

Minutes of the Pitcombe Parish Meeting, held at the Village Hall, Hadspen, on 14th May 2001.

Present: members of the Parish Council and 8 residents,
County Councillor Tim Carroll

In the Chair: Cllr Roy Taylor, Chairman of the Parish Council.

1 Opening Remarks and Welcome: Cllr. Roy Taylor.

Cllr. Taylor welcomed those present to the meeting. This was the opportunity for local people to make their feelings known to the Parish Council and others. Cllr Taylor recorded the Apology for Absence from Cllr. Bunting.

2 To Receive the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15 May 2000.

Minutes **approved.**

3 Matters Arising.

There was considerable discussion on the subject of mud on the highway (A359) which had been commented on at the last meeting. There were two causes of mud on the road. The problem last year was mainly caused by vehicles leaving the field off Hurn Lane, which was being used to dump soil. This was controlled by a County Council Planning Permission, and conditions had been imposed requiring vehicles leaving Green Lane to be washed to prevent mud being deposited on the A359. This Planning Approval has lapsed. The problem this year has been caused by tankers depositing slurry and food processing waste at Mr Walters' slurry pit. Because of the state of the road, a considerable amount of mud had been brought onto the A359 over a long period of time. An incident had also occurred where the slurry pit had been overfilled and slurry was allowed to spill onto the Green Lane. The Environment Agency had been involved and had placed a restriction on the use of the pit. No formal Waste Management Licence has been agreed between Mr Walters and the Environment Agency for the use of the pit. In the absence of an agreement, a maximum of 500tonnes of slurry could be stored. Slurry spreading was continuing, and it was not clear what regulations applied. There had been complaints about smell. Complaints about smell should be raised with the Environmental Health section of the District Council, in Wincanton.

The Clerk had enquired whether a condition could be applied to the Waste Management Licence requiring vehicles to be cleaned of mud before entering the main road. It seemed that 'highway' in this context would be interpreted as Green Lane, rather than the A359. Scalpings had recently been laid at the junction of Green Lane and the A359 to reduce the amount of mud brought onto the main road. It was not accepted that Green Lane should be surfaced throughout its length, as this would change the character of the lane.

Questions were raised over whether the pit had been constructed in exactly the position approved in the Planning Application, and whether the landscaping was to be carried out. The Environment Agency had been carrying out some monitoring but the precise details were not known. There were clearly a range of unanswered questions, and the Clerk was asked to write to the Agency and the County Council.

4 To receive a report on the work of the Parish Council for the year April 2000-March 2001.

The Chairman reported that a review of the minutes of Parish Council meetings showed that a similar range of topics had been discussed as in previous years. At the moment the Travellers who had been encamped on the Green Lanes and the Sheepwash Grit Store are no longer with us, thanks to some timely ditch digging in the Lanes, and vigorous campaigning to get the Grit Store filled and secured.

The bikers who had caused a nuisance in the old quarries off Green Lane had moved elsewhere, again we had made vigorous representations to the owners of the quarry and the police.

Again in Green Lanes, the slurry pit, the movement of tanker lorries, the dumping of soil and the resultant danger caused by mud on the main road had been a cause of concern. These concerns have been raised

with the appropriate authorities and some improvement has been noted. This will be an area we will continue to watch closely.

The speed and volume of traffic on the C125 still worries residents, and we have requested 30 MPH speed limits in the settlements of Hadspen, Cole and Pitcombe, with a 40MPH limit on the rest of the road. 20MPH speed limits are a possibility in the main road, outside Bruton School for Girls.

Foot and Mouth Disease, although thankfully not striking the farms in the locality, has seen the closure of many footpaths and Green Lanes, and although this is inconvenient to those of us who walk the dog, it is a price worth paying.

On the subject of financial matters, the Parish Council has continued its annual grants for maintenance of the Churchyard and to the Village Hall, and a new commitment to enable the grass to be cut on a regular basis on Ludwells Green.

The Planning Committee met on a number of occasions to review and comment on Planning Applications in the Parish, the most controversial of which was the Bruton School for Girls scheme for housing in Mill Lane, Pitcombe. Although the Planning Application had been refused by the District Council, an appeal has been lodged by the School, and will be heard on 26 June when the Parish Council will be present to raise its objections.

Many other items of interest to residents have been discussed and we continue to encourage residents in the parish to attend the meetings of the Parish Council, which are now held every two months.

5 To discuss any motions of which notice has been given to the Clerk.

None received.

6 Open Discussion.

6.1 It was suggested that a special meeting should be called to discuss the problems of the slurry pit, and that Mr Walters and representatives of the Environment Agency and the County Council should be invited.

6.2 Mr Andrew Jones raised a number of points pertaining to the Bruton School for Girls Planning Appeal.

6.3 Mr Elliot was concerned at rumours of take-over bids for parts of the Parish from neighbouring parishes.

6.4 Mr Elliot was concerned that the sign for Bruton on the 30MPH speed limit signs (Sunny Hill) was now not near the Bruton Town boundary. The Clerk reported that the 30MPH signs had been moved when the speed limit zone had been changed. He had spoken to the contractors (WS Atkins) to ask them to remove the Bruton sign, and would do so again.

6.5 Mr Jones was concerned about the speed of vehicles through Pitcombe, and suggested "Please drive carefully through our village" signs. Lamyatt had recently acquired smart new signs.. To be investigated.