

**PARISH OF HILLESLEY AND TRESHAM**  
**MINUTES OF 20<sup>th</sup> PARISH ASSEMBLY**  
**Meeting held at Hopkins Hall, Hillesley on**  
**Wednesday 21st April 2010**

**Present:** Cllr D Darlow (chair)  
H Cooke (clerk)  
**In attendance:** Cllr J Cordwell (County) and 13 other people

**1. Apologies for absence:**  
Cllr P Hemmings (district)

**2. Minutes of the last meeting:**  
The minutes of the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2009 were approved and signed by the Chair.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes**  
None.

**4. Briefing from Police Safety Team**  
WPC Tracy Brian from Dursley reported on local area crime rates. All incidents and suspicious circumstances should be reported so that they are recorded and can aid prevention planning in areas of known concern. She also emphasised the need to secure outbuildings especially in view of an increasing trend of quad bike thefts. In response to questions about playing field vandalism, she recommended the use of anti-vandal paint with signage. Fly-tipping should be reported to the SDC Neighbourhood warden and dog fouling to the SDC dog warden.

**5. Report of the Parish Council Parish Council**

- a. David Darlow, Parish Council Chairman reported that the past year has been one of stability, with all seven councillors who formed the new council last year continuing to serve. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were re-elected to office and Heather Cooke has remained the Clerk. There have been fewer external issues than there were last year, allowing the Council time make progress with some more local matters.
- b. One of the external issues was BT's threatened removal of the two telephone kiosks. Little changed in the past year, although BT did repeat its offer to allow the Parish Council to adopt the Tresham kiosk for a minimal sum. The Council decided instead to take a preferable course of action; to apply to English Heritage for listing of the kiosk and Victorian wall post box, as a group, and to inform BT and the District Council of that action. Subsequently, the kiosk has been damaged and has not yet been repaired.
- c. A new parish notice board has been installed near the Hillesley phone box. This replaces the one on the wall of Post Office Cottage and is large enough to allow the Parish Council to post statutory and other notices and others to display information about community facilities and events.
- d. In considering rental charges for allotment plots, the Council considered the

allotments to be a self-financing asset for the benefit of the community. With full occupancy, the rents, at £3 per plot, are covering costs.

- e. As hoped, progress has also been made with considering the future of community life in the parish. With the support of Gloucestershire Rural Community Council and the offer of grant assistance from the District Council, the Parish Council has initiated the process of preparing a Parish Plan. A well-attended drop-in session in 'The Fleece' in January drew out numerous ideas and showed that there was enough interest to make the preparation of a plan worthwhile as well as feasible. A small steering group has been drawn from the community and is now consulting more widely.
- f. To some extent, this process is running parallel with the development of the District Council's Core Strategy, which is intended to become a basic district wide guide for the local authorities decision makers. The District Council is consulting local people and Parish Councils at various stages and, in due course, the Parish Plan will act as a resource from which to feed in local information and views.
- g. Among other things that the Parish Council has had to handle has been a steady flow of consultations on planning applications, all requiring careful consideration and suitable response to the District Council. A new bus timetable in September left Tresham without a bus service and investigation of alternatives for the people who had relied on it. A further unexpected change in April 2010 was the change in route number to 86. Winter road maintenance was also an issue for a few weeks, with a shortage of salt and grit and the lack of functioning local snowplough.
- h. In the year ahead, the Parish Council will be supporting the development of the Parish Plan.
- i. Finally, I would like to thank various people for the support that they have given over the past year: my fellow parish councillors, Heather Cooke our clerk, Richard Goodenough for undertaking the internal audit, County John Cordwell and District Councillor Paul Hemming for attending meetings and taking up issues on our behalf.

## **6. Reports from Local Organisations**

### **a. Winter Jubilee Field Trust**

Steve Hayward, Chair of Trust and the Field Management Committee reported on the use of the field and village hall. Various fund raising events continue to be popular. Dean Gigg continued to mow the grass and Alistaire Johnstone continues to mow the toddler are. In addition there is a regular cleaner for the hall and pavilion. There has been significant progress on the Hall this year, finally knocking out the old toilet and putting the store room into operation. A core band of volunteers led by Martin Crossley have given the hall its first coat of paint since it was built in 1985. Curtain material was donated and a volunteer made them up to replace the old orange ones. There is still bits and pieces to do principally the storeroom and the hall lighting. The pavilion is now the Committees biggest problem due to work needed to the roof. A temporary has been fitted courtesy of Matt Aikenhead. As principal users, it is hoped that both the Cricket and Football clubs will provide support to refurbish the pavilion as a whole. The committee is grateful to the Parish Council for their continued financial support and additional funding during the past year.

### **b. St Giles Church**

Martin Crossley, Churchwarden reported on an interesting year in St Giles church and in the wider Christian community in the village. The central core of support for the

established church remains active week in week out, and large numbers are welcomed on the big occasion such as the main festivals. The church building continues to be open during the day for individuals to visit. "Giles Smiles", and has continued to be popular with younger children and their families, providing the opportunity for them to find out a little more about the church and its mission. Suggestions for provision for older children and young people have not been able to be taken forward and this remains an area for development. A grouping that has adopted the name "Faithworks" has developed from an initiative coming from Christians of various persuasions to "do something together". This group has met at irregular intervals and helped organise a few stimulating events. Now the group plans to move on to organise something called an Alpha Course. This will be open to anyone who wants to find out what the Christian faith is really all about.

c. Tresham Church

Richard Goodenough, Treasurer reported on the state of church funds. e had an overall surplus of £1,627 (2008 £2,289), bringing total funds to £14,482, up from £12,855 at the end of 2008, being the combined result of two funds: the General Fund and the Restricted Fund. The aim is to maintain a reasonable balance on the General Fund of around £3000 to £5000 and to gradually build the Restricted Fund so that it is able to meet capital costs over the years to come. It is believed this can be achieved with the support of local people through the collection box, our fund-raising activities and by grants and donations. The church is very grateful for this support.

d. Hillesley Baptist Burial Ground Trust

Caroline Webber reported that the Burial Ground continues to be maintained as a facility available to anyone in Hillesley and the local area. The grant received from the Parish council contributes towards the insurance of the ground which is always our largest expenditure. Most of our group live at some distance and some of us are elderly, so would welcome any help with mowing or hedge cutting if anyone has time to spare. Please contact [caroline.webber@mypostoffice.co.uk](mailto:caroline.webber@mypostoffice.co.uk) or Tess Docherty Tel.01453872357

e. Hillesley Allotment Association.

Lance Doughty, Chairman of the Association reported on a very busy and productive year. HAA was formed in order to aid development of the Parish allotments, and to establish a social link between plot holders. Annual subscriptions cost £10. Membership of the Association stands at 26, and there are 7 committee members. All plots are taken, growing an incredibly wide range of produce, and hosting a number of chickens. The Association has focused on a wide range of needs including water collection, manure supplies, social events and fundraising. At the Annual General Meeting in November 2009, outgoing Chair, Chris Hicks, summarised the achievements in the past year and thanked those responsible. The help of The Fleece (hosting meetings and socials), and the excellent support received from the Parish Council are much appreciated.

f. Hillesley Happenings

Carol Dawson, Editor explained that Hillesley Happenings is a free monthly newsletter for residents in Hillesley and Kilcott. It is produced and distributed by volunteers and its aim is to advise residents of forthcoming events and report on items of interest including school, village and local activities. From the feedback received from advertisers it would appear that villagers are keen to support local businesses. At the moment the newsletter is printed at very favourable rates and the revenue received from the

advertisements currently covers the cost. Thanks to all the contributors, without whom there would be no newsletter.

g. Mother & Toddlers Group

Arleen Greenwood, Treasurer reported that the group meet on Fridays in Hopkins Hall between 10 and 11.30am during term time. It is an invaluable support network, especially for first time mums or those new to the village.

h. Hillesley Primary School

Rebecca Arkle, Chair of Governors reported on the following:

Key Achievements:

- OFSTED Inspection on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009, assessed the school as “Good with Outstanding features”
- SIAS Faith inspection on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 assessed the school as “Good”
- 52 pupils on roll
- Full complement of Governors, with Louisa Bury, Julie Phillips & David Lamb joining the Governing body
- School dinners have been reintroduced, supplied by the Fleece Inn

Staffing:

- Mrs King has replaced Mrs Rebbeck & has settled in well in Yr 1, 2 & Reception
- Mrs Cooper has completed her NQT & continues to enthuse Yrs 3 & 4

Cluster resources

- New shared Handyman
- French teacher

Premises:

- New ICT suite has been completed
- Won funding for a new library from the Wotton Dental Practice writing competition
- The Friendship Garden has become established & forms part of school resources

Curriculum:

- Embedding the Creative Curriculum approach
- Continues to participate in the Making Good Progress pilot. This year Yr 6 pupils will complete Single Level Tests, as a replacement to SATs
- Silver Arts Mark Award
- International Status
- Seeking “Eco Status” award

Community:

- Tyndale Cluster celebrated 20 years of collaboration & continues with a membership of 6 schools
- Inter-school events include football, rounders (Hillesley won!), Nature Quiz, K’Nex challenge
- Cycling proficiency qualification
- FOHS continue to support the school with fundraising events

**7. Report from Village Agent**

The Village Agent Richard Bellis reminded the meeting that he is available to support those over 50 by providing contacts and advice on a range of issues.

**8. Report from County Councillor**

Cllr John Cordwell provided an informative report on his work, County and regional changes and events of the past year, and changes in charges and services:

- a. County Elections: the County Council elections held on 4<sup>th</sup> June last year when Cllr Cordwell retained his seat with an increased majority on a lower turnout. Overall, the Conservatives gained seats at the expense of Labour, achieving an overall majority and forming the Administration.
- b. County Council Budget. It has been known for over a year that to meet the pressures on the council's budget it would be necessary to make savings of at least £60M over the next three years. The County Council Cabinet tabled their first draft budget in December which required a 2.3% increase in council tax.  
With respect to the job cuts, in the first stage, 179 members of staff over the age of 50 applied for voluntary retirement and 126 were approved. By not filling vacant posts, staff reducing their hours and voluntary early retirement, the council's workforce will fall by 180 FTE posts and generate £21m of savings over three years at a one-off cost of £3.1M.
- c. Winter Weather. During the winter a national shortage of salt led to the Government taking control over its replenishment which caused problems for councils. The Government also instructed councils to reduce their salt usage by 25% to preserve stocks. A number of snow wardens, including some locally were unaware of their duties and powers, a situation not improved since January last year. The 2009/10 version of the Adverse Weather Plan only appeared on 4<sup>th</sup> January, and was not circulated to parishes or snow wardens.
- d. Pothole Repairs. The extra damage inflicted on the roads by last winter's bad weather has resulted in the County Council's cabinet member for highways approving a temporary highways inspection policy which deals with the highest priority defects (Category 1) first. This has been done in association with the county's insurers and, having raised the question, I understand that insurance claims will not be successful unless the county is not meeting this temporary inspection policy. (A Category 1 pothole is at least 75mm deep and 300mm x300mm at the road surface.)
- e. Regional Spatial Strategy. This plan gives a strategic overview of development in the South West region. A new plan covering the years 2006 to 2026 has been in preparation. The Secretary of State was expected to announce a final decision on its content last June. However, following a High Court judgment stating that the plan for the East of England region did not meet certain requirements, the Government delayed the publication of the new South West RSS until the potential implications of this ruling were known.
- f. Residual Waste Contract. This took a further step forward in December when the County Council cabinet whittled down the shortlisted bidders from 8 to 4. All the contractors propose to make use of Javelin Park, but in some cases final processing would take place outside the county.
- g. Local Transport Plan (LTP3). The next roll forward of the LTP will cover the time period from April 2011 onwards. A public consultation took place to establish what residents see as the top priorities. Unsurprisingly the condition of local roads was the top priority. A massive Government cut in capital spending on transport is expected after the general election, whoever wins.
- h. Rights of Way. There are currently 86 applications from the public for alterations to

the Definitive Map. Of these, 4 are regarded as high priority and 33 as medium priority. Staff to deal with these have been cut from 1.6 full time equivalent (FTE) in November 2008, which was insufficient to keep up with the workload, to 0.8 FTE following an early retirement which has since taken place.

- i. Public Question Time at Cabinet Meetings. A request for a public question time and presentation of petitions at Cabinet meetings was put to the Constitution Committee of the County Council in January. The County Council is the only principal authority in Gloucestershire that does not allow the public to question the council's executive at Cabinet meetings.
- j. Hillesley & Tresham bus. Tresham bus service, number 627, was cut last September. The service was subsidised by both South Gloucestershire Council and Gloucestershire County Council. The reasons given for the cut were: few passengers and a higher contract price from the new operator; the narrowness of the road from Alderley to Tresham and the chances of meeting something coming the other way; that the bus could not turn round in Tresham and as a result has to do a lot of extra miles via the A46. Local parish councillors have confirmed that a turning space could have been provided in Tresham. Alternative community services have the disadvantage that bus passes can't be used on them. An on-line petition to the Prime Minister asking for bus passes to be made valid on Community Transport schemes has been instigated: <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/commtransport/>. It runs until 26<sup>th</sup> April.
- k. Vale of Berkeley College. Following last year's Badman Report, which recommended the closure of the Vale of Berkeley College, the County Council's Cabinet Member for Schools consulted on two options.

#### **9. Report from District Councillor**

In his absence, Cllr Paul Hemming's report was tabled.

- a. The past 12 months has in general been relatively uneventful.
- b. Canal restoration work has continued through the year and is still on target to be completed in 2014.
- c. A Leisure Services Options Appraisal continues with the aim of placing a contract for the management of Stratford Park Leisure Centre and possibly Dursley Pool from November 2011. At the same time support for other services, notably Wotton Pool, are either scheduled to be reduced or discontinued.
- d. Community Safety continues to be uppermost and a partnership with Cotswold set up with the possibility of a formal partnership after a 12 month trial. This should result in cost saving and a unified approach. Under the community safety heading, a street drinking prohibition order should come into force in Dursley on May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- e. There have been a number of changes within the administration at Stroud which lead to a new leader of the council and a change in Cabinet members. In line with other echelons there has also been much scrutiny of expenses and spending by members.
- f. Stroud increased its portion of the Council Tax by 2.5%. Inevitably this may mean further cost saving in order to complete projects in the pipeline or more reductions in services offered.

#### **10. Items from Public Participation and other issues.**

None.

**11. Meeting closed at 8.45 pm**

I certify that the above minutes are a correct record of the above meeting

Signed: .....

Date: .....