

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selborne Parish Council held in Blackmoor
Village Hall on Wednesday 8th February 2006 at 7:30pm**

Present:	Mr. P Chapman Mr. W. Oliver Mr. P Ravenscroft Mr. D Ashcroft Mrs. L Yeomans Mr. J Coles Mr. A Chisholm Mrs. H Carter Mrs. L Coney	Chairman Clerk
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Also present were 3 members of the public, 0 representatives of the press, and Arthur Duff (Victim Support,) Christine Curtis (CAB) and John Page (CAB)

Item 1 – Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Keohane, (Illness) Cllr Thoms. (Work) and District Cllr Womack

Item 2 - Talk from Christine Curtis and Chairman of Trustees Mr. John Page, from Whitehill & Bordon CAB.

Mr. John Page opened, thanking the Parish Council for the invitation to speak. He wished to ask for continued support and also wished to update the Council on the work the CAB does which ensures that the public do not suffer through lack of knowledge of their rights but offering guidance and support. Christine Curtis went on to explain what the CAB does. Advice is given on debt – which can be overwhelming at this time of year; housing and homelessness, consumer issues, legal, domestic and employment. Whitehill and Bordon have an employment specialist to help with entitlements and benefits and through social services the specialist can undertake home visits.

Debt is now the CABs biggest area of concern. In the last year they advised some 5, 500 clients with over 10,000 cases of which nearly 15% deal with debt issues. Mrs. Curtis then handed the councillors a document (shown in appendix A) which shows how the Cab can support families in debt and how their help can assist the family unit in staying together. Debt is not always caused by bad financial management; it can be caused by loss of job, income a family bereavement and so on. The CAB has three debt advisors who can help reduce the pressure and negotiate with creditors, and help work out budgets. All help given is free, confidential and impartial.

John Page went on to comment that there are big changes on the way for the CAB with a greater amount of regulation not helping matters. All volunteers and paid staff now need much greater knowledge. It has become harder to recruit volunteers because of the bureaucracy on their shoulders. Their books just about balance thanks to the support of EHDC and local parish councils and a lottery grant which currently makes up the shortfall. Mr. Page then thanked the parish council for their continued support. Cllr Coles asked if the CAB offered free legal advice. Yes, through community legal services the CAB can offer a free 15 minutes session with a solicitor, which often is all that is needed for reassurance. Any further legal advice if needed may be charged.

The chairman thanked Mrs. Curtis and Mr. Page for coming to the meeting and giving such valuable feedback for a cause supported by the Parish Council.

Item 3 - Talk from Arthur Duff. Victim Support Alton.

Victim support is a national charity funded by the Home Office but have to top up their funding by approaching bodies such as parish councils. The Hampshire and I.O.W region cover our area but the local branch at Alton is currently in the process of closing and moving to Basingstoke, and is around £5,000 in deficit caused mainly by administration charges.

Most referrals for Victim Support come from the police as well as the community safety partnership, working with victims of domestic violence and working with the courts. The chairman asked Mr. Duff to explain to the council how support is given for example in the case of domestic violence. Mr. Duff replied that they would offer emotional and practical help, accompany them to meetings, help with filling in forms and generally be a friend in time of crisis. With no further questions the chairman thanked Mr. Duff for his presentation.

On completion of item 3 the meeting recessed to allow questions and comment from the public.

Rachel Barber, representing Selborne Bell ringers briefly explained why the bell ringers were applying for a grant. Selborne has a strong history of being one of the foremost training towers in the Alton and Petersfield District especially as the lighter bells are easier for young people to ring. Moving from six bells to a full octave gives an opportunity to progress further as there are few towers locally with a full octave ring and Selborne is the only one with a ground floor ring. Ringing from the ground floor (no steep ladders to climb to the ringing chamber) enables less able people and children to ring. Migrant workers and tourists show great interest in the bells when they visit and some have either 'had a go' or done some more serious training. The 5th bell was cast in 1735, is listed and survives today. Another bell was cast in 1783 and is still in situ having been re-cast in 1979.

Bell ringing is a unique skill in a rural area especially for the young and Selborne Bell Ringers are keen to promote this. They are entering the Calor Village of Year this year and are applying to EHDC for a project fund grant of £2000 as well as a heritage grant. So far they have raised £6700 towards their £20,000 target. Cllr Ravenscroft said he was very keen for the Parish Council to support this grant application and Cllr Ashcroft endorsed that view agreeing that it was indeed a unique skill.

Chris Webb (Tree Warden) confirmed that he had looked at a tree at Kates Cottage, Selborne for Cllr Keohane and had no objection to the proposed work on the tree.

Item 4 – Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 11th January 2006 and the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on the 1st February 2006.

After discussion, it was **AGREED** that these were accepted as a true record and signed accordingly.

Item 5 - Disclosure of Pecuniary and other interests.

The Chairman reminded members who had an interest to disclose, in relation to any item included in the agenda for this meeting, that it was their duty to do so at the appropriate agenda item. (As required to be disclosed by Section 94(1) of the Local Government Act 1972; and in accordance with the Parish Councils Order 2001)

Item 6 – Vacancy on the Parish Council (moved from Item 10 on the agenda)

The clerk had received notification from EHDC Electoral Services that no formal election had been requested for the vacant position and therefore the parish council was free to co-opt as they see fit. The clerk had received one formal application from Minette Palmer. Mrs. Palmer introduced herself to the council and it was noted that she had been both a former parish councillor and district councillor (1999 – 2003) and had been involved with Selborne Village Hall, CPRE and the South Downs Advisory Committee. Mrs. Palmer was asked to leave the room whilst councillors voted unanimously in favour of asking Mrs. Palmer to join the Parish Council.

Item 7 – Grant requests (moved from item 12c on the agenda)

Selborne Bell Ringers £200.00. Rachel Barber had already put forward Selborne Bell Ringers request to the council during public questions. The clerk confirmed she had received supporting accounts. The request was **AGREED** by all present

CAB Alton £225.00 (Retrospective) The CAB has written regarding their grant money. SPC has historically always paid them their grant money early and subsequently has fallen into the previous years accounts. This year the clerk had informed the CAB that their money would not be paid until April so that the payment fell within the correct financial year. This however left them with a gap in their accounts. It was **AGREED** by all present to move 06/07s grant forward and pay it now.

Blackmoor PCC. Had applied for £300.00 for 2005/06 and £300.00 for 06/07. They originally asked for this money to be towards the repair of the churchyard wall, but in case this was felt to be too close to “repairing the fabric of the church” the clerk confirmed that she had received a copy of their accounts which showed £425.00 spent on the grasscutting and lavender bushes this past year. This is historically what PCC grant money is granted towards. This was **AGREED** by 7 Councillors (1 against) and the request granted.

Item 8 – Reports of Subcommittees.

i) **Traffic.** - Cllr Ashcroft confirmed that Jim Soutar is almost ready to present the new traffic-calming scheme for Selborne to the council and wanted to meet before the 22nd February to go through the proposal. Blackmoor and Oakhanger issues have not been pressed but will be. The safer routes to school for Blackmoor will hopefully progress and will have a speed check undertaken in the next 6- 8 months as the one done before Christmas had suffered from equipment failure. Robina Hatchett from HCC has been investigating the lack of lollipop person in Selborne. She said HCC decided they could not justify the cost of employing someone for 15 minutes each day (you have to pay for an hour minimum,) when only 8 children use the crossing. She has contacted the school and told them that they will have to update their school travel plan before they will look at the possibility again. Cllr Ashcroft will try to find out what has to be done to update the plan and whether a controlled crossing can be introduced.

ii) **The Plestor** - Cllr Carter is organising a meeting with TerraFirma and the Plestor residents to go through the detailed plan for the plestor. It was also noted that a request had been received from the friends of a lady who had lived and worked in the village for years and had recently passed away. They wished to have a memorial for her in Selborne as she was buried in Alton and wished to have a bench with a plaque in her memory. Cllr Carter would investigate the cost of a bench to see if this was viable option for the donations her friends had collected. Cllr Yeomans commented that there should be some sort of plaque to note that the Parish Council have renovated the Plestor (once it is finished.)

iii) **Planning** - No report although Cllr Chisholm noted that the Parish Council meeting called last week had been worthwhile and that he would like to see Cllr Oliver speak for the Parish Council at the North Planning meeting regarding the toilets next week. Cllr Oliver replied that he was happy to speak but did want to mention that customary procedures had not been followed in this case. Cllr Palmer was concerned that the North Planning meeting may not be the place to air such a view but that a letter to the chief executive of EHDC may be worthwhile. It was pointed out that the AONB officer had also not been consulted in this matter and should have been. It was AGREED that the clerk would e-mail the AONB officer for his views and also write to Will Godfrey regarding the overall lack of customary practice with regard to this application, copying in the Head of Amenities.

iv) **North West Area Meeting** – No report.

Item 9 – Matters arising from these and previous minutes.

a) Oakhanger

Latchford Lane. Cllr Ashcroft reported from the meeting with Alan Todd on Tuesday 7th February. Mr. Todd had met with Cllrs Ashcroft, Ravenscroft, Chapman and the clerk the previous morning and they had walked from the nursery to Albury Farm observing the state of the verges, the ruts along the side of the road and the lorries traveling along the road. Mr. Todd has suggested placing 100 temporary bollards along the road. These have been ordered and Mr. Todd will liaise with Cllr Ashcroft regarding their placement. The road surface by the bridge will be leveled and the bridge inspected for structural soundness. The Oakhanger Farm junction will require a road closure for one day and Mr. Todd will speak to both the lorry company and the nursery to arrange this. Councillor Ravenscroft mentioned at this point that as the lorries were prepared to wait, maybe we should ask for more defined passing places. Cllr Chapman pointed out that once the lorries have gone (18month – 2years time) hopefully we won't need any further measures once the verges have been restored.

Chapel Farm. It was noted that a mountain of chalk had appeared at Chapel Farm. Cllr Ashcroft (acting as an individual) spoke to Keith Oliver at EHDC regarding this matter. It was subsequently referred to Peter Chadwick at HCC (minerals and waste) who is sending someone out to have a look, as it would appear that a considerable amount of chalk is being imported. It was AGREED that the clerk would speak to the Environment Agency with regard to the rules on transport and disposal of chalk. It would also appear that the "illegal" track (through Chapel Farm to the south of the Roman bridge) is being used. It was AGREED that the clerk would ask Keith Oliver for clarification on the use of the track. It would also appear that turf has been removed from the Reservoir Site (this can be seen from the top of Honey Lane. Finally it would seem that the two original settlements ponds, which had been overfilled, still have not been reduced in height. Clerk to investigate.

b) Selborne

The Recreation Ground – Lease. The Recreation sub committee (PC, PR, WO, CK and the clerk) met on Wednesday 1st February to consider the content of the current lease and possible alterations. The clerk is currently researching the questions raised by this meeting and the committee will reconvene on Monday 13th February to consider the matter further.

The Old Bakehouse – exchange of letters. The clerk had constructed a draft letter for the council to consider as per the last meeting request. It was noted that Mr. Maltby had already removed two bollards and placed the skip on the Plestor prior to this exchange of letters being formalized. It was therefore necessary to add to the letter that Mr. Maltby was responsible for the safekeeping of the bollards prior to their replacement. Cllr Carter noted that Mr. Maltby would not have to have removed the bollards and placed the skip on the Plestor prior to the exchange of letter had it not taken so long to sort out. The clerk wished it to be noted that it was not her fault that there had been delays, she had progressed the matter at each meeting as requested, but Mr. Maltby had not been in contact during November or December.

The council voted on whether to continue with the exchange of letters (4 against, 3 in favour and 1 abstention). Cllr Ashcroft proposed that the exchange of letters continued but that the council writes a letter to Mr. Maltby as well stating the councils anger at his actions and stating that any further disregard for council procedures would be dealt with in a serious way. The council voted on this proposal (1 against, 6 in favour and 1 abstention)

It was therefore AGREED that the clerk would engage the services of our solicitor to formalise the draft letter and send to Mr. Maltby for his agreement. Costs to be borne by Mr. Maltby.

Employment of Lollipop Person. Dealt with in Traffic report.

Pavements. (Whites Cottage & Galley Hill to Post Office) Jim Soutar has written to David Ashcroft re Mr. Emmersons letter and has said that he hopes to include pavements in his traffic package for Selborne. Mr. Soutar has suggested the Parish Council could help with getting the hedges cut back to make the pavements wider in particular on the stretch between the Selborne Arms and Galley Hill. The clerk will speak to Hampshire Highways to see if there is a standard letter she can use to write to residents. Councillors will give the clerk the names and addresses of those people requiring a letter.

With regard to the piece of pavement replaced by Whites Cottage, Cllr Oliver confirmed that this has been caused by SSI Services (electricity) and he had stopped the gas board doing the same thing a couple of days ago. This update will be reported to Mr. Hopcroft (defect number 764289.) The clerk will also consult with the conservation officer to see what the legislation is in respect of this matter.

c) Blackmoor

Blackmoor Play Area. Cllr Coles reported that a lottery Awards for All grant of £5000 had been awarded towards the cost of the playground.

Item 10 – Footpaths. - Deferred to next meeting.

Item 11 - Parish Plan. The clerk had spoken to Community Action Hampshire having read an article in the Local Council Review which said DEFRA through CAH were giving out up to £5000.00 per parish for parishes wishing to undertake parish plans. Deadline for this funding is March 2006. It was AGREED that the clerk would apply on behalf of the parish.

Item 12– Planning applications and decisions.

Applications.

F.32226/002/CAT Trim and reduce height by 30% Kates Cottage, High Street, Selborne. **NO OBJECTION**

F. 21336/008/REG4 Replacement Public conveniences. Selborne Car Park, Plum Fell Lane, Selborne.

OBJECTION Selborne Parish Council wishes to express that it has no objection to the design of the proposed toilet block but its objections all stem from the actual siting of the new conveniences.

Reiterating the comments put forward to application F.21336/007/FUL, the Parish Council stated at the time and now restates that their preferred siting of the new toilet block is in the same location as the existing block. If that is not possible then placement next to the existing facilities, where the Glass recycling is currently situated, with the longer axis of the proposed building backing on to the boundary, would be considered. Although this would put the existing toilets out of use while work is completed, it is felt that this would be a temporary inconvenience given the long-term gain.

Having listened to the views of the villagers of Selborne at a public meeting held on Wednesday 1st February (attended by 16 members of the Public) the parish council gave very careful consideration to all the opinions offered before making its decisions. The positioning of the new building on the site plan accompanying this application would be inappropriate for a number of reasons.

ACCESS. It would create an overall loss in parking space (possibly 8 or more) which, given the very limited parking in Selborne would be of detriment to both residents and visitors. It would also deny accessibility for coaches to turn around, which would cause chaos on the main road through the village. It would also create a safety hazard, meaning that emergency service vehicles, in particular the fire brigades, may not be able to access the field studies centre in the event of a fire. Although the amended plan (ES03/102) to the application suggests that parking could be marked out to maximise parking space, and indeed includes provision for disabled parking spaces, it has been made clear that no works would indeed be done to the car park itself. It is also questionable that the recycling facilities will be able to be retained because with the siting of the new toilets on plans and the new parking spaces, there would realistically not be enough room for the lorry to gain access to empty the bins if anyone was parked around bays 15 through 19. In addition the area surrounding the bins would have broken glass, which would disrupt the parking in bays 12 and 15. The amended plan ES03/102 also shows an overall loss to the car park of 1 parking space (although some of the proposed spaces would be exceedingly difficult to access.) Having marked it out on site the council concluded this is more likely to overall mean a loss of up to 8 spaces as people don't park that closely or neatly. If the National Trust enforced their boundary the loss of row 15 through 24 would exacerbate the problem.

APPEARANCE OF A CONSERVATION AREA. The siting of the toilets makes them detrimental to the character of the village. The height and look of the building will also block the view to the hanger and will be very visible from the Hanger. Positioned 90 degrees round to blend in with the backdrop hedgerows and trees would be far more aesthetically pleasing and reduce its appearance from the hanger. In addition the parish council would be opposed to overnight lighting, which will create light pollution in a rural area, and affect the nearby properties. In conclusion, the Parish Council feels that the car park is the most appropriate place to site the new toilets, and indeed favours the actual design of the toilets, which has been well thought out. The village welcomes thousand of people each year and toilets facilities are vital. However, the actual positioning of these facilities does need to be altered and is the main cause of the Parish Councils objection. The safety, access and character of the proposed siting is questionable. In a village such as Selborne where parking is at a premium any overall loss of parking could jeopardise vital tourism, which is the lifeblood of the village. In light of the issues regarding access and safety, it has been suggested that maybe the planning committee may like to view the site at a weekend when it is at its busiest.

Planning Decisions All decision notices together with conditions / reasons can be found on EHDCs website.

F.21878/011/AGR Prior Notification Order. Reservoir. Chapel Farm, Oakhanger Road, Oakhanger. **NOT PROCEEDED WITH**

F.27626/004/CAT Fell One Maple. Hastards Corner, Hastards Lane, Selborne. **NO OBJECTION**

F.49173/FUL Old Police House, Goslings Croft, Selborne. Single Storey extension to side. **NOTICE OF PERMISSION**

F.34348/004/CAT Reduce one lime tree. The Old Butchers Shop, High Street, Selborne. **NO OBJECTION**

F.23954/004/FUL. Replacement Shed / summerhouse. Copper Beech House, High Street, Selborne. NOTICE OF PERMISSION

Item 13 – Finance

a) Current Financial Position. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Councils current financial position as of 8th February 2006 was £756.97 credit in the current account and £24,829.12 credit in the Deposit Account

b) It was agreed that the following payments which had been requested since the last meeting be **APPROVED**:

- i) £Xxx.xx Mrs. L Coney (Clerks wages Jan)
- ii) £10.00 Selborne Village Hall (Hire Dec)
- iii) £234.00 HAPTC (subs for 2006)
- iv) £31.47 Mrs. L Coney (Expenses Jan 06)

Item 14 – Correspondence. The Clerk listed in the agenda all items of correspondence received since the last meeting.

Item 15 Any Other Business.

- 1) *Buckingham Palace – invitation to Chairman. The chairman politely refused the invitation to attend a royal garden party for parish and town chairmen (part of the Queens Birthday celebrations)*
- 2) *Cllrs Carter, Chapman & Oliver to sign the deed of grant for East Plestor Cottage. This was AGREED to be done at the conclusion of the meeting.*
- 3) *Risk assessment training & Qualification – March 27th 2006 Botley. The clerk asked if anyone wished to attend this event. Cllr Oliver replied he should like to attend if possible. It was AGREED and the clerk would send back the relevant forms.*
- 4) *It was asked whether or not there was anything to be done about the light pollution coming from Sotherington Hop Kilns. According to Cllr Palmer nothing can be done at the moment as they are not in breach of any planning permissions but once people have moved in it can be looked at again.*

Item 16 – Date and Place of next meeting.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 8th March 2006 at Selborne Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.20pm

Date.....

Chairman.....