

# Duffield Parish Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 2 December 2003 at 7.15pm in the Committee Room, Hazelwood Road, Duffield

Present: Chairman: Councillor J C Rowlands  
Vice Chairman: Councillor N G Storer  
Councillors: Buckle, England, Knibbs and B Woodings

Also in attendance: Mr D R Bostock – Parish Clerk  
Mrs S Bygraves – Treasurer/Assistant Clerk

Prior to the meeting Mrs Caroline Gibson of 41 Hazelwood Road, apologised to members for the misunderstanding that had led to her removing a section of our mutual boundary hedge, erecting a new gate and commencing grazing of the Cemetery Pasture, all without waiting for Council approval.

The Clerk reported that he had taken advice from the Parish Councils Valuer Mr R Savidge, who had confirmed that under no circumstances should we grant a full Agricultural Tenancy or Cultivation Tenancy. He suggested that our only realistic option was to issue a seasonal grazing licence on the Cemetery Pasture.

Apologies for absence: none, all present.

### **F/45/03 Minutes**

**Resolved:** that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 24 June 2003, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **F/46/03 Matters Arising**

a) Arising from minute F/24/03 a), Councillor Buckle confirmed that a young man from the Lower Sixth form of Ecclesbourne School, had taken away the detail of our new Web Site to hopefully progress matters further.

b) The Clerk confirmed that arising from minute F/26/03, he had requested a meeting with representatives of St. Alkmunds Church regarding the use of Parish Council land adjacent to their existing car park, for additional car parking purposes.

c) Arising from minute No.F/29/03, the Clerk confirmed that kerbs, a parapet wall and stoned car park, had all been seriously damaged by lorries removing top-soil from the Millennium Meadow site.

d) The Clerk reported that arising from minute F/34/03, he was awaiting a response from the William Gilbert School regarding the offer suggested for their continued use of the Gray Recreation Ground.

e) Arising from minute F/40/03, the Clerk obtains a copy of the annual accounts from the Vintage Event Committee. He should also prepares a plan showing their proposed road widening scheme for the Donald Hawley Way, in order to provide easier access and egress from the site and submits these details to the next Parish Council Meeting on 9 December 2003.

f) Arising from minute F/43/03 a), the Clerk reported that due to circumstances beyond his control, it would be premature to provide office shelving in the Meeting Room at the moment.

**Resolved:** that the Clerk writes a letter to the Millennium Meadow Conservation Trust, expressing the Parish Council's deep concern regarding the damage being caused to the Eyes Meadow infrastructure by their recent activities.

**F/47/03 Exclusion**

As no members of the Public were present, it was agreed that there was no need for the Committee to go into exclusion.

**F/48/03 Exceptional Expenditure**

**Blackspot Lighting:** the Clerk advised members that the order for screening the Chestnut Close lamp and the replacing of the lamp on Chapel Street had been placed with the County Council.

He also confirmed that the schemes for lighting provision, on the Pastures to Holloway Road footpath and Golf Lane had been designed by the County Council and estimates of the costs involved, were £2,900 and £3,700 respectively.

**Bus Shelter:** the Clerk confirmed that the Duffield Castle, south-bound Bus Shelter had been erected satisfactorily and that the Parish Council's element of the cost share with the County Council will be £2,168.00.

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The Clerk also advised that it could be possible to obtain some match funding for the provision of Railway Station Shelters from The Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership.

**Eyes Meadow Security:** the Clerk reported that this work had been seriously disrupted this year, arising from the damage inflicted on the new car park by the Millennium Meadow Conservation Trust activities.

He did confirm however that the Conservation Trust had agreed to clear the mud from the Car Park, resurface the area with new stone and provide a quantity of stone for pot-holing the Changing Room Car Park.

**Finger Posts:** the Clerk reported that the Community Association were not keen to site a finger post sign on the Wirksworth Road corner site, but did suggest that outside the Florists Shop on the other side of the junction may be acceptable.

**Notice Board:** no action so far.

**Seating:** the Clerk reported that the Council's recommended public seat the Glasdon "Rushton" has been withdrawn and recommended that the Parish Council adopt the "Stretton" seat, which is an extra heavy duty seat of a similar size and design.

He also reported on a request from Ms S A Mitchell, for a memorial seat on Eyes Meadow in memory of the recently deceased Mrs Lynn Lamb.

**Resolved:**

a) that the Clerk obtains competitive quotations for providing the new lighting scheme on the Pastures to Holloway Road footpath in the current financial year and that subject to budgets and match funding prevailing from the Borough Council, the scheme for lighting Golf Lane proceeds in 2004/05.

b) that the Clerk seeks Grant Aid from the Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership, for renewing the Waiting Shelter on Duffield Station.

c) that in view of the current budgetary situation, the provision of the Finger Post Signs and Notice Boards remains on hold for the time being.

d) that the Clerk advises Mrs Mitchell of the likely costs involved in providing a memorial seat to Mrs Lynn Lamb and enquires what the preferred site would be on Eyes Meadow.

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**F/49/03 Applications for Grant Aid**

The Clerk reported on completed Grant Aid Application forms from Amber Valley Victim Support and the Trinity Methodist Church.

**Resolved:** that in accordance with the Parish Council's powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1992, the following grant aid be made to the organisations named:

	£
a) Amber Valley Victim Support	100.00
b) Trinity Methodist Church	500.00

**F/50/03 Assistant Clerk's Hours and Training Budget**

The Clerk confirmed that the Assistant Clerk / Treasurers hours were currently 10 hours / week.

The Assistant Clerk confirmed that her six month probationary period was now completed and her hours of work were spread over the whole week as and when required, currently 20/25 hours / week.

She further stated that her main duties so far were Treasurer/financial work, Parish Plan, Football organisation and supervision, Open Spaces actions, supervision of the Tidyman and Fireworks Display/Bonfire. It was furthermore estimated that she spent 8 hours / week on her financial duties.

The Clerk confirmed that he had allowed for a Training Budget of £100.00 in his Administration Budget for 2004/05.

**Resolved:**

a) that as the Assistant Clerk / Treasurer, Mrs Sally Bygraves had now successfully completed her six month probationary period, her position with the Parish Council be now made permanent.

b) that Mrs Bygraves be allocated a dedicated telephone line for her Parish Council duties.

c) that Mrs Bygraves hours of work be further discussed in the current Budget making process.

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**F/51/03 Duffield CCTV System**

The need for a CCTV surveillance system in Duffield was accepted and the Clerk was requested to approach the Borough Council for help in its provision, as Duffield is the largest village in Amber Valley and is beginning to suffer with quite serious incidents.

The Chairman has spoken to the Derbyshire Building Society regarding help with a CCTV scheme and has also contacted the Co-operative Society.

**Resolved:**

a) that if the Clerk's letter to the Borough Council fails to gain any support for a CCTV scheme in Duffield, a meeting be called with all interested businesses and individuals within the Parish.

b) that the Clerk checks into the Heanor Gate system, makes contact with all Duffield traders and establishes the locations of any existing cameras in the village.

**F/52/03 Yorkshire Bank – Current Account**

The Clerk read out a letter from the Yorkshire Bank confirming that they remained happy with the way the Parish Council account was being run and in the light of good credit balances, they are willing to continue with the present situation for a further 12 months.

**Resolved:** that members noted the above situation.

**F/53/03 Bad Debt 2002/03**

The Clerk reported on the following outstanding accounts for our services in 2002/03, as follows:

Invoice No. 280 – £5.00 Allotment rental – Mr Boyd has given up his allotment.

Invoice No. 285 (part) - £5.00 Allotment rental – Dr. Crowder has given up one of his two allotments.

**Resolved:** that the above two legitimate reasons for non-payment be noted and accepted, with the debts involved written off.

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**F/54/03 Code of Practice for Handling Complaints**

The Clerk circulated a copy of the Code of Practice for Local Councils in Handling Complaints.

**Resolved:** that the Parish Council formally adopt the Complaints Procedure as set out below:

***Before the Complaints Meeting***

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk, or other nominated proper officer.

2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.

3. The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council, or by the Committee established for the purpose of hearing complaints.

4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representatives as they wish.

5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

#### ***At the Complaints Meeting***

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council Meeting in public.

7. Chairman to introduce everyone.

8. Chairman to explain the procedure.

9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.

10. Members to ask any question of the complainant.

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11. If relevant, the Clerk or proper officer to explain the Council's position.

12. Members to ask any question of the Clerk or other proper officer.

13. The Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of the last word (in this order).

14. The Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not grounds for complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties are to be invited back).

15. The Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear the decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.

#### ***After the Complaints Meeting***

16. A decision shall be confirmed in writing within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

**F/55/03      SiteShare Telecom Site Marketing Services**

The Clerk circulated a copy letter from the above Company, in which they offered to market our present Eyes Meadow Telecoms Site to other Telecoms Organisations at a commission equal to 50% of the first year's site rental.

**Resolved:** that the above offer be received and no further action taken for the time being.

**F/56/03      Orange – Telecom Site Rent Review**

The Clerk circulated details of the proposed tri-annual rent review of the Orange Telecoms Site on Eyes Meadow, the current rental is £3,755.00 / annum and they propose increasing this to £4,000.00 / annum from the 13 January 2004.

The Clerk confirmed that evidence obtained from the Borough Council regarding RPI rates over the last three years, would indicate that this was a fair offer.

**Resolved:** that the Clerk accepts the offer of Orange Personal Communications Services Ltd, in increasing their rental for the above site to £4,000.00 / annum from the 13 January 2004, for the three year period to 13 January 2007.

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**F/57/03      Meeting Room Cleaning**

The Clerk reported on a letter from Mr & Mrs D R Guy, regarding the Health & Safety implications of Mrs M Guy continuing as the Meeting Room Cleaner, now that she had become visually impaired.

They therefore stated that it would be worth the Council considering transferring her duties and remuneration to Mr D R Guy the Cemetery Superintendent.

**Resolved:** that subject to a signed agreement to the above proposal being received from Mrs Guy, the duties and remuneration of the Meeting Room Cleaner be transferred to Mr D R Guy.

**F/58/03      2003/2004 Budgetary Control and Budget Requirement for 2004/05**

The Clerk detailed the current Budgetary Control and the Budget Proposals for 2004/05 as follows:

	03/04 Budget £	Exp to date £	04/05 Budget £
<b><i>Normal Expenditure</i></b>			
Clerk's Salary	10,200	4,455	11,500
Clerk's Fixed Allowances	350	203	350
Treasurer's Salary	1,850	2,534	
4,250(6,575) Administration & Audit		2,000	705
2,500			
Insurances	2,100	2,229	2,500
Fees & Donations etc	500	412	500
Section 137 Grants	1,000	180	1,000
Committee Room Energy	300	210	300
Chapel Energy	200	26	100
Church Clock	100	-	100
Misc Small Items	100	35	100
Phone – Clerk	450	320	450
Phone – Asst Clerk	-	-	500
Chairmans Allowance	100	67	100
Parish News Letter	-	396	800
PAYE & NI	-	4,659	-
Clerks expenses	-	760	-
Treasurers expenses	-	771	-
Parish Plan	-	60	
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	<b>19,250</b>	<b>18,022</b>	<b>25,050</b>
			or

(27,375)

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<b><i>Exceptional Expenditure</i></b>			
Contingencies	1,500	-	1,500
Parish Elections	3,000	4,036	-
Advertising	100	-	-
Blackspot Lighting	2,500	(2,500)	2,500
Dog Bins	100	-	100
Seats	500	-	250
Bus Shelter	2,250	2,168	2,250
Tidyman	2,000	2,385	5,370
Notice Board	500	-	500
Hanging Baskets	1,250	(1,250)	1,250
Eyes Meadow Security	2,500	-	-
Band Concerts	400	150	200
Admin. Assistance	2,500	-	-
Finger Post Signs	1,000	-	1,000
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	<b>20,100</b>	<b>12,489</b>	<b>14,920</b>
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<b><i>Grand Total</i></b>	<b>39,350</b>	<b>30,511</b>	<b>39,970</b>
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(42,295)

or

### 2004/05 Precept Requirement

The Clerk advised members that the budget requirements for the various Council Committee's were as follows for 2004/05:

	£
Footpath Committee	5,000
Open Spaces Committee	23,700
Cemetery Committee	28,750
F & G P Committee	40,000
	or (42,000)
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	<b>97,450</b>
	<b>or (99,750)</b>
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The Clerk reported that in last year's report he forecast a carry forward into the current year a sum of £46,000. However, due to more work being charged by the Treasurer into 2002/03 at the year end than expected, a carry forward of £32,385 was achieved.

However the Parish Council was trying to reduce balances to the region of £35,000 and this we achieved by the above action.

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The Clerk also reported that he predicted at the same time as above, that a £25,000 carry forward was likely into the subsequent 2004/05 year.

He went on to state that £64,000 of our £92,000 budget has been spent so far this year, with £40,000 in reserve and further income expected, if we spend the full budget, we should be on course for a £20 – 25,000 carry forward into 2004/05, as predicted above.

Therefore if we carry forward £25,000 + a precept of £50,000 + interest and income of £25,000, a sum of £100,000 would be available for 2004/05.

**However to carry £25,000 forward into 2005/06, we would reduce our expenditure level to £75,000 and with our worst case budget scenario for next year being £100,000, the Parish Council will have a budget shortfall in the region of £25,000.**

**The above problem will need to be met by either by a reduction in our proposed budget for next year or an increase in the precept, or a combination of the two options.**

The Clerk further stated that to his knowledge the precept request had not changed for at least five years. He also explained that this level of precept

equated to a rate levy on a Band E property in Duffield of £30.00 / household / year (ie. 2p in the pound of the total rate levied).

He continued by stating that we have an increasing staff element to support and that we must rate as one of the best Parishes in the Borough for value for money. We provide and maintain virtually all the Cemetery and Leisure facilities for the village and with the likely onset of Quality Parish Status these financial burdens and duties can only increase, as the Borough begins to divest itself of evermore functions.

**In conclusion the Clerk stated he must recommend that the Parish Council levies a precept in the region of £70,000 and makes a modest reduction in the budget of £5,000, due to the above factors and the effect that inflation has had on our precept, whilst it has been maintained at £50,000.**

**Resolved:**

a) that the Current Budgetary Control situation for 2003/04 be noted.

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b) that the Clerk's report above be noted and that he establishes the exact effect that inflation has had on the Parish Council precept, whilst it has been maintained at £50,000.

c) that a Special Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be called for 7.15pm on the 6 January 2004, to agree the 2004/05 budget and set the annual precept, to be recommended to the January 2004 meeting of the Parish Council for approval.

**F/59/03**

**New Football Pitch – Eyes Meadow**

The Clerk reported that he now had the Environment Agency approval to construct the new football pitch and he also supplied all members with a copy letter from Allestree FC.

The Clerk also circulated copy plans of the current pitch layout, showing the new pitch on Eyes Meadow, together with two possible alternative designs.

The Clerk questioned the need for five pitches in the future, however the Assistant Clerk felt that five pitches would be beneficial.

**Resolved:** that the plans prepared by the Clerk be received and that a meeting be called by the Open Spaces Committee with Allestree FC, to finalise negotiations regarding the provision of the proposed new pitch and the necessary financial arrangements.

**F/60/03      Other Business**

Members noted with pleasure the article in the December 2003 issue of the Duffield Scene, regarding the excellent record of our present Chairman Councillor John Rowlands in being a member of the Parish Council for 16 years and currently serving as Chairman for a fourth term of office.

**F/61/03      Date of Next Meeting**

**Resolved:** that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, will take place on the 23 March 2004 at 7.15pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed -----      Date -----

