

Parish of Long Sutton
Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at the Hall on
Tuesday, 4th May 2010 at 7 p.m.

Present: Councillors: Mr. R.C. Vaux (Chairman), Mrs. J.R. Turner, Ms P. Jukes, Mr. D.C. Paull, Mr J.A. Foy, Mr. S.A. Pledger, Mrs. Y. Aitken and Mr. A.D. Jones. District Councillor Mr. G.R. Cox, and 5 members of the public.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor: Mr. C.J. Greenfield and County Councillor Mr. D. Yeomans.

1. Minutes of last APM - Previously publicised, were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record after amendment of Mr. M.J. Ellerbeck in those Present to Mr M J Willoughby.

2. Matters Arising
No matters were raised.

3. Report by PCSO/Police
There was no representative present from the Police.

4. Report by County Councillor

Mr. Yeomans being unable to be present, the Chairman read to the meeting his monthly report.

Summarised, this said:

The good news is that the pot holes in the roads are being filled and in general the damage of the winter is being repaired and in nearly all cases a lot better than it was done before. The new Contract with Atkins came into force on the 1st of April and buried in it is a much stronger inspection and quality control aspect, something that he says he has been asking to have implemented for a very long time. That said, in the last rainy spell he saw holes still being filled and the "black mac" being tamped down by hand. If we see this happening, he would be grateful if a note could be made of the contractors name, the date and location and let him know.

The semi integration of SSDC and East Devon is slowly progressing. The first Meeting of the Joint Integration Committee has taken place and decided on 16 main points which should be addressed in the first instance. The committee is made up of 5 members from each Council and some supporting Officers. There are more meetings planned for June to be held alternately in Yeovil and Sidmouth. His main concern is that the distances between the two are very considerable and the first thing that should be decided and implemented is a state of the art IT system. This would however cost a lot of money which should be in the mutual savings.

On the County front, the Building Schools for the Future has been approved by SCC and goes forward to obtain £100million under the PFI scheme as initiated by the present Government.

5. Report by District Councillor

Mr. Cox reported as follows:

Planning: There have been 20 planning applications in the last 12 months, the outcome of which has resulted in quite a good year.

Affordable Housing: This at last seems to be making progress but needs to be pressed by the PC.

Lengthsman's Scheme: This is progressing well and by August/September will be a live project.

SSDC/East Devon DC: The sharing of management duties has resulted in a 2 million saving at the moment.

Footpaths: SSDC have returned the obligation for the management of rights of way to SCC. This has resulted in a restructuring of the Rights of Way Team and the Warden responsible for this area is George Montague (email: g.montague@somerset.gov.uk or rightsofway@somerset.gov.uk Tel: 0845 3459155). He is responsible for 49 Parishes therefore the more we can do ourselves the better. There is a meeting at the Golf Club on 7th June.

Mrs. Turner asked Mr. Cox how the advertisement for the Lengthsman would be made and he said that they would be seeking help from the HR Department of Somerset County Council.

6. Report by the Chairman and other members of the Parish Council relating to the Parish Plan and other Parish matters.

The Chairman reported as follows:

"The past year has been an interesting one.

We've had two new Council members and a change of Chairman.

After a period of bedding in the Parish Council is now on an even keel and ready to do business.

The main issues we've had to deal with this year are pretty much the same as previous years, namely Affordable housing, Planning, and Vandalism.

Affordable Housing: Our Housing needs survey that was completed in the Autumn of last year, suggested that a modest amount of new housing is needed in the parish and we are working toward meeting that need but it's proving a difficult nut to crack. Our survey, interestingly also showed that the village didn't just need the building of starter homes but also housing of a more sheltered nature for the senior members of the parish wishing to down size. Hopefully we can be instrumental in helping to provide the type of housing required that can fulfil the needs of both those sectors of the community at a rate that can be easily absorbed into the village.

Another matter of interest revealed by the survey, although not directly to do with housing, was the concern expressed at the lack of public transport available, so we shall have to apply ourselves to see if an improvement can be achieved.

Planning: Happily most of the development that has or hasn't gained planning permission in the last year has broadly been in line with the Parish Council's opinion with the notable exception of one development.

Vandalism: Once again the main target for vandalism in the village would seem to be the village hall. With a spate of break ins to steal copper piping. The resultant damage being most upsetting to all those who work so hard to keep the hall in a state of good repair and also very costly.

On a positive note it looks very much like we shall have our very own lengthsman working in the village by late summer.

This was a project that was started last year but faltered until District Councillor Rupert Cox kick started the project again.

Simply put the scheme should mean that all those little jobs that the District Council despite being pressed by us , never seem to get around to doing, will be done .

Typical tasks will be varied but could be maintenance of drainage channels, rodding of culverts , removal of fly tipping or fly posting and the removal of graffiti.

We , along with five other rural Parish Councils in the Turn Hill Ward will club together and the partnership will put £10,000 in a pot which will be match funded by SSDC and SCC . This funding is available for three years .

With £20000 we will then be able to employ a self employed person who's time will be split between the Parish councils in the scheme . Long Sutton will benefit from about a day and a half a week on average .

All credit to Rupert for gaining enthusiasm for the scheme from the adjoining parishes and getting the whole thing off the ground .

Similarly Mr Gould and his staff are working hard to relaunch Neighbourhood Watch with the added benefits of Community Safety.

All done with no cost to the parish due to Mr. Gould seeking out grant funding.

A Parish presentation is planned for this summer .

The Parish Website is going from strength to strength due to Mr. Sensier's dedication and hard work and is a very useful source of information and well worth visiting to keep abreast of all the latest happenings .

Thank you to all who have worked tirelessly for the benefit of the residents of Long Sutton."

The Chairman then invited other members of the Parish Council to give a report regarding the areas of the Parish Plan for which they are responsible.

Mrs. Turner reported as follows regarding Community Safety:

"Residents report most crime, anti social incidents and vandalism to the Police or through our P.C.S.O Mel Austin, the Parish Council can only continue to encourage residents to continue reporting crime, no matter how trivial.

Thanks must go to Mel Austin for her continual presence and supporting commitment to the community, either through her monthly surgeries at the hall or at local events, this is much appreciated and we hope this will continue.

Neighbourhood Watch is hopefully being revived, with new ways of communicating via mobile phones and e-mailing with the use of the Parish website.

Community speed watch is up and running thanks to Nick Gould and volunteers for pursuing this. This is a much needed result for the Parish. The Police will support whenever they can.

Community safety is very important for our community and the Parish Council do all they can to reassure the residents that all that can be done, is being done. Our thanks must go to all the volunteers that participate to make our Parish a safer and stronger community."

Footpaths:

Mr. Jones reported that the monthly walks start again next Saturday. Stiles etc are in good condition. There are however a couple of longstanding paths still blocked.

Communication:

Ms Jukes reported that most of the work in this regard has been carried out by Mr. Sensier via the website which she said was a wonderful resource and she thanked Mr. Sensier very much for all his hard work.

She also said that the Newsletter was a great way of advertising upcoming events for the following month and she gave thanks to Ann Kent in this regard.

7. Any Other Business

The problem of litter on the Children's Play Area at the Recreation Field was raised and it was suggested that consideration should be given to moving the existing bin or providing another one.

District Councillor Cox thanked Mr. Vaux for his Chairmanship and said that he hoped that he would continue in this role.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

draft minutes for approval at next APM