

Trull Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting held in the Memorial Hall, Church Road, Trull
on Monday 16th February 2009 at 7.15 pm.

Present: Mr. G. Hewett (Chairman)

Mr. S. French, Mr. D. Archer, Mrs. F. Drew, Mrs. A. Hudson,
Mr. C. Ralph, Mrs. D. Luke, Mrs. J. Wooldridge, and
Mr. P. Parris, together with 17 Members of the Public.

In attendance: Mr. S. Martin-Scott – SCC District Councillor
Mrs. L. Webb – TDBC Affordable Housing Enabling Manager
Mr. J. White - Footpaths
Mr. S. Watts – Clerk
Mrs. A. Harding – Clerk Designate

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

22/09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received and agreed from Mr. N. Hancock.

23/09 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made: -

Name	Minute No:	Personal/Prejudicial	Reason and Action Taken
Mr. S. French	31/09	Personal & Prejudicial	Has nominated land in the area that may be suitable for future development to TDBC via Baker Associates. This was in response to the consultations for the Regional Spatial Strategy. Spoke at the meeting but was absent from the room during the Councillors' comments and vote.
Mr. P. Parris	31/09	Personal & Prejudicial	Owns land adjacent to the site. Spoke at the meeting but was absent from the room during the Councillors' comments and vote.

24/09 Chairman's Report

The Chairman referred to the recent retirement of Mr. & Mrs. Luke from Trull Stores and gave a review of the social evening held in the Memorial Hall on 24th January. The occasion had been very well attended, and gifts and a donation in excess of £950 had been presented to mark the occasion. The Chairman gave particular thanks to Mrs. Wooldridge and Mrs. Pegge for their help in organising the event.

The Chairman advised that he had arranged for the bus shelter at Honiton Road to be repainted following the gas main repairs. He had not been able to obtain a financial contribution from Morrison Civil Engineers, but had employed a contractor at minimal cost and provided the materials at his own expense. It was agreed that the work was very worthwhile (Minutes 127/08 & 138/08 refer).

25/09 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th January 2009 were agreed, and signed by the Chairman.

26/09 **Matters for Report**

Appointment of New Clerk (Minute 20/09 refers)

The Clerk referred to the requirement to prepare a training schedule for February and March for Mrs. Harding. The previously circulated working paper indicated that this equated to 20 and 30 hours per month respectively, and it was noted that Mrs. Harding was in agreement with the proposals.

27/09 **Appointment of Co-opted Councillor**

The Chairman referred to the previously discussed matter regarding the appointment of Mrs. Luke as a co-opted member (Minute 05/09 refers) and welcomed her to the Council.

28/09 **Report by SCC District Councillor Mr. S. Martin-Scott**

Mr. Martin-Scott reported that SCC was proposing to increase the council tax by 2.74% for the 2009/10 financial year at a meeting on 18th February. It was noted that the Police levy accounted for a significant proportion of the increase, and that TDBC was experiencing difficulties in setting its annual budget.

Mr. Martin-Scott advised that he had arranged for a large pothole to be repaired at the zebra crossing adjacent to Queen's College, Trull Road.

Mr. French queried the Police precept element within the budget, and stated that it was invariably difficult to locate an Officer when required. Mr. Martin-Scott advised that the interim measure to increase the number of 'officers on the beat' referred to CPSOs, but it was recognised that their powers were limited. He stated that there was on-going pressure to increase the number and accessibility of officers and that the fear of crime was greater than the statistics indicated. Mrs. Hudson reported on several burglaries that had recently occurred in the area, including at her own property, and that it had taken three weeks for a Police response that had not been satisfactory. Mr. Martin-Scott asked to be advised of the details.

Mr. French referred to the current economic situation and the claim by SCC that services would not be reduced. He questioned this approach, and stated that there were a number of functions that did not necessarily contribute to a recovery or, indeed, a balanced budget. He suggested that the situation could be reviewed and the service delivery be aligned to suit. Mr. Martin-Scott advised that the budgetary controls were difficult to monitor due to the volume and complexity of the appropriate committee papers but was aware of the issue.

29/09 **Report on Trull Action Plan (TAP) Review**

Mrs. Drew reported on recent meetings of the TAP committee. She stated that a revised document was being prepared for circulation within the parish and this would be available in approximately four to six weeks.

30/09 **Grass Cutting Contract**

The Clerk advised that the grass-cutting contract with Parsons Landscapes Ltd had expired at the end of October 2008 and that rates for a two-year successive agreement had been obtained. He referred to the previously circulated working paper that gave the projected costs as follows: -

		<u>Cuts</u>	<u>Verge</u>	<u>Spray</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Total</u>
2008	Actual	24	7	0	1,137.00	199.00	£1,336.00
2009	Projected	24	7	2	1,171.98	175.79	£1,347.77
2010	Projected	24	7	2	1,195.53	179.32	£1,374.85

It was agreed that the revised quotation represented a very modest increase in the charges and that Parsons Landscapes Ltd gave a high quality and reliable service.

Resolved: That the quotation received from Parsons Landscapes Ltd for 2009 and 2010 be accepted. This will be to the value of £1,171.98 and £1,195.53 respectively, exclusive of the prevailing VAT rate.

Mrs. Hudson and Mr. Ralph reported on the following applications received from TDBC for the Council to consider: -

- 08/050 & 051 - Middle Sweethay Farm, Sweethay.
LB Erection of a single storey garage in footprint of agricultural shed to be demolished.
- Resolved** - To make no comment due to the listed building element of the application being beyond the technical abilities of the Council.
- 08/052 - Honeysuckle House, Comeytrove Lane, Trull.
Full Erection of a single storey front extension, two storey side extensions and two storey detached double garage with storage area above.
- Resolved** - To support the application.
- 09/001 - Land opposite Dipford Road, Dipford, Trull.
Full Erection of seven affordable cottages and two affordable flats. Mr. Ralph introduced the item and gave his understanding of the changes to the previous submission (Minute 115/08 refers). These related primarily to cutting back the edges of the footpath along Dipford Road to provide the full width and reshaping an area of the road surface. It was noted that the actual road width would not be reduced and that the changes would be a condition of planning approval and funded by the developer. It was also indicated that Somerset County Council might, at some point, consider a reduction in the speed limit from 50 mph to 30 mph, although the formal recommendation from the Highways Engineer was not known at the present time. The Chairman invited members of the public to address the Council and representations were made regarding the following summarised items: -
- The maps used at the TDBC planning committee for the previous applications were not representative.
 - The site was not sustainable.
 - Members of the Parish Council had not fully declared their interests.
 - The reasoning for objecting to an application at 2, Church Road, Trull applied equally to Dipford Road.
 - TDBC had rejected the application on two previous occasions and this should be accepted.
 - The Parish Council was not adequately serving the community.
 - The application was submitted in advance of the survey to establish if there were other, more suitable, sites in the area.
 - Flooding at Dipford Road was an on-going problem and the design of the development had not accounted for this, particularly as the road is an emergency access route to the M5.
 - There was an unsold stock of 10,000 affordable homes across the country.
 - In excess of 280 people had signed a petition opposing the development, with very few in support.
 - There was no requirement on the Parish Council to promote the development of affordable housing.
 - The site was not a designated exception site and therefore should not be considered as such.

Mrs. Webb, TDBC Affordable Housing Enabling Manager, stated: -

- There was a confirmed need for affordable homes.
- Housing needs people are not necessarily able to articulate their requirements and tend to move away from the area.
- Without a mixed community, the infrastructure and facilities in the area will reduce.
- The 10,000 vacant affordable homes were spread across the country and represented a small percentage of the whole.
- The validity of the petition was questionable.
- The selection of tenants for the affordable homes would be through the S106 agreement and a 'close connection' to the community would need to be proven.
- Central Government had intentions to compel land to be available for affordable homes if the current arrangements did not provide sufficient sites.

The Chairman reiterated the fact that the Parish Council can only make a recommendation to TDBC, and that a mixed community would ensure the long-term viability of the area.

Mr. Archer advised that although the timing of the application was a little premature in respect of the site survey, the developer was entitled to submit an application at any time. He also referred to the Trull Parish Plan 2005 that was a democratically produced document that stipulated agreed actions to provide affordable homes in the area.

In summing up, Mr. Ralph, as the lead Councillor, advised that he considered the development to be overlarge for the site and could not support the application as it was submitted.

Resolved - To support the application.

09/002 - 1, Shepherds Hey, Trull.

Full Erection of extension to side of property including first floor extension over garage.

Resolved - To support the application.

Mrs. Hudson advised that a proposal to convert 12, Killams Green, Trull to provide assisted living support (42/09/003) had proven to be contentious within the local community, and the application had now been withdrawn.

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

08/041 - Trull Primary School, Church Road, Trull.

Full permission granted for the erection of a single storey extension to form a changing room and hall store within existing internal courtyard.

08/046 - 13, Mill Lane, Trull

Full permission granted for the erection of a single storey extension.

08/0048 - Hamwood Cottage, Daw's Green, Trull.

Full permission granted for the erection of a two-storey extension and single storey extension and construction of a detached garage/hobbies room.

09/049 - Cutsey Grange, Cutsey, Trull.

Full permission granted for the erection of a balcony to rear.

32/09 **Housing & Development**

Mr. Archer referred to the previously discussed Taunton Town Centre Plan and the reference to a floodwater reservoir on Sherford Stream near Wild Oak Lane. The document also indicated that during 2009/10, an appraisal and environmental assessment would be undertaken. He had made further enquires on this matter and, in particular, the role that the Parish Council would have in any assessment. The TDBC Forward Planning Manager, Mr. Willoughby-Foster, had now advised that the area identified for the reservoir is an important part of the Vivary Green Wedge in terms of maintaining the separate identity of Trull from the Sherford area of Taunton and that the scheme, if implemented, would remove any longer term risk that Trull could merge with Taunton through development. The storage reservoir could ensure this in perpetuity and at the same time enhance the biodiversity of Sherford Stream through the creation of a semi-wetland habitat. However, it was also advised that the recently completed Long Run Farm flood storage scheme at Roughmoor had delivered more capacity than was originally anticipated and the need for the Wild Oak Lane facility had reduced as a consequence.

Mr. Martin-Scott requested clarification on the timescale and the need for the assessment. Mr. Archer agreed to liaise further with TDBC and report back to the Council.

33/09 **Playing Field**

Mrs. Wooldridge reported that she had recently inspected the playing field and the play equipment, and advised that the elephant springer was not securely fixed to the ground. Mr. Parris agreed to investigate the problem. It was also reported that the boundary fencing had been damaged, and that there had been further incidents of fly tipping. Mr. Hewett repeated the offer of providing a replacement basketball hoop to the changing room (Minute 10/09 refers) and Mrs. Drew agreed to arrange for the installation.

34/09 **Highways**

The Clerk referred to the various matters that had been raised at the January meeting (Minute 11/09 refers) and reported on information that had been received from Somerset Highways: -

1. An inspection of the footways and grassed areas at Gatchell Green had revealed no significant defects following the Morrison works.
2. The matter of speeding HGV vehicles at Daw's Green had been passed to the Traffic Engineer, Mr. Titcombe, for further investigation.
3. With regard to various blocked gullies, there were currently three vehicles working on the routine cleaning programme within the Taunton Deane area, although if a specific flooding location were identified, a reactive inspection would be carried out.
4. The flood water run off at Hort's Cottages at Comeytrove Road would be reported to the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), which works with local farmers to improve farming methods.
5. The Highway Superintendent would be made aware of the obstruction of the speed signs at Eastbrook and would arrange for the vegetation to be cleared.

35/09 **Footpaths**

Mr. White reported that the DDA gates at Poke Lane had yet to be repaired and that the contractor concerned had left the area. To compound the issue, SCC ROW had advised that the department had no funding available within the current financial year. It was agreed that in order to prevent further damage to the gates and surface of the footpath, repairs should be undertaken without further delay. A possible solution to the problem may be for the Parish Council to organise the work and recharge SCC in the next financial year. The Clerk will discuss the matter with the ROW team and report back to the Council.

Mr. White referred to an area of Poke Lane immediately to the south of the Bell House drive that suffered from poor surface water drainage. He had raised the matter with SCC ROW, who advised that they were of the opinion that it was a problem for Somerset Highways to resolve. It was agreed that this was an issue for Mr. Hancock to address.

36/09 **Trull Memorial Halls**

Mrs. Luke referred to a recent meeting of the Trull Community Centre Development Group and gave a detailed account of the current position. An outline plan was circulated that illustrated a possible extension to the Parish Rooms and two alternative proposals to divert Poke Lane in this area. The intention of the Group now was to maximise the buildings available and to be as inclusive as possible to the various organisations in the community. It was noted that the PCC and the Memorial Hall owned the majority of the land identified for development. There would need to be considerable effort to satisfactorily resolve any car-parking issues, and parents would have to be consulted on the proposals. Further consideration would need to be given to any additional alterations to the Memorial Hall following the recent refurbishment of the kitchen area. It was advised that the initial estimates for the work had been obtained some 18 months ago and would need revising. The proposals would need to be debated and agreed by the PCC before the next stages, such as a planning application, could commence.

37/09 **Trull School**

There was nothing to report on this item.

38/09 **SALC**

The Clerk referred to the previously circulated February 2009 information sheets regarding the Power of Well-Being Order. As this will effectively replace S.137 of The Local Government Act 1972 it may have implications for Trull, as the power will only be available to Councils that satisfy statutory eligibility criteria. A series of training events are planned so that the due process can be explained.

It was noted that there was a Severn Barrage Proposals Information Event on 31st March at Weston Super Mare, and that the area SALC meeting for March had been postponed due to the lack of items for the Agenda.

The Clerk advised that there were SALC 'New Clerks' training events at a venue in Edington on 11th and 18th March and that Mrs. Harding had made reservations. Subject to non-attendance, there would be no cost to the Council.

39/09 **Correspondence**

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

A copy of the TDBC February edition of the Deane Dispatch.

A copy of Issue 2 of 'Transporting Somerset' received from Somerset County Council.

40/09 **Accounts for Payment**

Resolved: That the following accounts be authorised: -

Mrs. J. Wooldridge – January Newsletter	-	£20.00
Clerk's salary – January	-	£390.82
Mr. G. Hewett – labour cost to repaint the bus shelter	-	£35.00

41/09 **Any Other Urgent Business**

Mrs. Hudson advised that a tenant had complained about the number of rabbits within the allotments. A proposal from another tenant at the liaison meeting held on 20th October 2008 to humanely despatch them had, on reflection, not been progressed, due to the potential risk to the public and adverse publicity. It was agreed that there

was little that could be done at the present time, and that the person concerned should be advised that it was for individual tenants to protect their produce from vermin.

Mr. French referred to the current vehicle parking issues at Canonsgrove College, and advised that the introduction of wheel clamping was exacerbating the problem. This approach was not helpful given the limited income of the students involved, and he requested that the Clerk write a letter to the SCAT Principal asking that it be reviewed.

Mrs. Hudson advised that CPSO Deb Parry, being the replacement for CPSO Kelly Browning, had been intending to update the Council on the PACT issues raised at the meeting held on 20th November 2008, but had suffered a minor injury while attending an incident and would attend the next meeting.

Mrs. Hudson welcomed the successive Clerk, Mrs. Alison Harding, to the Council.

Mr. Parris reported that he had cleared the recent snow from the roads using his own staff and machinery, and it had been brought to his attention that if there had been an incident as a consequence, he might have been liable for any claims or compensation. Mrs. Drew thanked him for his commitment to the community.

42/09 **Items for the Next Agenda**

Items for the next Agenda will include: -

- Repairs to Poke Lane
- Report from CPSO Parry

43/09 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 16th March 2009, in the Pearce Suite, Trull Memorial Hall, Trull at 7.15 pm.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.55 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of Trull Parish Council

Date.....