

CROSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

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

Also Present Borough Cllr M Iddon and 8 members of the public.

51.07 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs J Kearton and S Thompson, Borough Cllr D Dickinson and PC Plummer.

52.07 Personal/Prejudicial Interests

Councillors Forrest, as a resident of Moor Road, declared a personal interest in item 15 on the agenda (Moor Road Traffic Issues).

Councillors Almond, Forrest and Peet and Thompson, as Trustees of Croston Old School (which had provided a letter of support for a grant application), declared prejudicial interests in an item forming part of agenda item 8 (Financial Matters).

35.07 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 February 2007

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

The Chairman brought forward item 15 on the agenda.

36.07 Moor Road Traffic Issues

Standing Orders were suspended to allow members of the public to speak.

Residents living in the vicinity of a business on Moor Road reported problems caused by vehicles belonging to visitors and staff parking on pavements and blocking access. It was suggested Moor Road is being used as an overspill car park. Residents have had accesses blocked and been subjected to abusive language when challenging visitors and customers.

Standing Orders were restored.

The Chairman advised the Parish Council has no jurisdiction over traffic issues and can only refer them to higher authorities.

This month's Police report advised the business is to be contacted regarding the situation.

Resolved: the results of the negotiations between the Police and the owners of the garage be awaited prior to any Council involvement.

37.07 Clerks Report

Lancashire County Council advised that Fishery Bridge requires remedial works which are likely to lead to the closure of the road. Councillors requested the resultant diversions avoid Moor Road and Station Road.

Chorley Borough Council is holding a Neighbourhood Working Drop-In on 26 March 2007.

38.07 Police Matters

The monthly crime statistics were noted.

39.07 Residents Points of Interest

No points raised.

40.07 Borough Councillors

A breakdown of the total amounts of council tax residents paid over to the Police, Chorley Borough Council and Lancashire County Council levied from Croston residents was provided.

41.07 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.

Councillors considered a grant application from Lancashire Constabulary towards the purchase costs of a vehicle for use by the Community Beat Managers. Concerns were expressed that the Police portion of council tax for the forthcoming year is set to rise by 11.37% and any grant would represent a form of double taxation on residents. Councillors also took exception to the description of the area as affluent as this is reflected in the levels of council tax raised. No proposal for the awarding of a grant was made and Councillors considered a response to the request.

Resolved: the reasons behind the declining of the request be made clear to the Constabulary.

Councillors Almond, Forrest and Peet and Thompson left the meeting.

Councillors considered a grant application from St Michael's Parochial Church Council for the installation of an ornamental lighting column in the church grounds. A letter of support from the Trustees of Croston Old School was provided.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow members of the public to speak.

Information was provided regarding the requirement for additional lighting in the area, which would benefit residents and users of The Old School.

Standing Orders were restored.

Resolved: a grant of £1175 be awarded.

Councillors Almond, Forrest and Peet and Thompson rejoined the meeting.

Councillors considered requests for payment to the Council.

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	Income tax
£ 227.27	Employee 1	Reimbursements
£ 14.00	Croston Old School	Room hire
£ 30.00	North West in Bloom	Entry fee
£ 243.35	B & C Norris	Replacement gate
£ 110.01	Eccleston Electrical Services	Repair - play area light
£ 986.96	Chorley Borough Council	Grasscutting - recreation field

42.07 Planning Matters

The following applications were considered:

07/00196/FUL External covered area at The Crown Hotel, Station Road

07/00257/FUL Single storey rear extension at Willow Barn, Finney Lane

Resolved: no comments be lodged.

Councillor B Thompson declared a prejudicial interest in the following item and withdrew from the meeting.

06/00229/FUL Construction of new disabled access ramps to the front of three existing bungalows at 1 - 4 St Michaels Terrace, Westhead Road.

Resolved: the application be supported.

Councillors Thompson rejoined the meeting.

06/00256/FUL Revision to Planning Permission 03/00687/FUL by modification to Condition 3 at Drinkhouse Farm, Drinkhouse Road. Condition 3 of the original permission, limiting the use of the building to process crops produced by Moss Farms Ltd, was imposed to protect local residents from undue disturbance. Councillors were concerned that, as the applicant's address is given as Lathom, Ormskirk and the Parish Council has no indication of the extent of, and locations of, the operations carried out by the company, the suggested modification to allow processing of crops produced by Quantil Farms Ltd may lead to the importation of crops from outside the area from other facilities owned by the applicant, thus exacerbating an existing problem with large vehicles using narrow lanes which were blatantly not designed to take such vehicles.

Resolved: an objection to the proposed modification be lodged, with the proposal of an amendment to the wording to limit the use of the building to process agricultural crops produced on land owned by the former Moss Farms Ltd.

43.07 Recreation Ground/Village Green

The report of the Working Group was considered. The Japanese Knotweed is to be treated in the growing season in accordance with advice received from Chorley Borough Council. The Probation Service to be contacted with regard to the provision of labour.

Resolved: the initial recommendations of the Working Group be ratified and a further meeting of the Group be arranged to add fine detail to the proposals presented.

44.07 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

A suggestion was made for the formation of a small Working Group to carry out research of existing and alternative orders and regulation.

Resolved: Cllr Parkinson and the Clerk provide recommendations for amendments at the next meeting.

45.07 Asset Valuation

The insurance values of assets were inspected and found to be adequate.

46.07 St George's Day

A proposal to arrange celebrations to mark St George's Day was not supported.

47.07 Closed Circuit TV System

A request from Villages in Partnership for the loan of the system to protect the Circus Big Top during the Spring Fair was considered. It was suggested the system should be made available for community use.

Resolved: the system is to be hired for a fee of £20, subject to the Clerk discussing the practicalities with the Council's insurer.

48.07 Reports from Outside Bodies

Items considered at the recent Lancashire Association of Town and Parish Councils Chorley Area Committee included the proposed Chorley Borough Council Neighbourhood Working initiative, which was considered to represent another unnecessary tier in the local

government scheme, and the grant request from Lancashire Constabulary to Councils in the Southern Division.

49.07 Matters for Information

Problems have arisen with the acquisition of the Over 60's Building. A request for possible future support for the Community Centre Management Committee was received. Councillors mentioned the support was already firmly established.

50.07 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 April 2007.

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