

# Trull Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting held in the School Hall, Church Road, Trull  
on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at 7.15 pm.

Present: Mr. G. Hewett (Chairman)

Mr. S. French, Mr. D. Archer, Mr. C. Ralph,  
Mr. S. Jeffery, Mr. N. Hancock, Mrs. J. Wooldridge,  
Mrs. A. Hudson and Mr. P. Parris, together with  
22 Members of the Public.

In attendance: Mr. J. White - Footpaths  
Mr. S. Watts - Clerk

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting, the Chairman invited questions from the Public on matters that were not related to the Agenda, but none were forthcoming.

145/07 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and agreed from Mrs. F. Drew.

146/07 **Declarations of Interest**

The following declaration of interest was advised: -

Name	Minute No:	Personal/Prejudicial	Reason and Action Taken
Mr. P. Parris	150/07	Personal	Owns land adjacent to possible site for affordable homes at Dipford. No action necessary.

147/07 **Chairman's Report**

There was nothing to report on this item.

148/07 **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were agreed, and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments: -

ISIS Project (Minute 131/07 refers).

"The initial budget for the organisation would be £1.8M in the first year..." should read "The initial budgeted saving the organisation would deliver will be £1.8M in the first year...."

Asian Flu (Minute 131/07 refers).

Should read "Avian Flu".

Planning (Minute 133/07 refers).

"Mr. Borthwood" should read "Mr. Brothwood".

149/07 **Matters for Report**

Footpaths (Minute 115/07 refers).

Mr. Parris referred to the matter of the SCC ROW team allocating part or the entire £1,000 award to the cost of the footpath at the bottom of the playing field. As no further information had been forthcoming, and the closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> December, it was agreed that the Clerk write to the officer concerned and request that the funding be used to extend the low walling to Poke Lane at the Church Road end. This work had

been identified at the 2006/7 budget set meeting (Minute 126/05 refers), and would help to stabilise the adjacent bank.

Proposals for Change in Taunton Town Centre (Minute 132/07 refers).

Mr. Archer advised that he had now received clarification from TDBC regarding the reference to a 'Wild Oak Lane flood storage reservoir' on page 94 of the *Proposals for Change in Taunton Town Centre* consultation document. This confirmed that the proposal was part of a number of measures to alleviate flood risks to the regeneration areas and the town centre itself. As Sherford Stream was a tributary of the Tone river, a flood storage system was being considered, and an initial appraisal and environmental assessment of suitable land near the stream would be undertaken in 2008.

SCC Award for Service to the Community 2007 (Minute 179/06 refers)

Mr. French referred to the nominations for the SCC sponsored award scheme that had been submitted in April. He was very pleased to announce that the Chairman of the Parish Council had been recognised for the unstinting time and effort that he had put into the community over many years. He then presented the Chairman with a framed certificate on behalf of Mr. Alan Gloak, Chairman of Somerset County Council, and led warm applause from the Parish Council and members of the public.

150/07 **'Affordable Housing in Trull' Survey**

The Chairman introduced Mr. Karl Hines of the Community Council for Somerset, and Mrs. Samantha Southam of the Falcon Housing Association, and advised that they would give short presentations on the recent affordable housing survey (Minute 89/07 refers). He clarified that the item was not associated with the Summerfield Developments proposal at Comeytrove Road, but an independent assessment of the affordable housing needs within the Parish.

Mr. Hines circulated a survey report to the Council, and explained the findings in some detail. He advised that of the 900 forms circulated, 18 respondents gave the following key information: -

- 14 were current residents in the parish.
- 12 have a family connection to Trull.
- 2 were currently employed in the parish.
- 6 were currently living in unsatisfactory or overcrowded accommodation.
- 8 were setting up home for the first time.
- 7 were wishing to move out of their parent's homes.
- 6 have an insecure tenancy agreement.

He confirmed that this response was compatible with the level of need revealed in other similar surveys in comparable parishes.

Mrs. Southam explained that Falcon Housing was essentially a registered social landlord, but another part of its role was to facilitate development when needs were revealed by surveys such as the one that had recently been completed here. The organisation did this primarily by working closely with interested building companies, and use of their low cost home ownership schemes. It was emphasised that their work was governed to a certain extent by TDBC releasing planning exception sites for development.

The Chairman invited Mr. Lahner of West of England Developments to address the Council. Mr. Lahner advised that he was in discussion with a

landowner in Dipford Road regarding the purchase of an overgrown orchard that could be used for affordable homes. The value of the land would be at agricultural rates in order to secure planning permission for affordable housing, and he gave an overview of a possible proposal for eight terraced units that he considered to be appropriate for the area.

Mr. Archer stated that the concept of a small-scale affordable housing project was more important than the site specifics at this stage. Mr. Lahner advised that to progress the development, the housing need would have to be proven, and agreement reached by the key parties involved such as the Community Council and the housing association.

The Chairman invited comments from the public, and a resident of Dipford Road, Mrs. Bazley, spoke against the development proposal made by Mr. Lahner. She stated that new build properties would not be visually compatible with the existing, older style properties; and that a development in this rural site, well away from the settlement 'envelope', was likely to be the 'thin of the wedge'. She was also concerned about the loss of wildlife habitat. Mr. Dadson agreed that progress was dictated to a degree by the availability of sites, but this was an opportunity to address the housing needs within Trull, if not necessarily Taunton.

Mr. Archer thanked the representatives from the Community Council for Somerset and Falcon Housing for their presentations, which confirmed there was a modest need for affordable housing within Trull. Mr. French stated that any site scheduled for affordable housing within Trull was likely to cause controversy and that awareness should be raised, ideally via the Newsletter. Mr. Parris commented that the key to successful integration within the community would be by developing a number of small-scale sites that were located throughout the parish.

The Chairman summarised the position, and it was agreed that the Council support the initiative in principle. The next stage would be to work with the Community Council and Falcon Housing to hold a publicity event, which would confirm how many people there were with specific affordable housing needs. Mr Archer undertook to liaise with Mr. Hines, Mrs Southam and Mr Lahner to arrange this, which it was hoped could be mounted early in the New Year.

151/07 **Budget Set 2008/9**

The Chairman emphasised the need to set the 2008/9 precept as low as practically possible. It was noted that an ambitious programme of work had been achieved in recent years, and that the majority of outstanding items had now been addressed.

The Clerk explained the format of the previously circulated discussion paper, and stated that a precept of £14,000.00 would be necessary in order to maintain a 2009/10 carry forward balance of £10,000.00. Mr. Hancock gave additional information, and suggested that a balance of this amount was questionable and some flexibility could be exercised.

Mr. Parris referred to the matter of repairing the Wicksteed two bay swing. The item had been manufactured in circa. 1959, and a recent order placed with Wicksteed for replacement triangular links and shackles had established that the parts were no longer in production. Moreover, the company had recommended that the swing be replaced with a new item at an approximate cost of £2,280 for a two bay unit and £1,350 for a single bay unit, both prices being exclusive of carriage and VAT. There was a

debate on the cost/benefits of repairing the old versus the purchase of a replacement. It was agreed that a new item represented better overall value for money, and could be accommodated within the budget proposals.

The Chairman proposed that the current payment made to Mr. R. Vining be increased from £250.00 to £300.00 p.a., on the basis that he now undertakes additional duties within the playing field.

Mr. Archer recommended that consideration should be given to increasing the salary for the Clerk in accordance with NALC guidelines and previous Parish Council resolutions (Minutes 126/05 & 129/06 refer). He referred to a previously circulated paper showing the increase due on the current salary of £300 per month. He suggested that this should be aligned to an annual RPI index linked point within the monthly salary range of £377.04 - £427.79. He then proposed that the monthly salary be set at SCP 19, which equated to £377.04, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008, increasing to SCP 20 (£390.82 plus an annual inflation adjustment) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.

**Resolved:** That the following be approved: -

- (1) The 2008/9 precept be set at £14,000.00.
- (2) The Clerk's salary be increased from £300.00 per month to £377.04 commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008, rising to £390.82 (plus an annual inflation adjustment) per month from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, with annual increments thereafter until the top of the scale, SCP 23, is reached.
- (3) The Wicksteed two bay swing be advertised for sale, and a replacement item be purchased at an estimated cost of £2,280 plus carriage, VAT and installation.
- (4) The annual payment made to Mr. R. Vining for footpath cleaning and litter removal from the playing field be increased from £250.00 to £300.00 with effect from June 2008.

#### 152/07 **Planning**

Mr. Archer and Mrs. Hudson gave an overview of the applications received from TDBC for the Council to consider: -

07/051 - Eastbrook House, Church Road, Trull.  
Outline      Erection of a detached dwelling on land to the west of Eastbrook House.  
Mr. Archer advised that this was a continuation of previously granted outline permission. He had discussed the matter with the neighbours, and they supported the application in principle.

**Resolved** - No objection to the application.

07/052LB - Hamwood Farm, Daw's Green, Trull.  
Listed Building      Retrospective internal and external alterations.  
**Resolved** - No comment made, as the application is beyond the technical competence of the Council.

Not listed on the published Agenda but also considered were: -

050/LB - Middle Sweethay Farm, Staplehay, Trull.  
Listed Building      Repair and renovation of house including replacement windows, door and porch and internal alterations.

**Resolved** - No comment made, as the application is beyond the technical competence of the Council.

07/053 - 12, Mill Lane, Trull.  
Full Erection of a conservatory.  
Mrs. Hudson explained the background details of the application, and that she had discussed the matter with the TDBC planning officer concerned. A neighbour, Mrs. Barrett, was invited to address the Council, and she stated her concerns regarding the close proximity of the conservatory, which was in addition to a large wooden chalet-style garden structure that already overshadowed their property.

**Resolved** - No objection to the application.

07/054 - The Coach House, Wild Oak Lane, Trull.  
Full Erection of single storey extension to rear and replacement garage to front.

**Resolved** - No objection to the application.

Mr. Archer advised of a new TDBC Tree Preservation Order for a mature beech at Meadowside, Wild Oak Lane, Trull.

Mrs. Wooldridge reported that the planning application for additional units at The Paddock, Fosgrove, Pitminster (Minute 113/07 refers), had been refused by the TDBC Planning Committee. However, it was anticipated that an appeal would be made against the decision.

The Clerk advised of the following decisions that had been received from TDBC: -

07/011 - The Old Rectory, Wild Oak Lane, Trull.  
Outline permission granted for the erection of two dwellings, together with parking and turning area on adjoining land.

07/044 - Lea Bank, Dipford, Trull.  
Full permission granted for erection of a single storey extension to front.

07/045 - 7A, Orchard Close, Trull.  
Full permission refused for the erection of a garage.

07/047 - 2, Gatchell Green, Trull.  
Full permission granted for the erection of a dwelling to replace bungalow.

#### 153/07 **Playing Field**

Mr. Parris suggested that the appearance of the new footpath at the bottom of the playing field had improved following the recent heavy rainfall, and other members agreed. It was decided that the proposal to lay and roll 20 mm yellow gravel to the top surface would be deferred to a later date.

#### 154/07 **Footpaths**

Mr. White reported that he had advised the SCC ROW team of numerous stiles and signposts in the parish that required maintenance. He intended making a list of deficiencies for items that he had reported during the year but still required attention.

Mr. Archer reported that during the recent heavy rainfall, water had been forced out of a manhole cover in Carter's Way, indicating that the system

may be partially blocked. As the amount of water was considerable, the problem needed to be addressed in order to protect the hard surfacing of the footpath. It was agreed that the Clerk liaise with TDBC DLO and Aardvark Drainage Ltd to establish indicative costs for a camera survey, and report back to the Council. It was understood that the drainage system was used for surface water run-off from Trull Green Drive to the allotments, and therefore Somerset Highways may need to be involved.

Mr. French referred to a recent newspaper report regarding the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. The article claimed that DEFRA was reminding Local Authorities that kissing gates and stiles needed to be more 'user friendly', as they posed an obstruction to disabled persons. As this could lead to issues of effectively containing livestock, he requested that the Clerk write to SCC ROW stating that this was a costly and impractical proposal. Other councillors were more sympathetic to the need for access to footpaths for the less mobile or those with pushchairs. It was agreed that a common sense approach to specific situations was needed.

155/07 **Highways**

Mr. Hancock advised that the gully emptying work by Somerset Highways continued, and requested that he be advised of any particular problems.

Mr. French referred to a recent discussion that he had had with a resident of Spearcey Lane regarding the placing of large stones on a small strip of grassed land adjacent to the highway. He considered that these could cause a traffic accident and possibly injury to any pedestrians who happened to be in the vicinity at the time. A solution would be for the area to be hard surfaced, and he requested that the Clerk write to Somerset Highways requesting that the work be carried out.

156/07 **Allotments**

There was nothing to report on this item.

157/07 **Trull Village Memorial Halls**

Mr. Jeffrey reported on a TCCDG meeting that he and Mrs. Wooldridge had attended on 26<sup>th</sup> November. He gave details of a proposal to transfer the Old Village Hall to the PCC. This would be a straightforward sale as opposed to a lease or trust arrangement, and it was noted that four members of the committee had been nominated to progress the matter. It was agreed that the proposal represented a significant step forward in the process, and was to be welcomed.

158/07 **Trull School**

There was nothing to report on this item.

159/07 **Report on CiLCA**

The Clerk advised that he had achieved the Certificate in Local Council Administration (Minute 47/06 refers). He thanked the Council for its support and cooperation, and stated that this now fulfilled the six main criteria necessary for 'Quality Council' status. It therefore gave an opportunity to apply for the award, as SALC was currently indicating that the requirement for the percentage of members of the applying Council that had been elected was likely to be reduced from 80% to 70% in April 2008. It was agreed that the benefits of being a 'Quality Council' should be discussed at a later date.

160/07 **Appointment of 2008/9 Internal Auditor**

The Clerk referred to the appointment of an independent Internal Auditor to examine the 2008/9 accounts and management system. Mr. A. J. Bullen had again offered his services for the work, and the rate charged would be £31.20 per hour. This represented an increase of 4% on the previous rate, and it was noted that the cost for the 2006/7 Internal Audit was £129.90.

**Resolved:** That Mr. A. J. Bullen be appointed as the 2008/9 Internal Auditor.

161/07 **Matters of Correspondence for Report**

The Clerk advised of correspondence that was of interest to the Council: -

An Agenda for the Taunton Deane Area Working Panel that was held on 6<sup>th</sup> December at Kingsmead Community Hall, Wiveliscombe, together with Minutes of the previous meeting.

An invitation to submit nominations to the 'Safer Somerset Awards' scheme.

162/07 **Accounts**

**Resolved:** That the following accounts be authorised for payment: -

Mrs. J. Wooldridge – November Newsletter	-	£19.00
Clerk's salary – November	-	£300.00
MediaKitchen Ltd – web site maintenance & hosting fee	-	£132.95
Abacus Ltd – works to playing field footpath	-	£1,215.77
Party in the Park 2008 – return of 2006 funds	-	£1,909.12
Mr. Ray Shattock – Trull Green grass cutting – Oct/Nov	-	£32.00
EDF Energy plc – changing rooms	-	£2.53
Parsons Landscapes Ltd – grass cutting Oct/Nov	-	£113.98

163/07 **Any Other Urgent Business**

Mrs. Wooldridge gave apologies for the next four meetings, due to an extended holiday. The Clerk and the TDBC Parish Liaison Officer had previously confirmed that no issues would arise from the absence. She introduced Becky Howat, an experienced journalist and Trull resident, who has kindly agreed to edit the Parish Council Newsletter in her absence.

164/07 **Items for the Next Agenda**

Items for the next Agenda will include: -

- Appointment of a lead Councillor for 'Affordable Housing', and a Playing Field Advisory Group.

165/07 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2008, in the Pearce Suite, Trull Memorial Hall, Trull at 7.15 pm.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.50 pm.

Signed.....  
Chairman of Trull Parish Council

Date.....

