

## COLLINGBOURNE DUCIS PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT COLLINGBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 6 MAY 2004 AT 7.00 PM

**Present:** Dist Cllr A Still (Chairman)  
Cllrs Bale, Carter, Cogdell, Cox, Molyneux-Downs, Price,  
J C Robinson, J W Robinson, Shields and Stone, County Cllr M Connolly,  
Dr B King, Mr J Mason, PC J Davis, Mrs L Rogers, Mr J Dowsett  
and four members of the public.

**Apologies for absence:** None

#### **1. Annual Report of the Parish Council.**

The Chairman said that this year had been a disappointing one for the Parish Council with the closure of the Village Hall because of damage to the roof and the loss of the recreation ground play area due to vandalism. Wiltshire County Council Youth Section are looking at funding this in the future. There has also been damage to the two wooden bus shelters leading to the one at Everleigh Road being removed. The shelter by the shop is to be refurbished but Cllr Still warned that the council cannot fund further repairs if it continues to suffer damage.

The good news is that the new school is due to open later during the year and several thousand pounds have been raised by the Friends of Collingbourne School and the PTA to supply new equipment.

The village now has two Flood Wardens, Cllrs Still and Shields who will be on hand to deal with possible future problems.

The Senior Environmental Health Officer for Kennet District Council will attend the next Parish Council meeting on 3 June to give an update on what they are doing to deal with the problem of flies this year. Cllr Still said that his year as Chairman had been one of the most depressing periods in the village and reminded those present that seven years ago it won first prize in its class in the Best Kept Village Competition. He hoped that things would improve in the coming year.

#### **2. Summary of the Council's financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2004.**

Cllr J W Robinson said he anticipated that the un-audited annual statement of accounts will be available for approval by the Parish Council at the July meeting.

In the year ended 31 March 2004 the Parish Council operated within the income and expenditure budgets set for the year. There were no significant items of over-expenditure in the year. Savings were made in Councillors' and Clerk's expenses, elections, training costs and the contingency was not used. Income was in line with budget.

Reserves at the end of the financial year were approximately £16,000. This has been allocated to the Village Hall Roof Fund (£5,000) Knapp Close play area refurbishment (£4,088) and burial ground refurbishment and recreation ground play area repairs (£4,000).

#### **3. Governors' Report from Collingbourne C E Primary School.**

Chair of Governors Dr B King introduced Mr Jeff Mason who succeeded Mrs J Wright as headteacher in January this year. She reported that there were 100 children on role with 5 full-time members of staff and no part-time teachers after the completion of this year's SATs at the end of May. The school community was very excited about moving into their new premises at the end of the October term and Dr King thanked everyone who had helped with fund-raising to equip the new school.

Mr Mason thanked the Parish Council for inviting him to the meeting and said he had had a very warm welcome at the school and feels very much at home there. He was looking forward to moving the present school forward and sees the new school as just a stage further in this process. He will try to make sure the move itself is a simple one. The official opening will take place in the term before Christmas. In a sense the new school itself is already part of the curriculum with regular visits by the children to the site and by Mr Grant Pomphrey, Site Manager, to the school. The new school will have fantastic facilities which they are looking to share with the wider community in the future.

Dr King and Mr Mason then answered questions from those present.

#### **4. Observations of Wiltshire County Cllr Connolly.**

Cllr Connolly reported that concerns regarding the original access to the new school site via the village hall had been taken on board and a new entrance for the school, via Chicks Lane, was factored in. The 30 mph speed limit will be extended to beyond the village hall entrance as part of the package and a traffic calming measure near the entrance to the school will also be put in place.

The Electoral Commission has recommended that the Collingbournes and Everleigh be placed into a new county seat called Bedwyn and Collingbourne. This seat will be huge with some 17 Parishes for one County Councillor to cover.

The County Council raised its Council Tax by 5.98% this year. This increase would have been less than inflation if Central Government had not held back for the second year running £6M that Wiltshire was entitled to under the new funding arrangements that had been brought in for local government last year. The leader of the County Council was given good news by BT who confirmed that it was upgrading over 1200 exchanges to take broadband by June 2005. BT has stated that all exchanges covering Wiltshire would be included in these upgrades.

Cllr Connolly has been nominated by the Tidworth Community Area Partnership to lead on the transport element of the Area Plan. He is working with County to ensure that a package of schemes is put together to be included in the next 5 year Local Transport Plan that County submits to Central Government next year and is looking for any ideas for schemes and new members for the committee. A questionnaire will be sent to every household in the Community Area to assess the requirement for community transport.

Cllr Connolly then answered questions from those present.

#### **5. Report from District Cllr A Still.**

Kennet District Council raised its council tax by 5% this year – a move forced upon it by Central Government. Scheduled increases for last year, this year and next year will increase council tax by 15%.

The revenue reserve at Kennet District Council stands at just under £3M but cannot be used for revenue. Although the houses in Saunders Meadow were all occupied last year the council tax paid went into the revenue reserve as the tax had already been set for the year. Kennet is not classified as a poor area.

South East Kennet Area Forum now meets twice a year instead of every three months. It feeds information into the local strategic partnership Tidworth Development Trust. If those who organise the Forum can be encouraged to publicise meetings it will in turn encourage people to attend and ask questions.

Kennet District Council has £80,000 available for grants this year and any voluntary organisations can apply for funding for community activities.

Cllr Still then answered questions from those present.

#### **6. Report from Wiltshire Constabulary.**

PC John Davis informed the meeting that Sgt Paul Oatway has now retired after 32 years service 9 of which were spent at Tidworth. Last year he was awarded the Queen's Police Medal. He will be taking up a civilian post at Salisbury Police Station.

His replacement at Tidworth will be Sgt Mick Woods who is coming from Salisbury to join them.

This year's crime figures indicate that Tidworth section continues to be one of the safest areas in the county with a detection rate of 37.7% despite a reduction in staff numbers by 3. There were 24 recorded crimes of which 6 were burglaries to dwellings, 3 were burglaries to farm buildings, 7 criminal damage, 1 arson and 1 theft.

PC Davis then answered questions from those present.

#### **7. Statement of Accounts from the Village Hall Trust.**

Mrs Lindie Rogers reported a very warm and reassuring response to their appeal following the disaster of the village hall roof. The hall is a facility that the village has got used to having and hopefully it will re-open in September. Several Parish Councillors have been very supportive and although they might not always be in agreement it has been a very positive collaboration. The Village Hall Trust will have to pay in the region of £10,000 VAT on the cost of the repair work and Mrs Rogers appealed to the Council to consider requisitioning the work on their behalf so that it could then reclaim the VAT.

Mr John Dowsett reported that £25,000 has been received in cash and £23,000 is pledged making a total of £48,000 towards the repair work. Costing is proving a very slow and tortuous process. They now have a reduced specification and are awaiting tenders. They are also awaiting the results of two more applications for funding. As they do not want to compete for funding with many other organisations in the villages they have no held a lot of fund-raising events.

Mrs Rogers and Mr Dowsett then answered questions from those present.

#### **8. Report from the Bypass Action Group.**

Cllr Shields reported that an open meeting on 16 May 2003 was very poorly attended despite being advertised by a flyer in the Courier. Only some 34 households in Ducis and Kingston were represented and subsequently only 22 persons expressed an active interest in pursuing the objectives of the Group.

With further government cut backs on road building and in particular bypasses there is little prospect of anything being achieved in either the near or medium term future. Even the A338/A346 Working Group appears to have lost its momentum to strive for overall improvements along this route.

However the work of lobbying and obtaining sound statistical data on traffic flows through the village needs to be maintained so that the Group is in a position to present a strong case if and when government attitudes change and funding may become available.

In the light of this a Traffic Count was once again carried out in July 2003. The total vehicle count of 8,807 did not maintain the upward trend of the past four years but significantly the overall count of HGVs rose from 8.5% of the total in 2002 to 9.2%.

Of most concern was the fact that some 20.9% of HGVs were 6 axle articulated vehicles compared with 17.2% in 2002. The inevitable trend towards the larger, higher payload continues. A new count period from 5 am to 7 am showed a much lower traffic volume than had been anticipated.

Given the necessary support a further count will be held in July 2004.

Cllr Shields then answered questions from those present.

#### **9. Written Resolutions.**

There being no resolutions to consider the Chairman thanked all the speakers.

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm.