

CROSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting held 14 February 2007 at 7.30 pm in The Old School, Croston.

Present Cllrs P A Peet (Chair), K Almond, C Gibbons, J Forrest, Cllr J Kearton, A Maddran, S Parkinson, S Thompson.

15.07 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Thompson, Borough Councillors D Dickinson and M Iddon and PC Plummer.

Councillors considered options for the manner in which apologies are to be dealt with.

Resolved: every Councillor, who is unable to attend a meeting, is required to provide an apology, in advance, which will be recorded in the minutes. In the event of longer term absences a written apology, together with the reason for absence, is to be submitted, for the consideration of the Council. The Council will decide whether, in its opinion, the reason given constitutes an acceptable reason for absence.

16.07 Personal/Prejudicial interests

Councillors Almond, Forrest and Parkinson, as members of Croston Rural Action Group, declared prejudicial interests in an item forming part of agenda item 9.

17.07 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2007

Resolved: the Minutes (as circulated) be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

18.07 Clerks Report

The inaugural West Area Community Forum takes place on Wednesday 21 March 2007 at the Quality Hotel.

The Central Lancashire City is holding a Forum on Core Strategy Issues and Options on Monday 19 March 2007.

Information from the Charity Commission regarding Croston United Charities is to be circulated.

A consultation on the revised Model Code of Conduct is to be circulated.

Lancashire County Council is conducting a consultation on Proposals for Engaging with Neighbourhoods. As a response is due by 23 April 2007 the information is to be circulated.

Information received from Chorley Borough Council regarding Community Forums is to be circulated.

19.07 Police Matters

The monthly crime statistics were noted.

20.07 Residents Points of Interest

No points raised.

21.07 Borough Councillors

The condition of the Former Orchard, Moor Road, following the groundworks which have been carried out, has been reported to the Landowner and is to be attended to.

22.07 Financial Matters

The receipt of the precept request by Chorley Borough Council was evidenced.

Resolved: the financial update and bank reconciliation be received and accepted and signed by the Chairman.

A grant application from Home-Start Chorley and South Ribble was considered. Several Councillors expressed the view that the cause was not sufficiently local to the village. A proposal to provide a donation of £100 was defeated.

Resolved: the following payments be approved, the invoices having been inspected in accordance with fidelity guarantee requirements:

£ 301.38	Employee 1	Salary
£ 294.10	Employee 2	Salary
£ 82.94	Inland Revenue	Tax and NI
£ 14.00	Croston Old School	Room hire

23.07 Planning Matters

Ulnes Walton Parish Council requested the Council's support for planning applications numbered 06/01399/FUL and 06/01400/ADV for the proposed "Ulnes Walton Trail".

Resolved: the Planning Officer be notified of the Parish Council's support for both applications.

The following applications were considered:

07/01081/OUT Outline application for the erections of one detached two storey dwelling with a detached garage and a detached garage for The Gables at Land 30m North West of The Gables 88 Station Road - Councillors had no objections to the proposed development however, in view of existing well documented, parking problems in the area measures should be taken to ensure adequate parking within the development site to avoid exacerbating the problems.

Councillors Almond, Forrest and Parkinson declared prejudicial interests in the following item and withdrew from the meeting.

06/01341/FULMAJ Proposed redevelopment of Rectory Farm creating 6 No. six four bedroom dwellings, conversion of existing barn to create 3 No. three bedroom apartments and 1 No. two bedroom apartment with associated garage space and visitor parking. Also erection of rear extension to Croston Trinity Methodist Church to create Sunday school/community facilities with associated car parking at Rectory Farm, Town Road.

Resolved: an objection be lodged on the following grounds:

The application fails to demonstrate sufficient adherence to Chorley Borough Council's Planning Policy. The applicant has failed to explore options for the re-use of farm buildings for commercial, manufacturing, tourism and community facility, the support information fails to demonstrate requirements regarding the marketing of the site have been complied with.

The purported "affordable" housing provided within the development is totally unsuitable for the requirements of the village. Smaller, starter type homes/social housing are urgently needed in the village if younger residents are to be retained.

The village already suffers from serious parking problems. The development may exacerbate the parking problem as provision for potential residents on this site is grossly inadequate as larger, four bedroomed properties realistically require more than two spaces per property.

The scale, appearance and design of the proposed dwellings is not in keeping with the character of surrounding and adjacent properties within the conservation area.

One of the criteria of the village primary school's admission policy has led to children living closest to the school being given preference for school places. This could mean that children moving into the Rectory Farm Development could be given priority over other children already residing within the village.

Councillors Almond, Forrest and Parkinson rejoined the meeting.

24.07 Recreation Ground/Village Green

Councillors considered the setting up of a Working Group to provide suggestions for improvements to the Recreation Ground and Village Green.

Resolved: a working group, comprising Councillors Almond, Gibbons, Kearton, Peet and S Thompson, be set up.

25.07 Village Green

Councillors considered a request from Village in Partnership for the use of the Village Green for a Spring Market on Sunday 27 May 2007 and a Christmas Market and Torchlit Parade on Sunday 16 December 2007.

Resolved: permission be granted for both events subject to confirmation of the holding of relevant insurance cover.

26.07 Newsletter Delivery

An offer, from Croston Juniors Football Club, to deliver the next edition of the newsletter was considered.

Resolved: that delivery of the newsletter within the core area of the village be awarded to Croston Juniors Football Club.

27.07 Delegated Powers

A proposal to delegate powers to the Clerk to respond to planning consultations on behalf of the Council was considered.

Resolved: the Clerk be granted powers to respond to planning consultations. Councillors will be consulted prior to the response by the Clerk.

28.07 Competition Entries

Entries into the North West in Bloom and the Lancashire Best Kept Village Competitions were discussed. Concerns were expressed regarding the judging criteria for the Best Kept Village Competition and that the village, as a previous winner, would be entered into the Champions Class for this and the following two years

Resolved: that the village be entered into the North West in Bloom Competition only.

29.07 Risk Assessment

The risk assessment, as recommended by the Practitioners' Guide to Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales, was carried out.

Public Liability insurance was inspected and found to be satisfactory.

Employers Liability insurance was inspected and found to be satisfactory.

Precept - receipt is to be confirmed at the May meeting. The existing monthly monitoring statement provides performance against budgets.

Investment Income - the current return from the Reserve Account was found to be satisfactory.

Salaries - wage sheets and printouts of the Inland Revenue calculations are inspected in conjunction with the quarterly audit.

Direct Costs and Overhead Expenses - the Clerk verifies orders and invoice values. All cheques issued by the Council are verified against invoices prior to signature in accordance with Fidelity Guarantee requirements.

Councillors Allowances - claim forms will be submitted and verified.

Grants and Support - a list of items allowable under S137 expenditure is provided for Councillors. All such payments will be verified and minuted.

Election Costs - the Clerk will verify the costs and Councillors will consider the budget annually.

VAT - the analysis is verified in the quarterly audit.

General and Earmarked Reserves - the adequacy is considered annually at the setting of the precept.

Assets - an annual review of assets and Public Liability insurance will be undertaken at the time of the policy renewal.

Staff and Loss - the Fidelity Guarantee was found to be adequate.

Borrowing - adequate funds will be precepted and reviewed monthly in the monitoring statement.

Legal Powers - a list of powers is provided for Councillors. Any activity or payment will be verified and minuted.

Financial Records - quarterly inspections are carried out by Councillors.

Minutes - the current system of monthly receipt and approval will continue.

Members Interests - Councillors will review their declarations of interest on an ongoing basis.

30.07 Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005 Section 55 - The Dog Control Orders (Procedures) Regulation 2006

Councillors considered a consultation document from Chorley Borough Council to increase fines and extended the area for the serving of fixed penalty notices.

Resolved: the Council supports the proposals of the Borough Council and will assist where possible.

31.07 Reports from Outside Bodies

Items considered at the Borough/Parish Councils Liaison Meeting included parking enforcement in the parishes, the 2007/08 Budget Consultation, Community Forums, the Local Government White Paper on two tier working and the revised Draft Code of Conduct. A letter of complaint has been sent to the Chief Executive regarding the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition during the meeting.

32.07 Matters for Information

Suggestions to commemorate St Georges Day and to discuss recent developments regarding the potential of loss of health services from Chorley Hospital were made. Both items will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed .