnes, D. Boxall, Miss F. Corp and R. Dearden - 7.

Also in attendance: WCnllr T. Deane; 7 residents; 2 no.WWT speakers; Mrs S. Harry (Clerk).

Apologies received and accepted: Ms J. Farrell, A. Lovell-Wood and Mrs E. Young; P.Cnllrs D. Carroll, Mrs Pam Chave, P. Coopman and M. McGrath.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 18th May 2010

These were accepted as a correct record.

Proposed MissFC / seconded RD / unanimous of those present - 4

4. Chairman's report for 2010/11

The Chairman, Patrick Duffy, spoke to those present based on the following text:

'Your Parish Council has seen a busy year, not only from projects initiated from within the village but also ensuring that the voice of the village is heard in the countless consultation exercises we have seen, both as a result of Wiltshire Council service changes but also in response to Government drive for cuts. These have included Gypsy and Traveller Issues; Parking; Public Transport and Mineral extraction.

All of this has only been possible with the dedicated commitment of the volunteers on your Parish Council, the tireless efforts of our Councillor Tony Dean, our very capable Clerk Sandra Harry and most importantly the many other community minded volunteers who play a vital role in helping our village to be a great place to live and work. I would like to begin by offering my thanks and appreciation for their efforts in the last year.

We have one new councillor this year, Terry Barnes who brings with him experience as a Parish Councillor in London, giving us all a valuable different perspective on things. He replaces Janet Golding who has served as Councillor and Vice Chairman in recent years, who I would like to take the opportunity to thank for her service.

It remains the case, as it has been for some time, that vacancies on the Parish Council are filled without a great deal of competition. It is one of my objectives to do more to

encourage people who may be interested to take the plunge when the opportunity arises so if anyone is interested, even tentatively, and especially the younger members of the community; I encourage them to express an interest to Sandra. Despite the 'Vicar of Dibley' image we sometimes have it is a crucially important part of local government, and is going to become more so in the coming years. It's a real chance for the local community to have their say, get involved and help out when they can and we need the support of the community to do it properly.

During the year, Your Parish Council has considered 37 planning applications, none of which has been for a completely new building and has approved the spending of R2 monies, from developers for the local community, on the new swimming pool cover (11k) and a new surface at the lower recreation ground, by the football pitch (7k).

It has indeed been a busy year, in addition to the normal business of planning applications and doing our small part to keep the 'logistics' of the village going, we have also been swamped with the various 'consultations' as well the progression of several of our own important projects.

The Hindon Lane development has now progressed with the final detailed permission (with the actual permission already approved some time ago) and after extensive consideration and consultation of our own, your Parish Council has agreed to the application with a long list of caveats and requests to ensure that if we are to have this development, then we should take the opportunity to influence it in the villages favour. Together with Tony Deane, we have also been able to make significant progress on a number of measures to address the safety and traffic issues along Hindon lane, both now and once the development is completed, and we expect work on these to start later in the year.

On the Parking issues, following several surveys and plans, we undertook a well attended and lively public meeting to seek views on solutions to our parking problem along station road. This is actually a complex issue and no 'big step' was agreed, but we are now progressing with temporary yellow lines and will monitor the impact of that once it happens. Wiltshire Council budget restrictions and reorganisations have unfortunately delayed this but we continue to push for this on behalf of the village.

Related to this is the ongoing issue with large truck deliveries on the High Street. This is a difficult issue for everyone involved, but discussions have been held with the Co-op and there have been some improvements to the scheduling of trucks to less busy times, which although not eliminating the problems completely have eased things considerably. We will continue to monitor this and do what we can to ensure that the co-op is able to operate effectively with proper regard to safety on the High Street.

One of the most exciting developments we have seen has been the progression of the proposed Tisbury 'Community Campus' which will bring together the existing facilities, included the soon to be vacated school site, at the top of Weaveland Road into a single managed facility to support both Tisbury and the surrounding area. This will potentially bring additional funding to develop the facilities (including parking) as well as local provision of Wiltshire Council services and significantly increased local input. This is all part of the 'localism' we are all hearing about but can only be good for the future of village as a hub for the local area and over the coming year, your Parish Council will be very involved in ensuring this happens.

Composting has been a focus for much discussion over the last few years, but this year, after some early hiccups, has seen the project come into its own with the addition of equipment for shredding; the efforts of volunteers and more recently the use of 'community payback' labour we now have a successful and environmentally friendly and local facility for the village. The cost to the Parish in the year was £500 which was previously being spent instead on skips to transport the waste to landfill !

The year also saw Wiltshire Council consult on and implement plans to 'harmonise' parking charges across Wiltshire, this was to involve the implementation of parking charges in Tisbury, something we understood was very much against what the village wanted. On behalf of the Village, the Parish Council has successfully negotiated with Wiltshire Council that we take over the car park ourselves. This will mean some costs to the Parish, and has contributed to a slight rise in our precept this year, but we believe that the benefits to the village and its survival into the future more than outweigh this. As a result, parking in Tisbury will remain Free.

We also faced the potential loss of our public toilets as a result of cost savings at Wiltshire Council, again a facility that as a local community we value and contributes to Tisbury as a destination for walkers, shoppers, cyclists and tourists. We believed that the village would want them retained and as a result have negotiated the takeover of them, with cleaning and maintenance now being done by local employees at a lower cost. Again, this does have a cost attached and is the second of the two items which have increased our precept but we are confident that benefit makes it worthwhile.

The total cost of the car park and toilets is under £5.00 per household per year on the precept part of your council tax.

Although cost savings have hit us in a number of areas, the most significant is of course with our Library. The Village was faced with the very real prospect of losing the library completely, the only route to survival being with the very reduced hours of a part time Librarian; investment in new equipment and crucially the support of sufficient volunteers. The Village has responded at an unprecedented level and a strong team of

volunteers is now in place and training has begun. Not only has this got the attention of the local press, putting Tisbury once again 'on the map', but could in the long term mean that the Library is open more rather than less.

In many ways it has been a difficult year with the implications of government cost cutting hitting our community and some very contentious and difficult decisions to be made, but as a community we are weathering it well and with the continued support of the Village I am confident that your Parish Council can continue to help Tisbury to remain a great place for us all to live, and the lucky ones among us to work as well.'

5. The Lord Arundell of Wardour Trust Annual Report

In the absence of P.Cnllrs. Mrs P. Chave and M. McGrath, the Clerk informed those present that an amount of £3200 had benefitted 2 organisations and 10 individuals in the year 2010.

6. Alice Combes Trust

Mrs D. Carter indicated that funds had been made available over the following categories:

- a. Tisbury Relief in Need Trust (Reg. number 214218) - 8 grants had been disbursed to individuals, mostly for heating costs, particularly oil.
- b. Education Foundation of Alive Combes and Others (Reg. Number 309359) - Grants may be given to meet expenses for education and training, for example, special books, equipment or travelling expenses. 10 grants had been awarded to individuals.
- c. The Alice Combes Newtown Trust (Reg. number 1086842) - dedicated to support of clubs, societies and organisations established for charitable purposes within the community of Newtown. 4 grants to institutions and organisations with charitable purpose had been made.

7. Tisbury Parish Council Financial Report for the year ending 31st March 2010

The Responsible Financial Officer for Tisbury PC (Cnllr. J. Berkley-Matthews) reported that:

'The precept for 2010/11 was £36370, equivalent to a charge of £40.76 on a Band D property; compared to £34373 the previous year. This was an increase of £1997, equivalent to less than £2.25 for a Band D property per year - less than 1p per day.

In addition to inflation increases, the precept rose to accommodate the EXPECTED increases in expenditure, these were:

Additional night for the Youth Club - £3000

Improvement of internet facilities within the village - £2000

Repairs and renewals (playgrounds) - c.£1800

The rise in budgeted expenditure of only £2260 over the previous year was achieved through savings in the budgets of the JBC (£1500), Composting Group match funding (£1250), professional fees and the Parish Council website (£2500).

At the year end, expenditure was £8011 less than income and this brought the total reserves to £26816; with £4588 of this being funds held on behalf of others - TISBOWLS, SIDs, TAPCAP and Composting Group.

Actual spends were broadly in line with budgeted figures except for office expenses (£705 spent, £500 budgeted) and s137 monies (£335 spent, £200 budgeted). Both these budgets were significantly affected by additional public consultation for the Hindon Lane development and parking issues within the village.

R2 monies, the financial contributions from developers of, for example, the land adjacent to Ladydown View, were available, but are now much reduced. Approximately £10,000 is left in the pot at present. In 2010/11, the monies were used for:

- £7436 - providing an improved surface for the Lower Recreation Ground play area*
- £11700 (50%) - pool covers for the swimming club*
- £507 - Signage for the swimming pool*

In conclusion, the finances of the Parish Council are in good shape, with healthy reserves.'

8. Wiltshire Councillor's Annual Report

WCnlr TD spoke on the following issues:

- a. Council Tax - Council Tax for 2011 to 2012 remained the same as the previous year (there might have been local changes for Parish Council precept and adjustment for the number of dwellings contributing in a Parish.) The Business Plan for Wiltshire Council shows no increase in Council Tax for 2012-13.
- b. Roads - Wiltshire Council & central government have put money aside for potholes after the last winter. All potholes should be reported via CLARENCE (0800 232323 or by email to (clarence@wiltshire.gov.uk)). Presently the response to calls is at an all time minimum. The Parish Steward carries materials to repair pot holes on the Land Rover.
- c. Broadband - in recognition of the importance of high speed broadband to the many rural and small town local businesses Wiltshire Council is negotiating an investment deal to provide super high speed broad band to 98% of the population. Please respond to the current consultation.
- d. Area Boards - the South West Wilts Area Board which covers the three community areas of Tisbury, Mere & Wilton still achieves respectable attendances where local issues are presented with some discussion but most of all Area Board Grants are

discussed and awarded. The local transport budget of £17,500 to be spent on small highways improvements has been a success and will continue this year. The Area Board Meetings move around to various meeting halls to give Parish Councillors and the Public the opportunity to attend more easily.

- e. Community Campus (Tisbury) - The site at the top of Weaveland Road Tisbury which includes the Sports Centre, St John's Primary School etc has been nominated as a pilot campus, it is probably the most rural of all of the pilots. The intention is that this becomes a centre for delivery of community services, the extent of those services will be the subject of recommendations of the Shadow Campus Organisation Board which is about to meet for the first time. ALL Parishes and organisations in the community area will be allowed to comment on their wishes; another consultation that will be carried out involving the Parish Councils. The campus is a community facility; its catchment will be to the County Border in the South & West and as defined by the Tisbury Community Area on the other sides. We will strive to cover the whole of the community, not just Tisbury.
- f. Planning - There have been staff changes at the Southern Area Planning Hub (Salisbury). It is advisable to ensure any application which you feel has problems is called in "if the Officers are minded to approve it". This can always be cancelled later but there are strict 'call in' time limits, so play safe. **Enforcement:** members of the parish know more about what is going on with developments than an Officer based in Salisbury. Please set up a system to raise concerns as early as possible.

9. Report from Tree Warden - Mrs D. Carter

'Applications for tree works in the Tisbury conservation area

I was asked to look into approximately 10 applications all of which I approved except the hedge beside the allotments which cannot be cut until after the bird's nesting season. I also had reservations on trimming two mature limes in Ladydown View but this was overruled by the Tree Officer for the Council.

Hedges

I have been in correspondence with the Fonthill Estate on two occasions when they removed scrub and cut hedges burning the brash and branches which is not good practice as it gives the invertebrates and bird life nowhere to retreat and destroys the ecosystem. I have given them a folder produced by Natural England on hedge management which has been gratefully received.

I would like to apply for grants to plant more hedges/ trees in Tisbury. I believe that the field at the back of the school is designated as a 'Recreational Area' as part of the Weaveland Road / Hindon Lane Development plan and would like to suggest that a copse should be planted in the bottom corner (SW) and fill in the gaps in the existing hedges when this site is handed over to the Parish Council. This is approved by the Tisbury Natural History Society.

This could be a community project involving Tisbury people and St John's School.'

10. Report from the Community Emergency Volunteer (CEV)

The Clerk spoke on behalf of the CEV, informing those present that:

'James Scott-Clarke, our emergency planning officer cannot be here tonight but would like to remind everyone of the role he plays in Tisbury. He is responsible for all emergency planning, especially flooding. He has written the Tisbury Plan which includes reference to the Environmental Protection Agency Plan and the SW Trains Disaster Plan. This Plan is available on the Tisbury Website and a copy is held by James and in his absence, Patrick Duffy, our Chairman. James can be contacted on 01747 871921/07747 807268 at jamescottclarke@googlemail.com.'

Note: Although the Emergency Plan is posted on the Parish Council website, access is currently restricted. Authorisation will be sought from those individuals named in the plan to make the plan accessible to all.

11. Invasive Plants in Tisbury

Samantha Bull (Wiltshire Wildlife Trust - WWT) gave an informative presentation on the Invasive Plant project and welcomed the very enthusiastic help being given on stretches of the Nadder that are affected; in particular the Tisbury area. Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed were all well illustrated, together with their impact on biodiversity, the economy and public health. The necessity to spend £70m on ridding the Olympic site of invasive plants was just one of the examples of an economic consequence. Clearing the invasive plants involves methods such as spraying over a 3 year cycle, strimming at base level and burning to prevent seeds spreading. The work of the WWT is ongoing and involves surveying the Nadder and tributaries (with help from land owners, angling clubs and volunteers), clearing invasive plants and re-establishing the native species.

Biological control is a fairly new method of control, but in the next few years it is hoped that current research will enable this to be more widespread. However, funding for the project as a whole is not guaranteed in the future and a lot of time is spent on educating land owners and volunteers to take control of invasive plants without ongoing help.

No other business was conducted before the meeting finished at 8:40pm.