

## CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF the 237<sup>th</sup> MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER  
ON THURSDAY 31 JULY 2008

Present: Cllr Norman in the Chair  
David Allison - Clerk  
Amanda Taft – Minute Taker

Cllrs Bennett, Birch, Brading, Dann, C Jefford, Martin, Seeley, Shafe and Vassiliou

Voting Members: 10

Not Present: Cllrs Bains and Seabourne

There were 2 members of the public present

Before the meeting began, a Councillor asked that CC557.2 be included in the first part of the meeting rather than the Part 2 but the request was refused.

CC547/08 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Brand, Hollands, Saxon and Wynne-Jones.

CC548/08 Declarations of Interest by Members

The Chairman recommended that any declarations be made throughout the meeting as necessary.

CC549/08 Representations from the Public

There were no representations.

CC550/08 Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Seeley and seconded by Cllr Jefford that the Minutes of the 236<sup>th</sup> Monthly Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 26 June 2008 be accepted. The proposal was agreed and the Chairman signed the Minutes.

CC551/08 Matters Arising

CC540.3/08 (Matters Arising; CC526/08 Parish Council Website). The Clerk was asked how the website was progressing and he informed Members that he was currently working on it.

CC540.3/08 (Matters Arising; CC531/08 Replacement Land Rover). One Member again stated that he believed the Minutes should record how many Cllrs voted for, against or abstained. After some discussion on this topic it was suggested that a paper be put forward so that possible changes could be discussed although the Clerk pointed out that the wording and format used by the Parish Council is common practice.

CC552/08 Committee Reports

CC552.1/08 Environment and Amenity Committee held on Tuesday 1 July 2008

It was proposed by Cllr Seeley and seconded by Cllr Martin that the Minutes of the Environment and Amenity Committee held on Tuesday 1 July 2008 be adopted. The proposal was agreed.

CC552.2/08 Any matters arising

EA473/08 (Matters Arising; EA462/08). The Clerk was asked how many children were attending Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) Youth Club before it was cancelled due to poor numbers attending. The Clerk stated that he did not know and he had not been asked for that information.

EA474/08 (Active Works List). The Clerk was informed that the wooden bus stop was still dirty. The bus stop would be inspected.

EA475/08 (Village of the Year Competition). It was asked if the certificate would be hung on the wall and the Clerk responded that he was intending to hang it on the wall of the Council Chamber and he added that the press release for the competition was yet to be made.

EA476/08 (Maintenance of the Guild of Sport Football Pitches). An update was requested to which the Clerk replied that he had contacted Mr Evans with the news that the Parish Council would undertake a free of charge, trial cut. The Clerk was told by Mr Evans that this could not be undertaken until the Groundsman came back from his holiday. The Clerk was still waiting to hear from Mr Evans although the Groundsman was back and had since cut the grass.

CC552.3/08 Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 2 July and Wednesday 16 July 2008

It was proposed by Cllr Bennett and seconded by Cllr Seeley that the Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 2 July 2008 and Wednesday 16 July 2008 be adopted. The proposal was agreed.

CC552.4/08 Any matters arising

There were no matters arising.

CC552.5/08 Finance and Administration Committee Scheduled for Thursday 10 July 2008

It was noted that the Finance and Administration Committee which should have been held on Thursday 10 July 2008 was cancelled as it was inquorate.

CC552.6/08 Any matters arising

There were no matters arising as the meeting was cancelled.

It was pointed out that the issue of cancelled Finance and Administration meetings due to them being inquorate needs to be addressed and the Chairman said that solutions to this problem should be discussed at a Council meeting. He added that this may result in Standing Orders having to be amended.

CC553/08 Parish Council Bank Accounts

The Chairman introduced this item and the Clerk referred Members to the previously circulated document and highlighted the recommendation from the last final audit report. The report stated that "Members should consider the need to retain the deposit account and, if deemed as no longer required, transfer the residual balance to the main account". After a brief discussion this was proposed by Cllr Brading and seconded by Cllr Dann and the proposal was agreed.

CC554/08 Three Rivers District Council's Standards Committee Parish Representation

This item was introduced by the Chairman and the Clerk informed those present that at the TRDC Joint Officers Meeting held 3 July 2008, TRDC had not changed their decision to have only two representatives from the Parish Council on the Standards Committee. These are currently Cllr Gell of Sarratt and Cllr Morton of Abbots Langley. The Clerk added that Best Practice recommends three representatives and the Chairman suggested that this is kept under review.

CC555/08 Basketball Report April – July 2008

The Chairman introduced this item and the Clerk referred Members to the previously circulated report. It was considered that although there were a large number of children on the register, the numbers attending was relatively low. The Clerk informed those present that this week letters had been sent to the parents of those who most regularly attend the basketball sessions to ask if they would be willing to pay for the classes. He added that one reply had been received so far.

Councillors felt that at the last budget discussions, it had been made clear to the parents that the classes were not sustainable and that funding would only be available until March 2009 and that it should become a self sufficient club. The Clerk pointed out however, that as this was a Parish Council initiative, the initial onus remains with the Parish Council to resolve its future somehow. He added that he was currently making enquiries into a grant from English Basketball. However, it was still felt that the class needed to make the transition into a self-sufficient club.

It was finally agreed that a meeting would be arranged for September with Mr Munroe, the two Coaches and parents and in the meantime, the Clerk is to approach TRDC to enquire whether they would be willing to fund the classes with the money they no longer spend on their Youth Club.

CC556/08

Correspondence

The Clerk referred those present to the list of relevant correspondence which had been circulated with the Agenda. It was asked why two letters were not on this list and the Clerk explained that the reason was that one was after the agenda and supporting papers had been issued and the other was an email – there was a note on the schedule advising of ‘numerous emails’.

CC557/08

PART 2

The first part of the meeting concluded at 8.50pm and members of the press and public were excluded from the meeting. A brief interval was permitted and the meeting re-convened at 8.55pm. The Chairman asked for a Councillor to propose and another to second the proposal, in order that the meeting progress to a Part 2 session. It was proposed by Cllr Bennett and seconded by Cllr Dann that the meeting continue into a Part 2 session.

It was again asked of the Clerk why CC557.2 was in a Part 2 session and was there any basis in law for this? The Clerk replied that when this item was put forward for Council it was requested that it be discussed in a Part 2 session to be dealt with ‘in-house’ as it relates to the Council’s Code of Conduct and the Council’s Media Relations Policy. The Chairman added that should Cllr Brand be referred to the Standards Board, this would demand confidentiality.

CC557.1/08

Insurance Claim Against the Council

This item was introduced by the Chairman and the Clerk referred Members to the previously circulated paper and added that this item was confidential. The Clerk stated that this matter is currently being dealt with by the Parish Council’s insurance company who will seek expert medical advice as to the exact cause of the injury sustained by the claimant. It was asked why, if the claimant was aware of the damaged step on the Land Rover, it was the liability of the Parish Council to which the Clerk replied that this was the view of the Council’s insurers.

The Clerk advised that he did not know at this point what the outcome of the claim would be. He added that the Claimant had not suffered any loss of earnings as a result of the incident.

After some discussion, the Council noted the report and await the outcome of the claim.

CC557.2/08

Letter in ‘My Croxley’ by Councillor Brand

The Chairman introduced this item and the Clerk referred Members to the previously circulated supporting paper and reminded Councillors that this item was also confidential. It was pointed out that Cllr Brand had asked that this item be deferred as he is currently on leave, however this had not been possible as it had been a legitimate Agenda item put forward within time from another Councillor.

Members were reminded of the relevant section of the Council’s Media Relation

Policy (Section 3.5) which states: "Nothing in these guidelines is to be interpreted as preventing, or attempting to prevent, a Member from expressing a personal opinion through the media, for example by writing to a newspaper or posting an item on an internet site. Members must make it clear that any views expressed, where different from Council Policy, are their own personal views. However, Members should take care not to misrepresent and/or bring the Parish Council into disrepute, and must bear in mind their responsibilities under the Local Government Code of Conduct".

Some Councillors believed he had not brought the Parish Council into disrepute, however, others believed that by using the signature Lib Dem PC it gave gravitas to the article. After some discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would write to Cllr Brand stating that he had freedom of speech when it came to his own personal opinion but that he must not bring the Parish Council or Councillors into disrepute. The Clerk said that he would copy the letter to all Councillors for their information.

CC558/08

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.32pm.