

WELLOW PARISH COUNCIL
Wellow Village Hall – 21 January 2002
(7.00 p.m. – 9.30 p.m.)

PRESENT: Mrs Perry (Chairman); Mr Austin, Mr Bloore, Mr Gentle, Mr Noble,
 Mr Overton-Hore, Mrs Simpson and Mr Thaxter

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Harris and Mrs Kittow

201. **PLANNING**

(a) Current applications: RESOLVED that the Council comment on the following applications as indicated:

| | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|
| TVS. 02246/6 | Abbotts Farm, Canada Road – change of use from agriculture to light industrial and storage and distribution | No objection |
|--------------|---|--------------|

(Mr Noble declared an interest in this application and left the room for the debate)

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| TVS.09421/1 | Land to the rear of Acorns, Whinwhistle Road – erection of special needs dwelling | No objection, subject to adequate screening being provided to protect neighbouring properties |
|-------------|---|---|

(b) Planning decisions: Members noted the decisions set out in paper 2 accompanying the agenda (shown as an appendix in the minute book).

(c) Appeal – TVS.3202/5, Site at Bridge Farm, Romsey Road – appeal against enforcement notices alleging breach of planning control by change of use and repair and spraying of motor vehicles: It was noted that the appeal in this case had been dismissed. A three month period was allowed for discontinuance of the use and removal of all relevant equipment and tools.

(d) Planning Training: The Clerk reported that a planning training session for Wellow members would be provided by Test Valley at the Council meeting on Monday 18 March 2002 at 7 p.m. If necessary, the meeting would be start earlier at 6.40 p.m. to deal with any normal planning business.

202. **BUS SHELTER, LOWER COMMON ROAD**

Mr Bloore reported on the results of neighbour consultation concerning this proposed shelter. Three objections had been received from residents living close to the intended site. In particular, the objections related to visual impact, noise and disturbance caused by gathering of local youths and potential vandalism. However, the residents concerned would have less opposition if a seat were substituted for a shelter.

Members felt that the Council should still proceed with a shelter, albeit one with minimal sides to address the objectors' concerns. A shelter of suitable design was displayed at the meeting.

RESOLVED that three tenders be invited for a suitable shelter for this site, to be considered at the Council meeting on 18 February.

203. **WELLOW SCHOOL – PUBLIC FOOTPATH**

In the public session prior to the meeting, Peter Stuckey, Chairman of Wellow School Governors, had referred to the improvement works necessary to upgrade the public footpath through the grounds of Wellow School. The land was owned by Hampshire County Council but it was necessary for the school to maintain the path from its devolved budget. Regrading and levelling were estimated to cost around £5000 which it was hoped to fund in part from various grant sources. It was hoped, also, that the Parish Council would be able to contribute.

RESOLVED that, based on the estimated cost of £5000, a grant of £250 be offered from the Council's 2002/03 budget, with a further £250 in 2003/04.

204. **QUALITY PARISHES**

Further to minute 166(b), Members considered a Consultation Paper on Quality Parish and Town Councils. A summary of the Paper had been circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

The Paper followed on from the Rural White Paper and contained detailed proposals for putting the 'quality' concept into practice. The proposals included: a model charter covering relations between parish/town councils and borough/district/county councils; the additional benefits to be gained from quality status; a series of tests to be passed by parish/town councils to achieve quality accreditation; and arrangements for self-assessment validated by the external auditor.

In its recent discussions on the future of the Parish Council, members had in part embraced the quality concept. However, there was concern about the possible cost of the new initiative, including the proposed 'enforced election' process. There were also concerns about whether the costs involved would be proportionate to the benefits. The proposal for parishes to provide information and communication technology might be a problem for smaller parishes, especially those without offices, although joint ventures might be possible in some cases, e.g. with the local school etc. There was also a danger, under the quality initiative, of parishes becoming too 'professional' and therefore discouraging membership. Quality status would also involve significantly more work for Members and the Clerk.

RESOLVED that the Council respond to the Consultation Paper on the above lines.

205. **VITAL VILLAGES PROGRAMME**

Further to minute 90(e), Members received details of this programme organised by the Countryside Agency. Under the scheme, grants were available for Parish Plans, community service improvements, parish transport initiatives and rural transport partnerships. As reported to the 7 January meeting, a firm of consultants, Mackenzie-Cook Associates, had offered to assist in the preparation of a town or parish plan and with grant applications under the new programme. Members agreed that it would be useful to test the value of the parish plan concept at the forthcoming planning training session with Test Valley on 18 March.

RESOLVED that the principle of a parish plan be discussed at the planning training session.

206. **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Consideration was given to the appointment of a new Vice-Chairman of the Environment Committee in the context of Mr Gentle's future mayoral commitments for Test Valley Borough Council.

RESOLVED that Mrs V Perry be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the year 2001/02.

207. **PARISH COUNCIL PUBLICITY**

It was agreed that the following items be included in the next quarterly Newsletter: Cutting of the Monkey Jump hedge; updates on Golden Jubilee celebrations and bus shelters (Mr Thaxter to provide); A36 – new 40 mph limit and other Parish Council improvement requests; procedure for grant applications (Mr Bloore); re-opening of Foxes Lane; repairs to play area; Foxes Lane pond improvements.

208. **PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

(a) Accounts: RESOLVED that authority be given for the following payments:

| Cheque No | Payee | £ | VAT | £ |
|-----------|---|--------|-------|--------|
| 001489 | Susan Tillyer (January salary) | 72.00 | 0 | 72.00 |
| 001490 | Joyce Pidgley (Salary, 30/1201 - 26/1/02) | 36.00 | 0 | 36.00 |
| 001491 | Cynthia Merrey (Tennis agent's fee – January) | 19.16 | 0 | 19.16 |
| 001492 | M Derrick (Clerk's salary and expenses) | 493.43 | 1.94 | 495.37 |
| 001493 | Southern Water (Sewerage charge, Lower Common Road) | 23.48 | 0 | 23.48 |
| 001494 | M Lodge (Strimming/tidying of Buxton land) | 50.00 | 0 | 50.00 |
| 001495 | Wicksteed Leisure Ltd (Play area inspection) | 25.00 | 4.38 | 29.38 |
| 001496 | Test Valley Borough Council (Dog bin emptying/cleansing, 2001/02) | 558.60 | 97.76 | 656.36 |

(b) Transfers: RESOLVED that the following transfers be made from the Premier Interest Account to the Treasurers Account:

Immediately: £600
In 14 days: £500

209. LAND AT NIGHTINGALE CLOSE/ARUN WAY

The Chairman reported on a letter sent by the Arun Way/Nightingale Close Neighbourhood Watch Scheme to Test Valley Borough Council concerning the land between these two roads. The existing screen of vegetation harmonised with the countryside but evidence had recently been found of a 'camp' built in the middle, together with assorted rubbish. As a result, Test Valley had agreed to clear the land and cut back the foliage after which the residents would undertake ongoing maintenance. The usual highway licence would be needed for this purpose.

RESOLVED that application be made to the highway authority for a maintenance licence in respect of this land.

210. PLAY AREA – TREES

It was noted that further branches had fallen from trees on the boundary between the play area and Gurnays Mead. Testway Housing had denied responsibility for the trees in which case the Parish Council would need to carry out future maintenance. Mr Austin agreed to arrange for any necessary tree surgery to be carried out.

211. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that, by reason of the confidential nature of the business, publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

212. PLAY AREA – SAFETY INSPECTION

Members considered a report from Wicksteed Leisure following a recent safety inspection. Various items required attention, some arising from the introduction of new European standards. It was agreed to clarify with Wicksteed whether it was necessary to comply immediately with the new standards or whether the situation could be addressed when the relevant equipment was replaced. Guidance was also needed on other aspects of the report.

In the meantime, Mr Bloore agreed to undertake the following during the weekend of 2/3 February:

- removal of excessive thread protruding from bolts under the roundabout
- removal of all swings pending receipt of replacement chains and seats

Members agreed that, in the longer term, consideration should be given to upgrading the whole play area with the benefit of any available grants.

RESOLVED that a quotation be obtained from Wicksteed Leisure for carrying out any necessary repairs to the play area (with the exception of routine works to be undertaken by the Parish Council).