

Please note these are draft minutes until approved and signed at the next meeting.

**BLETCHINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE
COMMITTEE ROOMS ON MONDAY 08 DECEMBER 2008**

P R E S E N T

Councillor R. Gater – Chairman

Councillors: K Bridger, D Martin, J Moore, N Munday, B Tatnell and R Trotman

In attendance: Clerk - K. Wantling, CC M Myland, DC G Black, DC T Elias, P Cock –
Bletchingley in Bloom, D Turner – Neighbourhood Watch, PC Shrapel and PCSO Cheasman.

170/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Butler. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

171/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Changes to Councillor Munday's Declarations of Interest had been notified to the Clerk and subsequently forwarded to TDC.

172/08 MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 24th November 2008 were approved and signed by the Chairman. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th November 2008 were approved and signed by the Chairman subject to the following minor amendment: Page 4, No 6, Tree Wardens – delete the letter “s” from “Junior Tree Wardens”.

173/08 RESIDENTS' REQUESTS

Councillor Moore reported that the trees on Tilgate Common were still in need of attention but that this was in hand.

174/08 REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

CC Myland updated on the transport schemes identified at the Tandridge Local Committee meeting held on 5 December 2008. The Bletchingley High Street (A25) layout improvement plan feasibility study is scheduled to be completed by the end of January 2009 with works likely to be undertaken in 2009/10. Pendell Road is scheduled to have patching work done in the next few months. The footpath on Rabies Heath Road from Park Lane to St Catherine's Cross is to have slurry treatment in January 2009. The Community Gang is next in the area in the week commencing 19 January 2009. Additional grass, tree and hedge cutting is scheduled for Outwood Lane, Whitehill Lane and Sandy Lane and Warwick Wold Road with a flail cutter and Sunnybank Cottages, Chevington Villas and Coneybury by hand – works likely to continue through to the end of the year. CC Myland requested that any debris resulting from flail cutting be removed from site so as to avoid blockage of the drains. It was hoped to schedule the painting of the white lines in front of the Red Lion on the next Community Gang visit. CC Myland confirmed that she was pressing for a school crossing near the entrance to Grange Meadow.

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CC Myland would chase the various outstanding issues on the Action Point list and report back, including the gateway signs.

DC Black reported that weekly recycling, including recycling of plastic bottles would be introduced in Bletchingley on 1st February 2009.

DC Elias reported that TDC were currently working on finalising their budgets for 2009/10.

175/08 POLICING ISSUES

PC Shrapel confirmed that PCSO Dawn Sheppard had left Surrey Police. A replacement was in the process of being sought. In the interim, support was being received from local PCSOs. The Chairman reported that he had commented to Inspector E Burtenshaw that PCSO Dawn Sheppard was sadly missed by both the Parish Council and Bletchingley parishioners and her work in the community was greatly appreciated. PC Shrapel confirmed that he would pass on these comments to Dawn Sheppard.

PC Shrapel reported on the recent violent robbery at South Nutfield Priory Farm at 5pm on Saturday 6th December. The police are appealing to the public for any information relating to the incident and the two male suspects. The robbery was violent and several thousand pounds stolen and several thousand pounds worth of damage done. The police have visited other local garden centres to notify them of the incident and advise on crime prevention. The CID are currently investigating this crime. PC Shrapel asked all residents to be particularly vigilant in relation to crime prevention over the next few weeks.

Theft from motor vehicles has increased in Tandridge. Halloween and Fireworks evenings were relatively quiet. Recent night time burglaries in South Nutfield have resulted in 2 persons being identified and questioned. Information from the public and partnership working between the county forces is proving to be very successful. Any suspicious incidents need to be reported to the police.

PC Shrapel gave a detailed report on reported crimes in Bletchingley. PCSO Conrad Cheasman was introduced to the Parish Council. He had, along with PCSO Andy Adams been supporting PC Shrapel in the last few months. The Chairman thanked the police for coming.

PC Shrapel and PCSO Cheasman left the meeting.

176/08 BLETCHINGLEY IN BLOOM

CC Myland left the meeting.

Mrs Cock reported that the Church planters had been redone and so far there had been no reported incidents of theft. The 2nd phase of amenity beds near the Red Lion would be planted this coming Saturday. Bulbs had been planted around the village sign. The recent fundraising flower arranging event had been well attended and over £500 raised. Out of this, has to be paid the hall hire charge and the cost of the flowers. The new marking sheet had now been received and the standards were very high. Mrs Cock expressed concern that there was not enough man power or sponsors to achieve the goal. Residents were being asked to sponsor planters in the village at £25 a planter.

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The Chairman reported on the latest relating to Hevers Pond. A letter had been sent to Mr M Lambert on 3 December giving details of past failed attempts to gain a licence to work on Hevers Pond and included the reasons why it was required and how it was intended that this work would be undertaken. A response had been requested by return.

DC Elias and DC Black left the meeting.

The Chairman updated the Council on the subsequent 24 page lease received from the agents, RH&RW Clutton, including the suggested legal fees of £750. It was thought that the client's lawyers had suggested a lease as opposed to a licence, despite our request for the opposite. The Council felt it was not appropriate for it to take on the risk involved with the full responsibility of a lease. It was agreed that nothing further would be done until a response was received from Mr M Lambert.

177/08 MATTERS AND ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MINUTES

The Clerk's report was noted. No changes were made to the list of outstanding action points.

Tandridge Community Fund – The Parish Council approved the publication of the donation in an article to be submitted to “The Voice”.

Affordable Community Housing – The meeting was now scheduled for 9th February 2009 and it was agreed that this would start at 7pm to enable the Parish Council meeting to start as normal at 7.30pm.

Sustainable Communities Act – The Clerk and Councillor Tatnell provided a brief update on the recent ESPLG meeting which included the above item on the agenda. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would await the outcome of the first round of Local Area Forums to see how best to proceed with this new act. It was thought that this Act could be linked to Affordable Housing.

D Turner left the meeting.

178/08 CURRENT PLANNING ISSUES

9.1. **TA/2008/1563** – Land at Whitehill Lane, Bletchingley – erection of barn for storage or agricultural machinery, silage, hay and stock pens within. Retention with alteration of tracks and entrance gates. Following a discussion,

KW

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the Parish Council object on the following grounds, already indicated in the previous Planning Committee meeting: (i) No indication of height of the barn; (ii) size of barn does not seem commensurate for the type of farming; (iii) The farm is clearly for fat stock use because there is no mention of milking parlours etc. The barn is very big for this purpose and there should be no need for calving pens.

9.2. **TA/2008/1585/TCA** – Berry House, 58 High Street, Bletchingley – reduce and reshape crown of 1 x Magnolia by up to 35% on previous reduction points.

KW

RESOLVED: No comment

9.3. **TA/1556/L1 and L2** – The Barn, Place Farm Road, Bletchingley - Part demolition of the existing garage to separate the garage from the barn

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(Planning Permission - 2008/1556/L1 & Listed Building Consent - 2008/1556/L2).

KW

RESOLVED: No comment

9.4. SCC/2008/0151/SAJ – Land at Kings Farm, Tilburstow Hill Road, South Godstone – Star Energy Weald Basin Ltd

AB

RESOLVED: The Parish Council accepted Councillor Butler’s Report and agreed that the comments indicated in her report could be made.

9.5. Any other current planning matters – discussion only

Councillor Martin reported on recent documentation giving revised guidelines for planning applications following changes, which came into effect on 1st October 2008. Extensions to dwellings now appeared to have gone back to referencing to the footprint of the building.

Mrs Cock left the meeting.

Below is a list of planning appeals and delegated action taken by TDC in relation to planning applications.

TA/2008/1211 – 3 Red Gables, Hextalls Lane, The Conduit, Bletchingley – Erection of single storey rear extension **Approved (Full)**

TA/2008/1266 – Highcroft, Coldharbour Lane, Bletchingley – Demolition of existing garage. Erection of 2 storey extension to south elevation and single storey extension to north elevation. **Approved (Full)**

179/08 REPORTS FROM AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. Neighbourhood Watch: Councillor Bridger reported that some damage had been done to the boot of a vehicle parked near St Mary’s Church. There was an increased police presence in this location. 2 individuals had been interviewed, along with their parents and viewing of the CCTV footage had been offered. The last few weeks had been relatively quiet. The motorcyclists involved in this location had been informed that any further episodes in any location would result in immediate scrapping of the motorcycles.

The drink driving campaign over the festive period would be starting next week.

2. Footpaths and Bridleways: Councillor Trotman had nothing to report.

3. Transport: Councillor Munday reported that the bus shelter near Barfields had been cleaned.

4. Speedwatch: Councillor Martin confirmed that he would be in touch with D Turner regarding a future speedwatch date.

DM

5. Cemetery: Councillor Tatnell had nothing new to report.

6. Minerals: Councillor Butler’s report relating to Star Energy’s revised plan for appraisal of hydrocarbons at King’s Farm, Tilburstow Hill Road, South Godstone had been discussed earlier under Planning. This revised application is as a result of Star Energy unexpectedly striking oil and therefore the original gas appraisal plan has had to be amended. Councillor Butler will make further enquiries and ask for more time to comment if necessary.

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7. Village Hall/Community Centre: Councillor Tatnell reported that 2 groups had dropped out of utilising the facilities but more bookings were coming in. The cameras used to search the drains had reported no problems other than roots needing to be removed. The light rigging on the stage area would be discussed at the next meeting following receipt of the report. A discussion followed relating to the costs involved in making the rigging safe. The Parish Council needed to ensure that safety issues, fire risk and cost factors were all taken into account. The Village Hall Management Committee needed to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment in any event. Following a discussion,

IT WAS AGREED THAT the Village Hall Management Committee needed to discuss the contents of the report and if necessary, obtain a note to be placed on file from an appropriate authority stating that some of the work suggested in the report is not necessary and that the existing equipment is suitable.

8. Recreation/Sports Association: Councillor Moore had provided a playground report to the Clerk, which noted that all was in working order, with only some minor damage to the picnic table.

Councillor Trotman reported that agreement had been reached between the Sports Association and TDC in relation to the relocation of the playground to near the skate park/ball park area, but that this needed to be formalised.

The Clerk gave a brief update on the funding progress for the playground, which was now up to a pledged amount of £13,000, not including the element from TDC. A full application to Star Energy would be made in due course following acceptance of the Expression of Interest. An application would also be made to Gatwick Airport Community Fund.

9. Allotments: Councillor Moore had nothing new to report.

To discuss and approve an increase in the allotment rents for 2009/10. In light of the continued high maintenance costs involved with the upkeep of the Allotments, the Parish Council discussed increasing the allotment rents, which have not been increased for 2 years. Following a discussion,

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the Allotment rents would be increased to £17.50 for a plot and 15.00 for a concession rate for the 2009/10 rents.

10. Street Lighting: The Clerk reported that the light in Outwood Lane near no 1 Sackville Cottages was on all the time and covered by vegetation. It had previously been reported. Councillor Trotman reported that No 10 light on Rabies Heath Road was on 24 hours a day.

KW

IT WAS AGREED THAT the Clerk would report this.

11. CCTV: All fixed cameras were working correctly. Metal Mickey had picked up the incident at St Mary's Church and had been utilised by the police.

12. Website: The Clerk had nothing to report.

180/08 FINANCE

11.1 The following December payments were sanctioned and cheques and stubs signed.

000524	Bletchingley Village Hall	12.00
000525	Mrs K Wantling	733.74

All

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000526	HM Revenue & Customs	119.65
000527	Tandridge Community Fund	100.00
000528	Oxted Citizens Advice Bureau	100.00
000529	SLCC	150.00
000530	The Society of Local Council Clerks	105.00
000531	Viking Direct	46.93
000532	DA Landscaping	979.00
000533	Robert McCarthy	<u>18.00</u>
		<u>£2364.32</u>

181/08 FOOTPATH 506

Following a discussion,

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the following would be published.

In 2003 Bletchingley Parish Council wrote to Mr Herrtage requesting that he cease immediately to drive his motor vehicle along the restricted section of Footpath 506. Mr Herrtage responded by stating that he had a legal right to vehicular access to the rear of his garden along Footpath 506. Mr Herrtage then proceeded to threaten the Bletchingley Parish Council with legal action unless we withdrew and publicly apologized for our previous statement regarding his claimed use of Footpath 506.

Mr Herrtage proceeded to take out a County Court claim for defamation against individual Bletchingley Parish Council members, the Bletchingley Parish Council as a whole, District and County Councillor Myland and Surrey County Council. Mr Herrtage's claims of defamation against each Bletchingley Parish Councillor and District and County Councillor Myland were later struck out by the County Court on the direction of HH Judge Reid.

Subsequently Mr Herrtage reported the Bletchingley Parish Council to the Standards Board. The Standards Board thereafter confirmed that the Bletchingley Parish Council had not breached any guidelines or standards.

Mr Herrtage then proceeded to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office regarding the conduct of the Bletchingley Parish Council. It was subsequently confirmed by the Information Commissioner's Office that there was no case to answer.

In January 2005, after a number of County Court Hearings, His Honour Judge Reid decided against Mr Herrtage's claim to have a right of vehicular access over Footpath 506. Full costs and interest were awarded to the Bletchingley Parish Council. An appeal to the High Court by Mr Herrtage was subsequently dismissed.

In August 2007 Mr Herrtage took out a second complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office regarding the conduct of the Bletchingley Parish Council. This finally went to an Appeal in February 2008 as Mr Herrtage challenged the Information Commissioner's decision notice. Mr Herrtage's Appeal failed.

In May 2008 Mr Herrtage attempted to take out a Defamation Claim against the Bletchingley Parish Council. HH Judge Reid confirmed that this was outside his jurisdiction and that defamation claims can only heard in the High Court.

Mr Herrtage has failed to pay any of the costs and interest awarded to the Bletchingley Parish Council, which has forced the Bletchingley Parish Council back

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to Court to recover the costs awarded. At the final Hearing on the 24th November 2008, HH Judge Reid made an Order for the sale for Wideways, 100 High Street, Bletchingley due to Mr Herrtage's failure to pay the awarded costs and accrued interest since January of 2005. HH Judge Reid confirmed to Mr Herrtage that he had until a date in January 2009 to pay the full costs and interest, failing which Hedley's Solicitors would then proceed to sell Wideways to recover the debt owed to Bletchingley Parish Council.

After the Court Order for sale was confirmed by HH Judge Reid on the 24th November, 2008 hearing, Mr Herrtage stated that he would pay into the County Court the costs awarded including interest. Hedley's have subsequently received confirmation from Guildford County Court that Mr Herrtage has paid a cheque for the costs and interest awarded. Our Solicitors are awaiting from the County Court the awarded costs and accrued interest.

The Parish Council unanimously thanked the Chairman for continuing to see this matter through to the end.

182/08 ALLEGED DEFAMATION

To discuss Bletchingley Parish Council's alleged defamation against Mrs Herrtage.

The original letter from Mrs Herrtage's lawyers had been previously circulated to all councillors, together with the draft and subsequently approved response from Hedleys. Following consultation and approval from the insurers, the Parish Council resolved that the lawyers should proceed as necessary.

183/08 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Councillor Munday left the meeting.

14.1 To consider, at the request of TDC, a response from Parish Council members on paying any allowable allowance under the legislation Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SL2003/1021). Following a discussion,

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the Bletchingley Parish Councillors all agreed that no basic allowance should be paid to any councillors except the Chairman. It was not believed that the lack of basic allowance payment was stopping future candidates from standing as councillors.

KW

184/08 MATTERS FOR REPORTING OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDA

A presentation on Affordable Community Housing had been agreed to start at 7pm on the 9th February 2009. The January agenda would include an item relating to the need to put the CCTV contract out to tender.

185/08 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Planning Committee – No December meeting

Parish Council Meeting – 12 January 2009

Planning Committee Meeting – 26 January 2009

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The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.20 pm