

Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of a Meeting held in the Pearce Suite, Memorial Hall, Trull
on Monday 21st April 2008 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, in particular, CPSO Kelly Browning and Mark Green of 'Project Taunton, 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 16th April 2007 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 A comprehensive account of the year was given and it was explained why the precept had been increased from £12k to £14k for the 2008/9 financial year. Reference was made to the recent planning applications for Comeytrowe Road and Dipford Road that had attracted a good deal of controversy. It was noted that the arrangements for the Party in the Park 2008 were very advanced; and that a number of improvements had been made to the play equipment. Mr. John White had secured a grant of £1,000 from the SCC ROW team for footpath improvements; and progress was being made on options for the Memorial Hall. The recent confirmation that the Post Office would remain for the immediate future was very welcome; and the monthly Newsletter continued to go from strength to strength.

- 4.2 The Chairman then thanked the members of the Parish Council for their enthusiasm and hard work. Mr. Archer referred to the SCC Chairman's Award for Service to the Community that had recently been presented to the Chairman. He proposed a vote of thanks in recognition of the efforts that the Chairman had made in over 20 years of service to the Council, and this was warmly agreed.

5.0 Financial Report for 2007/8

- 5.1 The Clerk gave a summary report on the financial position of Trull Parish Council. The total expenditure for the year was £21,188.02 plus £1,469.18 VAT (£22,657.20). The expenditure was divided under six main headings as follows: -

a) Playing Field & Open Spaces	£4,155.83	For the purchase of a new swing, painting of the entrance gates, grass cutting contract, dog bin servicing and the maintenance of two motor mowers.
b) Allotments	£361.47	For ground works to the new gate installation and water supply.
c) Footpaths	£4,781.73	For repairs to the footpaths at Wyatt's Field and at the bottom of the playing field, plus clearance at Staplehay weir and general maintenance within the playing field.
d) General Administration	£6,875.68	For the purchase of stationary, postage and printing costs, Clerk's salary, subscriptions, insurance premium and Audit fees.

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|----|------------------------|-----------|---|
| e) | Trull Village Halls | £3,104.19 | Grant for Feasibility Study and TDBC Planning Advice. |
| f) | Party in the Park 2008 | £1,909.12 | Return of balance plus interest from 2006 event. |

The total receipts of the Parish Council for 2007/8 were: -

	£
Precept on Trull Council Tax Payers received via Taunton Deane Borough Council	12,000.00
Allotment Rents	406.00
Taunton Deane Borough Council Maintenance Grant	1,285.00
Credit from A.P. Parris Ltd	37.44
VAT Refund 2006/7	889.15
Interest Received	234.15
Total	<u>14,851.74</u>

5.2 The Total Balances of the Parish Council as at 31st March 2008 were £4,482.82.

6.0 **Village Charity Reports**

6.1 **Parish Lands Charity**

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

6.2 **Trull Village Memorial Halls**

Mrs. Pegge reported that fund raising was a necessary but successful part of the Halls' operation. The options to develop the Halls would be available for public consultation in the near future.

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

Mrs. Hudson advised that the financial report was still being finalised, but it appeared that the overall position was satisfactory.

7.0 **SCC District Councillor Report**

7.1 The SCC District Councillor, Mr. Stephen Martin-Scott, reported on the following items: -

- **Somerset Unitary Authority Bid**

Reference was made to the recent Unitary Authority bid that had not been approved by central Government. The decision was considered to be a good exercise in democracy as it was evident that the large majority of Somerset residents did not support the application. The action groups that have now been created as a consequence of the process were working closely with the District Authorities in order to achieve financial and operational improvements.

- **IBM Southwest1 Contract**

The 10-year contractual arrangements between SCC, TDBC & IBM were explained and first year savings of £4M were anticipated. The contract would initially manage services such as procurement and HR (human resources), with additional areas being phased in over time.

- **'Project Taunton'**

Information was given on the 'Third Way', which will be an integral part of the Taunton town centre infrastructure development. In addition to reducing the current vehicle congestion, it will include a bridge over the river Tone that will be of architectural merit.

- SCC 'Rowing' Project
There had been progress with promoting cultural initiatives in recent months and a new member of staff had recently been appointed. It was noted that Mr. Martin-Scott was actively pursuing the provision of local rowing facilities for both pleasure and competition, with particular emphasis on the 'coxless four' craft.
- Local Initiatives Budget
A key element of the Taunton Deane Area Working Panel was that each County Councillor could fund schemes that had been developed with local communities to meet local priorities. This will complement the £5,000 Community Budget Scheme already in operation, giving a potential sum of £20,000, or more if Councillors 'pool' their budgets. There are strict criteria in accessing the funding, but the principal requirement is that applications meet the Local Area Agreement outcomes. Each Councillor could make a maximum of five applications between the range of £2,000 to £15,000 and these must be submitted before 28th November 2008.
- SCC Financial Position
It was suggested that SCC had recently borrowed an additional £20M for no identified purposes and that this was likely to impact on local ratepayers.

7.2 Questions and Answers

A number of questions were raised from members of the public such as the need for the kerb side recycling service to accept plastics and batteries, and the difficulties experienced with the SCC customer service telephone lines and the call back responses.

8.0 Any Other Business

8.1 There were no additional business items.

9.0 Questions from the Public

9.1 There were no additional questions from the public.

10.0 Presentation by Mark Green on the 'Project Taunton' Scheme

10.1 The Chairman introduced Mr. Mark Green, Project Manager for the 'Project Taunton' town centre enhancement scheme.

Mr. Green explained that he was seconded from TDBC and his role was to develop and deliver town centre improvements. The project was being supported primarily by the Regional Development Agency, SCC and TDBC. The appointed design consultants were Terence 'O' Rourke, who had considerable experience in this area of work.

By way of a projector and slides, the growth projections for Taunton for the next 15 –20 years were demonstrated, and it was anticipated that this could be in the region of 18,000 new dwellings per year until 2026.

The area around Firepool Lock would be subject to considerable development and a planning application was being prepared for 100 homes. This initiated the first phase of the project and approval was expected in September or October.

It was explained that a new bridge at Priory Road, adjacent to the MFI roundabout, would alleviate the increased traffic that would be generated by the development.

The area associated with the now redundant cattle market was being marketed to potential development and tenders were currently being considered. An announcement of the preferred bidder was likely to be made in June or July. The scheme was likely to feature hotels and retail outlets, and had the potential to create in excess of 3,000 new jobs. TDBC would retain ownership of the site during the build phase in order to ensure quality and sustainability requirements.

The project would enable improvements to be made to the Brewhouse Theatre. These would be carried out on the existing site, as a cost/benefit exercise had confirmed that this was the most cost effective option. The works were expected to cost some £20m and would provide a 500 – 600 seating capacity on completion. The area around the Brewhouse and the Tone Bridge would be considerably altered, and it was likely that the Poundstrecher and Lidl stores would be relocated.

SCC had secured £5M from the Heritage lottery fund for improvements to the Castle and Museum. It was noted that the Castle Green car park would be lost as a consequence, but alternative car parks were proposed to compensate.

The prevention of flooding to the town centre was paramount and Flood Risk Assessments were being prepared. It was considered that some areas of the development were subject to a high risk in the 1 – 100 year projections, and four options to provide increased flood storage capacity were being assessed. This involved attenuating the flow of the Sherford and Galmington tributaries into the River Tone, but the actual need for this had yet to be confirmed.

- 10.2 The Chairman thanked Mr. Green for his excellent presentation and stated that it would be very much appreciated if he could provide a progress update to the Council at a later date.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.35 pm.

Signed.....

Chairman of Trull Parish Council

Date.....