

TITCHMARSH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 20 November 2008 in the Clubroom

- Councillors Present: Michael Alderman (Chair) Julie Cheney
Sylvia Prestwich Geoff Love
Ian Curtis
Ian Teague
John Greig
In Attendance: Emma Meen (Clerk)
- 2008/11/1 **Public Open Time** As there were no members of the public present, the Chair deemed public open time to be closed
- 2008/11/2 **Apologies For Absence:** Bert Ash and Gina Gaskin
- 2008/11/3 **Declaration of Interests for items contained on the Agenda:** IT expressed a personal interest in agenda point 2008/11/7.8. Declaration of Interests book duly signed by IT.
- 2008/11/4 **Minutes of Last Meeting:** All agreed minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2008 to be an accurate record. JG proposed and IT seconded that the Chair sign them.
- 2008/11/5 **Matters Arising (for information purposes only):**
- 2008/11/5.1 **Removal of overhead power cables to parts of the village** Update received from EON to advise that works now commencing in North Street and concluding in Chapel Street. IT expressed concern that when works start in Chapel Street this will cause problems for parking particularly at School start and ends times with parents bringing children to and from School. Members agreed for clerk to send a letter to the School updating the Head teacher and requesting for their co-operation and consideration with parking during this time. Clerk
- 2008/11/5.2 Clerk reported that the streetlight outside 9 Drydens Close is not working. Aylesbury Mains have visited the light and reported that it has a "dead supply". Clerk instructed EON to repair fault as soon as possible. As it has a dead supply this will be free of charge.
- 2008/11/5.3 Two electricity bills received from EON for the supply to the streetlights. For the same amount £129.20. One for a month's consumption and one for a quarter. Clerk speaking to EON to resolve the matter and to also clarify the amount of VAT as bill states 17.5%, seeking clarification if this should 5%. Update at the next meeting Clerk
- 2008/11/5.2 **ENC Meeting – Improving Communications with Parish Councils** Meeting attended by JG on Monday 17th November at Aldwinckle Village Hall. Various issues raised relating to individual Councils. General comment re: Planning Department and less than satisfactory serviced provided. Question raised regarding the constant renewal of planning applications and no development or works being undertaken. Possibility of planning permission not being granted for renewals. Also reported a burger van habitually parking at Haldens Parkway which is causing dangerous parking by customers visiting. ENC to follow-up.
- 2008/11/5.3 **Routine Drain Maintenance within the village** Numerous drains around the village reported as being blocked, in particular the drain at the junction of Chapel Street with Church Street. Clerk reported this as urgent to streetdoctor. Also requests made by clerk and two councillors for road sweeper to visit the village to remove the vast quantity of fallen leaves which is not helping the blocked drain problem. Streetdoctor reported that Titchmarsh is scheduled for routine drain maintenance in December. Clerk to monitor. Clerk
- 2008/11/6 **Finance**
Payments to authorise:

Barclays Tracker Account	Savings	£5000.00
Society of Merchant Venturers	Allotment rent 80/20 split in rent collected	£616.80
Emma Meen	Clerks Salary October 2008 paid by standing order	£178.00
RECEIPTS		
	Allotment rents	£771.00
	HMRC – online payroll filing incentive	£100.00

- 2008/11/6.1 IT proposed that all payments be made. GL seconded, all in favour.
- 2008/11/6.2 Discussion of Precept for 2009/2010 Letter received from ENC inviting TPC to submit the request for the annual precept, to be received by ENC no later than 14th January 2009. Review of budgets scheduled for next meeting to arrive at the figure to request from ENC.
- 2008/11/6.3 Clerks cost of living rise in accordance with NCALC guidelines Update received from NCALC advising that a final salary agreement for the current has not been agreed but official authorisation received to increase salaries by 2.45% backdated to April 2008 pending a further adjustment once arbitration has been completed. SP proposed to implement 2.45% cost of living rise backdated to April 2008. All in favour. Clerk to prepare letter to Barclays Bank informing of the change to the monthly standing order to reflect this increase. Clerk
- 2008/11/7 **Correspondence**
- 2008/11/7.1 Letter from NCC – Restructuring of Northamptonshire Highways letter of introduction received from NCC advising that the agency contracted to maintain the highways in Northamptonshire is now MGWSP and giving contact details of the Area manager for our district. Letter also offers the opportunity to meet the new Area manager to discuss any particular problems. Members felt that a meeting is not necessary at this time and to keep the contact details should contact be needed in the future.
- 2008/11/7.2 NCC Highways – Surplus budget Email received from Northants ACRE advising that NCC may have a small underspend in the Highways and Transport Department and invited ideas from PC's where this underspend could be directed to. Several suggestions made from a bus shelter, zebra crossing outside the School to levelling and laying hard core along the byway which extends from Lych Lane to the sewerage works. Northants Acre responded by advising that they have some 55 requests from other PC's and it is a long shot how far the funding may stretch. Clerk awaiting further updates, but not hopeful.
- 2008/11/7.3 Letter from NCC – Urban Highway Grass Mowing 2009 - 136 Agreement Grant available to Parishes wishing to undertake the mowing of their own urban grass. Grant authorised is £707.31 Members all in favour to maintain grass cutting with existing contractor. Clerk to complete relevant forms and apply for grant. Clerk
- 2008/11/7.4 Village of the Year Judging Feedback received. TPC awarded 107.5 point out of a possible 131. Generally feedback good with positive comments made relating to village and community life, business and the environment. Suggested more encouragement for young and old people. Comments noted. Members previously agreed to have a break from entering the competition next year and to consider again some time in the future.
- 2008/11/7.5 Draft Public Participation and External Communications Strategy received from NCC inviting comments by 10th February 2009. Main focus of the strategy is for the council to inform and engage local people and communities and organisations better in what it does so that as a result services are more likely to meet their needs. Details circulated in the float file with covering sheet for members too make comments if they wish. Item deferred to next agenda to review any comments made to submit to NCC.
- 2008/11/7.6 Communities and Local Government Consultation Paper – Communities in Control The paper invites views for proposals for revising the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007. The stated aim of further changes to the code is to

	clarify members conduct in their non official capacity (ie private lives) and proposals to also introduce a code of conduct for employees to be incorporated in the terms and conditions of employment. Details circulated in the float file with covering sheet for members too make comments if they wish. Item deferred to next agenda to review any comments made to submit to Communities and Local Government.	
2008/11/7.7	<u>Letter from Spire Homes re: Overgrown boundary hedge Drydens Close Spire Homes</u> confirm that they feel that there is no breach in the tenancy agreement due to the overgrown boundary hedge but intend to speak to their maintenance department to ascertain if the trees require cutting back under Health & Safety. Trees to boundary have since been cut back and rotting vegetation cleared away.	
2008/11/7.8	<u>Letter from United Church Schools re: employees parking in and around the green</u> Acknowledging the problems which have occurred with parking in the village from their employees. United Church Schools Trust (UCST) confirms that they continually monitor the car parking so as to alleviate any inconvenience to the village. In their letter they also brought to the PC attention several incidents of vandalism to the external property of the Methodist Chapel and also the use of the car parking for skateboarding and also youths on bicycles. No further action was requested regarding these points by UCST. Members agreed that a copy of UCST letter be sent to the parishioner who initially commented about the parking obstructions around the green. On behalf of UCST IT advised that it is UCST intention to seek alternative parking arrangements elsewhere.	
2008/11/7.9	<u>SmartWater Forensic Property Marking</u> Details received from Northamptonshire Police of a scheme available where household items maybe marked with a transparent liquid which helps identify stolen property. A concessionary rate maybe available if sufficient interest is shown by Parishioners. Details to be placed in TT giving contact details if anyone is interested	
2008/11/8	<u>Ongoing Applications – First floor rear extension to Greystones 2 London End, Titchmarsh</u> Copy correspondence received from ENC and also architect suggesting alterations to the plans to satisfy ENC. Since receiving this copy paperwork ENC has granted planning permission based upon the amendments.	
2008/11/8.1	<u>To consider planning application received – two storey extension at 1 St Andrews Close Titchmarsh</u> All in favour	Clerk
2008/11/9	<u>Freedom of Information Act</u> members resolve to adopted New Model Publication Scheme with effect from 20 November 2008. Notice to be issued in TT making the public aware and also a notice displayed on the parish notice board.	
2008/11/9	Clerk and IT met to go over the new Act and to agree on the items to be included on the Guide for Information, which items of information to be available free of charge on the Website and which items of information to be available as hard copy. Agreed for a new page to be built on the website referring to FOI. New Model Publication Scheme to be uploaded as soon as possible together with the guide for information and scale of charges. IT and Clerk to liaise and arrange for items to be uploaded on to the website. Complaints procedure to be amended to incorporate reference to FOI act and give details of the Information Commissioners Office where complaints regarding the release of information under the FOI act be directed to, should requests not be handled correctly. Clerk to source correct wording and amend complaints procedure and present to the members at the next meeting.	Clerk & IT
2008/11/10	<u>Venue for future Parish council meetings and Annual Parish Council meeting</u> Pavilion at Playing Field now complete and ready for use. Members discussed the possibility of moving the venue for future meetings from the Clubroom to the new Pavilion. Members divided on their views. GL too make enquiries with the Clubroom Committee to establish their views. Defer decision to next meeting.	GL
2008/11/11	<u>Allotments – request for Islington plot holder re: water connection</u> At the rent collection evening one request was made by a plot holder from Islington Allotments if TPC could approach Merchant Venturers as landowners of the allotment site, to	Clerk

- ask if they would be prepared to fund the cost of the water connection to allotments in Islington. Clerk to send letter to MV.
- 2008/11/12 Grass cutting – quotations received for increased cuts next year 3 quotations received for 8, 9 and 10 cuts per year. **See annexed to the minutes table of comparison.** Concluded that ENC still offer the most competitive quotation. Members agreed to defer making a decision on increasing amount of cuts until the next meeting when annual budgets are reviewed so as to arrive at the precept amount for the coming year and whether or not it is appropriate to increase the amount of cuts and increase the grass cutting budget.
- 2008/11/13 Cold calling within the village some reports have been received of several sales people calling unannounced at homes within the village. TPC reviewed again the possibility of entering in to a “No cold calling zone” for the village. Some cost will be involved. GL to investigate this further and report at the next meeting. Notice to be placed in TT alerting parishioners to the recent spate of visits. Also asking for feedback on parishioners views to the “No cold calling” scheme.
- 2008/11/14 Affordable Housing – consideration of other sites Members expressed frustration at lack of progress and feel that time has been wasted in finding a suitable site. JG proposed that a plan be submitted to Northants Rural Housing (NRH) showing areas of land owned by the Diocese and for NRH to approach the Diocese direct if they would be interested in selling any areas of land for Affordable Housing. All in favour. Clerk to send plan to Joanne Richardson at NRH. Clerk
- 2008/11/14.1 Last update received from NRH, ENC arranging to meet with Merchant Venturers to discuss the possibility of land being made available for future development. Members reiterated comments made at the last meeting regarding this suggestion which implies that MV are considering offering land for open market development with an area designated for Affordable Housing. Clerk to continue to chase for further update.
- 2008/11/15 Procedure for Parish Council correspondence by email between meetings JG suggested that some sort of protocol be adopted regarding email correspondence between meetings. Email between members should be used as information only and not for the purpose of entering in to discussion. Matter deferred to next meeting to discuss a policy to be adopted and possible amendment of Standing Orders to reflect the correct procedure for the use of email.
- 2008/11/16 Date of next meeting Thursday 18th December 2008
- 2008/11/17 Items for report only
 SP – reported a white van habitually parked in Tofts close which is leaving at unsociable hours of the night. Reported to Neighbourhood Watch
 JG – reported that the horsebox parked in Polopit is now causing traffic to mount the verge in order to pass and a large muddy rut has now appeared
 GL – commented he has witnessed hedge cleaning along the A14
 IC – updated that he has studied the minerals and waste paperwork issued last month. Northamptonshire has seen the greatest rate of growth than anywhere in the country. Minerals extraction now moving back to river valleys with a horseshoe around Northampton rather than East Northants. 50% increase in recycling in Urban areas. Part of the policy is focusing on towns.
 The Chair closed the meeting at 9.50 pm