

MINUTES OF THE CROSSWAYS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN CROSSWAYS VILLAGE HALL
AT 7PM ON THURSDAY 28TH JULY 2011

PRESENT: Cllr Andrew Brewer (Chairman), Cllr Terrie Connor (Vice Chairman), Cllr Elaine Stenning (Vice Chairman (Finance)), Cllr Dave Harris (Chairman Sports Field and Recreation Committee), Cllr Barry Thomas, and Cllr Daphne Bearman

PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS None to report.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

a. Questions were raised regarding the matter of residents purchasing parcels of open space land adjoining their properties and concern that the Council could incur legal costs. Cllr Brewer advised that these requests were being dealt with and the Council had received advise that should it consider selling open space land the purchaser would be advised that the same terms under which the Council took ownership of the open space would necessarily be imposed on a new owner, these conditions will be forwarded to any enquirer to purchase open space land from the Council.

ACTION: CLERK

b. A complaint was received regarding overgrown hedges abutting Moynton Close and Dick o' th' Banks Road. The Clerk was asked to identify ownership of these areas and forward complaints to proper party for action.

ACTION: CLERK

REPORT BY COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER Apologies were received from the Community Police Officers.

REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR Apologies were received from Cllr Crowhurst.

REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLORS Cllr Stein advised those present that he had attended a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee who reviewed business rate debts and considered ways of dealing with these bad debts. Cllr Stein also advised that he had met with David Hodges (Planning Officer) at WDDC regarding the Solar Farm application who informed him that outstanding questions have now been answered and this application should be on the next planning agenda.

REPORT LIZ CALLISTER, FRIENDS OF CROSSWAYS LIBRARY Mrs Callister, the Chairman of the Friends of Crossways Library is attached at Annex A to these minutes.

Cllr Brewer thanked Mrs Callister for her sterling work as Chairman of the FOCL Library and asked that she continue in this role.

THE MEETING

ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Foster.

ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Cllr Brewer declared a personal prejudicial interest in Item 13b on the agenda and stated he would leave the room whilst this item was discussed.

b. Cllr Bearman declared a personal interest in Item 13c. Cllr Bearman was advised that this item had been withdrawn.

ITEM 3 DECLARATIONS OF PREDETERMINATION There were no Declarations of Predetermination.

ITEM 4 TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 30th JUNE 2011
The Minutes of the Full Council meeting on 30th June 2011 were accepted as a true record and duly signed.

Proposed: Cllr Thomas, seconded Cllr Connor

AGREED

ITEM 5 MATTERS ARISING There were no matters arising.

ITEM 6 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am sure all of you will have followed the developments regarding the Dorset libraries and the recent meeting at County Hall. Whilst I am relieved that the threat of closure from Crossways has receded I do not feel that we should be anything other than concerned about the decision made. As Chairman you will know the grave concerns I have had all the way along with the consultations and the way that this process was being handled. As an academic the closure of any library is, in my opinion, a dreadful thing – education is our investment in the future world and any community denied access to a library service or for it to be made more difficult is a poorer community. Therefore without any triumphalism I think it right we record our sympathy for both Wool and Puddletown. It should also be our stated aim to continue to support the work of adlib in whatever it chooses to do. I am a cynical person as you know but still have come away from this whole sorry process for the second time with a jaded view of the workings of our County colleagues. Do you feel like the man in front of the magician who feels he has been tricked into choosing a particular card. The deck was stacked against adlib in my opinion and officers and lobbyists were very busy in the background. Councillors were being asked to consider reports which were hundreds of pages long. In the end the decision to close 9 libraries was carried by one vote – hardly a ringing endorsement of the process. DCC have turned their backs on an opportunity to preserve our County Library Service which was once considered one of the finest in the country. It is a sad day for us all but I also restate my concerns that other County services represented in this village will be subject to the same processes and feel we cannot be complacent in any way. We have a duty to hold the County Council to account and I hope you will all support me in this role.

On behalf of this Council I sent a letter to Mrs Helen Boyce, the retiring Head of Frome Valley First School. Unfortunately this has been prompted by ill health and I am sure that you will all join with me in extending our best wishes to Helen for the future. I have asked the clerk to place a copy of the letter in the Council's files.

I have also spoken to Vickie Hedges about the graffiti and activities of a minority of youngsters around the new MUGA and skatebowl. Obviously with the summer holidays and lighter evenings this is a time for increased vigilance. Vickie assures me that enquiries are being made to catch the culprits with such a rich grasp of the Anglo Saxon language !

I am pleased to report that both the Village Hall and the Scout Group are keen to be involved with some of the suggestions for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee next year. A short article has been placed in the 'Bridge' to canvass ideas and support. That gives us venues for the community lunch and other events and an outdoor location for a beacon and evening celebration. This could be a memorable weekend and I commend it to you all.

Councillors will have received a letter this evening regarding an ongoing dialogue with agents for a third party looking to build further houses in the village. As Chairman I hope that I have been transparent in my attitude and approach to meetings of this nature. For obvious reasons the idea of confidential briefings or updates with Councillors is something I try to avoid. It is also, in my view, most important that we do not appear to be supporting any proposals or schemes. However we must be pragmatic and if development is inevitable then we have to secure the best deal for the village. In the correspondence you have been given tonight you are given a précis of the history of talks which seem to convey an impression that this village has been the beneficiary of a huge philanthropic bounty from one source. I dispute that assertion but am also uncomfortable if any third party draws our attention to community benefits previously secured as justification for support for further phases of development. This is why we spoke to our colleagues at West Dorset who advised us to exercise caution. At the end of the day we are being contacted by a firm who earn a commission based on proposals to build houses. The community benefits used to be called 'planning gain' and was open to abuse of the system. They are seeking to influence planning policy in order that their client gains and that must never be put out of our minds when we deal with requests from any developer or their agent.

We are in a difficult position as there are no proposals on the table or a long term structure plan which includes developments of the scale being muted. I welcome the opportunity for us to put our position in a way that does not close doors but also does not involve getting too close. The benefit of your thoughts Councillors would be appreciated before a response is sent which I hope will clarify matters. I should like to ask Stella to collate any responses from you and we shall write back accordingly.

As I have mentioned before it is going to become vital that we seek the views of those we represent in how this village develops and we will need to address this matter very soon. That is why we are here and as we see from tonight's agenda even when houses are built the work for this Council does not end and the agreements made at the outset of a development sometime have a habit of losing their appeal in the outcomes.

ITEM 7 UPDATE CONSIDER REQUESTS TO PURCHASE AREAS OF LAND, OWNED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL, BY RESIDENTS Councillors were given a copy of the e mail from Head of Planning at WDDC in the matter of Councils selling open space land which advised “If the Parish Council wants to pass on land which has been previously been conveyed to it under the terms of a Section 106 agreement, then unless that agreement specifically excludes such a transfer (which is unlikely), then you would be free to do so, BUT the new owners would of course be bound to manage the land in accordance with the terms of the agreement”. The Chairman advised that the Council would need to decide their policy in selling land and expressed concern that the covenants could be ignored. Cllr Connor questioned setting a precedent. Cllr Harris suggested advise residents of the covenants in that the land is open space and cannot be used for any other purpose. The Council was not minded to pursue this matter. The Clerk was asked to check the covenants and draft a letter to residents enquiring about purchasing land.

ACTION: CLERK

ITEM 8 TO AGREE FOR SIGNATURE THE TRANSFER DEED FOR THE AREA OF OPEN SPACE LAND KNOWN AS MIDDLE HILL WITHIN THE WOODSFOR FIELDS DEVELOPMENT – COUNCILLORS ARE ADVISED TO READ THE TRANSFER DEED IN CONJUNCTION WITH CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE PARISH COUNCIL/BETTERMENT PROPERTIES AND BLANCHARDS BAILEY SOLICITORS) MINUTES PAGE 1160 ITEM 9 REFERS Cllr Brewer gave a short history of the Section 106 Open Space agreement on this development and the difficulties already experienced on this site some of which were resolved with the reduction in the mound. Cllr Harris proposed the Council go ahead in taking ownership of this land. Cllr Thomas seconded this proposal. Cllr Brewer proposed meeting with residents before agreeing to take ownership, Cllr Bearman seconded. The Council voted on this first proposal 3 for, 2 against and 1 abstention. Cllr Harris’s proposal was carried.

AGREED ACTION: CLERK

ITEM 9 TO NOTE FOR INFORMATION/ACTION AS REQUIRED THE RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT COMPLETED ON MAY 19TH 2011

NOTED AND AGREED

ITEM 10 TO CONSIDER FORMATION OF A COMMITTEE TO TAKE FORWARD PLANS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE QUEENS DIAMOND JUBILEE 2012 The Council agreed to lead on the formation of this Committee. Volunteers will be sought from the following organisations, The Village Hall, The Scouts, the Play Group, and the WI. Cllr Harris and Cllr Bearman offered to sit on this Committee. The Clerk offered to act as Secretary.

ITEM 11 TO HEAR REPORT ON POLICE SATISFACTION SURVEY – CLLR CONNOR Cllr Connor had nothing further to report and advised this survey was on line. Local issues were noted; speed cameras and the PACT meetings. Cllr Brewer advised that if residents are not satisfied they need to make this known to the Police.

ITEM 12 AGREE AMENDMENT AND RESIGNING ASSET REGISTER INCORRECTLY DATED The Chairman signed the amended front page.

ITEM 13 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

a. **1/D/11/001070 WARMWELL CARAVAN PARK – SITE 13 STATIC CARAVANS**

No comment

Cllr Brewer left the room.

b. **1/D/11/001086 UNIT 8A, SCOTTON WAY, HYBRIS BUSINESS PARK – USE OF CAR PARKING SPACE FOR SITING OF MOBILE CATERING UNIT**

No Comment

c. **1/D/11/000961 LAND AT JUNCTION OF MORETON ROAD AND REDBRIDGE ROAD CHANGE OF USE OF UNIT 1 FROM B1 (BUSINESS) TO A1 (SHOP)**

Withdrawn

ITEM 14 TO NOTE AND APPROVE EXPENDITURE 30TH JUNE 2011 – 28TH JULY 2011 The following expenditure was noted and agreed:

	£
Salary Clerk*	
Steve Manuel Grass Cutting	220.00
Lane Decorating (Play Areas)	1665.00
Viking Direct (Stationery)	12.69
Inland Revenue (PAYE)*	
Honorarium and Expenses Internal Auditor*	
Fireline Ltd	46.71
Petty Cash Top Up	164.71
Steve Manuel Grass Cutting	220.00
Hardy Tree Services	180.00
Litter Collector*	

* Not published to comply with the DATA Protection Act

ITEM 15 ANY LATE URGENT ITEMS AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION – CLLRS ARE REQUESTED TO ADVISE THE CHAIRMAN OF ANY LATE ITEMS THEY WISH TO BRING FORWARD PRIOR TO THE MEETING Cllr Harris stated that fencing had appeared between the Nursery and Egdon House on questioned why.

Post meeting note: Cllr Harris advised the land in question is being grazed by sheep.

ITEM 16 CONFIRM DATE OF NEXT MEETING SEPTEMBER 29TH 2011 AND APPROVE DELEGATED POWERS TO CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMEN, AS PER STANDING ORDERS, DURING COUNCIL RECESS Proposed Cllr Thomas, seconded Cllr Harris

AGREED

SignedChairman 2011

REPORT BY LIZ CALLISTER, CHAIRMAN FRIENDS OF CROSSWAYS LIBRARY

As you are all probably aware, at the County Council Meeting on Thursday 21st July 2011 the Councillors voted in favour of Option B – to withdraw funding from 9 libraries by 21 votes to 20. It was a long, hard campaign that sadly became quite political at the end to the extent that AdLib lobbied hard for there to be a free vote on the 21st which did happen.

At times it seemed an impossible task and that the final decision was a fait accompli. But together with AdLib we saved Crossways Library plus 10 other libraries, we forced down the budget for the book fund and it was the AdLib proposal that formed the basis for the even better proposal from the Policy Development Panel. All this accomplished within six months by a group of committed volunteers.

However, the work continues as we are concerned that now the Library Service has managed to get authority to take 9 libraries out of the system it will only be a matter of time before they return for the other 11. AdLib are taking advice as to whether there is a case for a Judicial Review and appeal may be made to the Secretary of State who has overall responsibility for libraries.

As Crossways is not one of the 9 libraries under threat, the Friends of Crossways Library can now start work to increase the number of library users and that is already happening as the latest issue figures show that there has been an increase in the first quarter of this year compared with last year and does not include the new opening hours. We are also planning a calendar of regular events that we hope will appeal to all our members and attract new ones too. Thank you to everyone who wrote letters and signed petitions including teachers and children from Frome Valley and Broadmayne Schools. Thank you to the FCL Committee for their support and particularly Sue, Jane and Marilyn who attended the very long meetings with me. I would also like to thank Teresa Seall our WDDC Councillor for her active support and ideas which helped me but also the campaign.

The Public Meeting organised by Crossways Parish Council certainly went a long way to ensuring that Crossways Library was retained so thanks must go to them too.

Thanks are due also to Richard Drax, our MP, who wrote letters to each County Councillor, the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council recommending that Option D was the best option.

Councillor Crowhurst worked hard chairing the Policy Development Panel who produced Option D and it is particularly upsetting that they will not be able to finish the work they started but instead will now have the difficult task of steering through the recommendations of Option B.

Finally, a huge thank you to AdLib without whose tireless work we would never have achieved so much.

I am happy to continue as the PC Library Champion if it is your wish and to report anything that may affect Crossways Library.