

Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of a Meeting held in the Pearce Suite, Memorial Hall, Trull
on Monday 16th April 2007 at 7.15 pm.

1.0 Welcome by the Chairman of Trull Parish Council

1.1 Mr. Geoff Hewett, Chairman of Trull Parish Council, welcomed those present and explained the format for the evening. The meeting was to be followed by the scheduled Parish Council meeting and all were welcome to attend.

2.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th May 2006 were agreed, and duly signed by the Chairman.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4.0 Chairman's Report

4.1 Local Elections

It was explained that, although Local Elections were being held on 3rd May 2007, Trull would be voting only for its Borough Councillor. There would be no voting for Parish Councillors, as the Returning Officer had received only seven nominations for the ten seats available, so the nominees would be elected unopposed. All seven were in fact existing Councillors. There would be a process of co-option for the remaining three seats whereby interested persons could become Councillors.

It was noted that Mr. John Guy, Mr. Stephen Martin-Scott and Mr. Keyte MBE had not applied for re-election. However, Mr. Keyte stated that he had been prevented by illness from returning the nomination forms in time, and that he wished to be considered for co-option back to the Council. The Chairman thanked them all for their considerable contributions to the work of the Council.

4.2 Precept

The precept for 2007/8 had been agreed at £12,000, an increase of £2,000 over the £10,000 that had been set for 2006/7. This was due to the increasing running costs of the Council and the ambition to implement a number of community based projects during the year. Although the increase was fairly substantial, it was considered to be low in comparison with other Parishes within the Deane and represented good value for money.

4.3 SCC Unitary Authority Bid

In accordance with the recent change in Government policy, Somerset County Council was taking the opportunity to seek Unitary Authority status. The organisation had been selected for the 'short-list' of 15 Authorities and the submitted business case was now being scrutinised. A 12-week consultation period with major stakeholders was in place, and the final announcement would be made in early July 2007. If successful, the existing tiers of County and District / Borough Councils would be abolished, and the new Unitary Council would commence in April 2009.

The Chairman noted that Mr. Martin-Scott had combined being both Parish and County Councillor to good effect, and had proven to be a valuable conduit to SCC.

4.4 Local Area Working Panels

The SCC Local Area Working Panels initiative was explained, and how it was intended to devolve a proportion of the budget to the local community. There would be five area-based panels set up within the County, each panel consisting of 12 Councillors. Each Councillor would be allocated an initial £15k, in addition to the £5k community grant, for 2007/8 and the panel would then determine how best to spend the money.

Mr. Martin-Scott advised that there are no real restrictions on how the money could be spent, only that it must comply with the requirements of the Local Area Agreement scheme. The panel for the Taunton Deane area had agreed to examine ways to improve youth services and highway maintenance matters initially.

4.5 Trull Action Plan

The Trull Action Plan was a standard item on the Agenda, and the plan has the overall support of the Council. One of the priorities identified was to address the problem of dog fouling within the playing field. The new fencing and stile has proven to be very successful in dealing with the problem.

4.6 Party in the Park

The event was held on 1st July after having had a rest year in 2005. Despite the competition from the World Cup football, the event was very successful. The balance of £1,800 from the party will be held over by the Council until the next event in 2008.

4.7 Planning

It had been another busy year on planning. There had been a total of 46 applications received, of which 39 were supported, with objections recorded on 5 and 'no comments' made on the remaining 2. Most related to buildings, but 5 were for tree works. The Council is the only statutory consultee for the applications, and TDBC subsequently made 5 decisions that were contrary to the Council's recommendations.

Mr. Archer had again made an excellent job of leading on these issues, and the Council was indebted for his efforts.

4.8 Footpaths

The Carter's Way footpath linking Trull Green Drive with Wild Oak Lane had now been completed, and had been well received by the community. The footpath leading from Wyatt's Field to the playing field had also been resurfaced and was a big improvement, addressing both drainage and Health and Safety concerns.

4.9 Highways

There had been very little to report on highway matters. Somerset Highways had resurfaced the footpaths outside Trull Stores and the entrance to Dipford Road earlier in the year and this had been most welcome. There were issues regarding gully emptying and hedge cutting but, generally, the situation was satisfactory.

4.10 Allotments

The entrance gate adjacent to Wild Oak Lane had recently been replaced with a more suitable item and, in general, the allotments were in good order. There was a waiting list of five people at the present time, and a number of tenants had sited small sheds on their plots.

4.11 Memorial Halls

The options appraisal for either a new build on or off site, or refurbishing the existing building, continued but funding was a prime concern. The Council had agreed to pay a contribution of £3k to a feasibility study that would help determine the most cost-effective approach.

4.12 Newsletter

The monthly Newsletter continued to be a very effective and valued method of communicating with the community, and Mrs. Wooldridge was thanked for her efforts. It was noted that Trull Stores and the Post Office distribute the copies without charge. These were vital facilities within the village, and every effort should be made to return the support that was given so readily.

Mrs. Wooldridge thanked Mr. John Pepper for volunteering to deliver the Newsletter to properties in the Killams Ward.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Parish Council for their enthusiasm and hard work, and looked forward to completing a number of projects during the forthcoming year.

Mr. Archer proposed a vote of thanks in recognition of the efforts that the Chairman had made during the year, and this was warmly agreed.

5.0 Financial Report for 2006/7

5.1 The Clerk gave a summary report on the financial position of Trull Parish Council. The total expenditure for the year was £12,838.43 plus £889.15 VAT (£13,727.58) and was divided under six main headings as follows: -

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|--------------------------------|-----------|--|
| a) Playing Field & Open Spaces | £4,161.05 | Includes £2,450.00 for new fencing, changing room utility bills, repairs to the play equipment, grass cutting contract, dog bin servicing and the maintenance of two motor mowers. |
| b) Allotments | £449.23 | For the supply of water and compost, plus the replacement of the access gate. |
| c) Footpaths | £917.50 | For cleaning and maintenance. (Includes £500.00 for landscaping work to Carter's Way footpath). |
| d) General Administration | £6,927.70 | For the purchase of stationary, postage and printing costs, Clerk's salary, subscriptions, insurance premium and Audit fees. |
| e) Trull Players | £250.00 | Donation to drama group. |
| f) Web Site | £132.95 | Maintenance and hosting fee. |

The total receipts of the Parish Council for 2006/7 were: -

	£
Precept on Trull Council Tax Payers received via Taunton Deane Borough Council	10,000.00
Allotment Rents	434.00
Taunton Deane Borough Council Maintenance Grant	1,210.00
Party in the Park 2006	1,868.03
Party in the Park 2006 - Insurance Premium	341.25
VAT Refund 2005/6	1,204.06

SCC Community Award Grant	760.00
NALC Bursary Grant	138.75
Gross Interest Received	<u>173.39</u>
Total	16,129.48

5.2 The Total Balances of the Parish Council as at 31st March 2007 were £12, 248.28.

6.0 **Village Charity Reports**

6.1 **Parish Lands Charity**

The Chairman advised that, in the absence of the Treasurer of the Charity, Mr. John Guy, the report would not be available until June.

6.2 **Trull Village Memorial Halls**

Mr. Martin-Scott reported that a number of options were currently being considered to either improve or replace the Memorial Hall, and it was anticipated that a proposal would be finalised by the end of the year. There were difficult issues to address, such as energy efficiency, in retaining the existing building, which would not be the case in a new build scheme. However, financing this option is proving to be difficult as the overall profit from running the Halls during the course of a year is relatively small.

6.3 **Trull, Pitminster and Corfe Almshouse and Relief in Sickness**

Mr. Keyte, as appointed representative for Trull Parish Council, advised that a financial report was not yet available. However, it was explained that following the installation of double-glazing in 2006, funds were being built back up again.

7.0 **Any Other Business**

7.1 There were no additional items.

8.0 **Questions from the Public**

8.1 A member of the public referred to the subscription paid by the Council to the Community Council for Somerset, and queried if there were any developments on the provision of affordable housing in the area, and if further contact had been made with Falcon Housing. The Clerk advised that a letter had recently been received from Mr. Karl Hines of the Community Council regarding a housing needs survey within Trull, and the contact details were given. The TDBC Councillor, Mr. Mark Edwards, stated that he was actively involved in this area at the Borough Council and could provide further information on this matter.

8.2.1 Mr. Keith Sanders referred to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th March 2007 regarding the confidential nature of the appraisal options for the Memorial Hall. He considered that this was not helpful to the community, and requested further information on this point. The Chairman advised that the Chairman of the Working Group concerned had provided copies of the numerous options identified to date and requested that soundings be made of individual Councillors. There had been a request for confidentiality, and the Minutes had recorded this requirement.

8.3 Mrs. Margaret Pegge stated that a prime concern should be the condition of the Old Village Hall, and this was noted.

8.4 Dr. Bull requested further information on the SCC application for Unitary Status, and if it would have a detrimental effect on existing services and costs. Mr. Martin-Scott explained in some detail how the new Authority may operate, but the overall impact was unknown at this stage of the process.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.05 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of Trull Parish Council

Date.....