

Pitcombe Parish Council

**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
held in Hadspen Village Hall
on Tuesday 13th January 2009 at 7.30 pm**

Present: Councillors: **Beech, Carter, Elliot, Jury, Taylor, Whittaker**
In the Chair: **Councillor Taylor**

In attendance: Nigel Begg, Neil Ollis, Simon Osborne

District Councillor: Maili Felton

Residents of the Parish: Richard Scott, Tina Harley, Alex Harley, Maurice Madelin, Fran Madelin, John Knight, Hamish Craig, Gill Craig, Alan Whittaker, Ian Bell, James Clark, Ken Elliot, Ken Clothier, Marylin Goverd, Sue Chamberlain, Guy Mayers, Josie Mayers, Ian Bell, Annie Fry

1. Public Participation

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th December 2008

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th December be adopted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 9th December 2008.

None

4. Apologies for absence

Councillor Hartnell

5. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jury: SSDC - Planning Application 08/05174/FUL

Councillors Elliot and Whittaker: Somerset County Council Proposal for Construction of Sewage Treatment Facility.

6. Flooding – Cole and Pitcombe

Councillor Jury told the meeting that he wished to establish the support of the Parish Council for future work that may need to be done to minimise the risk of such flooding occurring again. The objective will be to arrange a public meeting to be held under the auspices of the Parish Council. **Councillor Jury** hoped that the meeting of all the various agencies involved could be held either at the end of this month or the beginning February. If possible the cause of the flooding needs to be established. **Councillor Jury** would be grateful for any photographic evidence of what occurred in different parts of the Parish on the day of the flood to be sent to him.

Councillor Taylor told the meetings in the past with the District Council after flooding had occurred have proved helpful.

Alex Harley told the meeting that the bridges at both Cole and Pitcombe formed dams. The Council has been asked by **Councillor Jury** to undertake an hydraulic study of both bridges. Ian Bell asked if the collateral damage could be submitted to the Council as evidence of the widespread damage caused by the flood.

The environment agency will also be encouraged to attend the public meeting.

Possible dates for the meeting are yet to be agreed.

Councillor Taylor expressed sympathy on behalf of the Parish Council to all those in the Parish who had been affected by the flood.

7. Planning Applications – For Consideration.

South Somerset District Council

08/05174/FUL – Mr. G. Mayers – Alteration and the erection of a first floor extension and alterations to form a room in the roof space to include the installation of dormer windows. (GR 36726/133140)

Location: 1 Pitcombe Hill, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0PH.

Nigel Begg reported to the meeting that the problem remained as to the position of the dormer windows due to objections from the Conservation Officer.

Councillor Taylor read letters of objection to the meeting from David Issit and Ian Mathieson

Nigel Begg also told the meeting that the ground floor bathroom had been damaged in the recent flood.

A discussion followed with a general consensus being that the dormer windows should not be situated on the rear of the property and that the extension may also be intrusive and overbearing to the neighbouring property.

The consultation return would be submitted to SSDC in accordance with these concerns.

Somerset County Council.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
CONSTRUCTION OF A SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITY (REVISED SCHEME
(PREVIOUS APP. 07/04740/CPO) AT LAND WEST OF HALFWAYS HOUSE, LIME
KILN LANE, HADSPEN, CASTLE CARY, SOMERSET, BA7 7LW
(GRID REF: 365658 – 132747**

Simon Osborne - Project Leader, Wessex Water, addressed the meeting on behalf of Wessex Water.

He stated that this application had been raised to supersede a previous application (PC/07/04740/CPO/BM - Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Wessex Water - Change of use and installation of below ground submerged aerated filter sewage treatment plant and above ground blower and control kiosks and vent stack, together with extension to roadside lay-by in highway verge opposite Rodge Cottages, Hadspen, Castle Cary, Somerset. (Grid Ref: 365655 – 132838) which had been approved by Somerset County Council in 2007. This was later referred to as ‘Plan A’

According to the Executive Summary of the application, the revised Sewage Treatment Facility is made necessary because of ‘Technical Constraints’ of the previously granted scheme - ‘Plan A’.

The Council was informed by Simon Osborne - Project Leader, Wessex Water that the term ‘Technical Constraints’ referred to the fact that the previously granted scheme – ‘Plan A’ had not allowed for the effluent output of Halfways (which is downhill from the scheme), even though the existing septic tank for the three properties resides in Halfways garden. He also informed the Council that the effluent output from Halfways could be pumped to the previously granted scheme - ‘Plan A’.

Mr. Osborne told the meeting that Wessex Water had obligations to install a level of treatment that was deemed appropriate, in this case there would be secondary treatment using reed beds.

Mr. Osborne, in answer to a question about the quality of the discharge from the treatment, said that there are set standards which would be closely monitored and assessed.

It was ascertained that the cost of the scheme will be in the region of £150,000 – to be paid for by Wessex Water. **Councillor Taylor** asked how many residents would actually benefit from the scheme. Mr. Osborne answered that the scheme involves 3 properties in Lower Hadspen with 9 residents using the facility. The most that this scheme would support would be 12 people. The current plans, upon which the application is based, also include a large concrete lay-by and a chain link fence.

Mr. Osborne, whilst agreeing that the cost of the scheme is high told the meeting that there is currently no alternative to the high cost of the project due to legislation covering such installations.

A long discussion followed with many objections being voiced from the floor. The objections covered the large cost involved, visual and environmental impact on the locality – particularly for residents in Hadspen, as well as the apparent inefficiency of the proposed scheme.

The question was also raised as to why if 'Plan A' had already been approved that now a second far more expensive and intrusive scheme should go ahead.

It was suggested that every house in Lower Hadspen would have to bear the environmental and visual costs now proposed. Mr. Osborne also agreed that the proposed scheme is a more industrial option.

Ken Elliott also raised the subject of the archaeological interest of the area of the proposed site and the affect this installation would have.

Councillor Taylor produced an example of a scheme where for a fraction of the cost it would be possible to install a single, replacement, domestic scheme for the 3 properties (complying with European & British Standards). This type of scheme would cause very little disruption to Residents of Hadspen during both installation and operation. These systems also appear to require less maintenance (some schemes only need de-sludging every 3 to 5 years).

Alan Whittaker cited the installation installed at his property which cost approximately £2500 and would service 6 people.

Mr. Osborne said that he would take the objections to the current proposed landscaping back to the planners.

The members of the Council then discussed the proposed scheme.

It was established that the proposal seemed out of proportion in terms of scale and cost for three properties. The efficacy of the scheme was also called into question considering the frequency of the de-sludging required necessitating a tanker visit every 90 to 120 days. The scheme also requires a routine inspection every 1 to 4 weeks.

Councillor Carter was in favour of the reed bed solution other than size of fence and general landscaping.

Councillor Jury and **Councillor Beech** both asked that the whole scheme should be reviewed as it appeared to be excessive to the actual need.

Councillor Taylor mentioned errors in the proposal such as gateway locations & location of proposal.

The councillors voted that the scheme should be rejected with the objections of Pitcombe Parish Council submitted to Somerset County Council, with reference to the above issues, on a similar basis to the objections to Scheme.

8. The Hamlet of Pitcombe – Issues.

Councillor Beech told the meeting that certain land has been cleared in Pitcombe but the question needs to be asked if permission should have been granted before the work was undertaken. Ian Bell asked that the use of the land in question to be made clear.

Councillor Beech will form a question to put to Mr. Mayer at District Council which will then be forwarded by **Councillor Taylor**

9. Reports.

10. Items for next Agenda

The Hamlet of Pitcombe – Issues.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

To be held on Tuesday 10th February 2009 at 7.30pm in Hadspen Village Hall

Members of the Council considered the matters in the exercise of their functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability): Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.