

**COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on**  
**Wednesday 10 December 2008 in the Meridian School at 7.30pm**

Members present:	Dr C Chambers	Mr E Halford
Councillors:	Mr D Charge	Mrs J Horne
	Mr A Hollick	Dr J McCabe
	Mrs D Morison	Dr R Rintoul
	Miss C Westgarth (Chairman)	Mr J Walsh

In attendance: Mrs Gail Stoehr (Clerk)

**Comments & observations from members of the public**

None.

**1. To approve apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

Apologies were received from Mrs Hyde (ill) and Mr Rowlands (work commitment). Cllr Harangozo's apologies were also noted.

**2. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 8 October 2008**

On a proposition by Dr McCabe, seconded by Dr Chambers, the minutes of the previous meeting on 12 November 2008 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters arising or carried forward from the meeting or a previous meeting for discussion or decision**

**3.1 (3.1) Co-option to fill casual vacancy**

It was agreed to co-opt Mr Serby of Barton Road onto the Council if he was willing to accept. This was proposed by Miss Westgarth, seconded by Dr McCabe and agreed with one abstention.

**3.2 (7.2) Communities and Local Government – Codes of Conduct for local authority members and employees consultation<sup>1</sup>**

Consideration was given to the consultation and there was a consensus that there was no problem with extending the code to members' non-official capacity also, but concerns were expressed about the encroachment of criminal offences into the code and whether constraints were reasonable given that all councillors were volunteers.

**3.3 (7.3) CPALC - Affiliation**

It was noted that training costs were additional to membership fees and training and legal advice was available elsewhere. It was agreed to suspend membership for twelve months as this would be approximately £600 saving to the Council and schedule this for review at a future meeting.

**3.4 (3.2) Chair Delegation Meeting Policy<sup>2</sup>**

The email from David Rush at SCDC was considered which indicated that Cllr Wright had changed his mind about a review of the policy. The Parish Council was disappointed with the change of mind and considered the consultation process a hollow one. It was agreed to write to Cllr Wright, with appropriate copies to interested parties asking him to reconsider. It was also agreed that if he did not to escalate the matter to the Scrutiny Committee.

**3.5 (7.3) Engaging Communities Meeting**

Mr Hollick had attended and he reported on the meeting which had discussed Local Area Agreements, the Strategic Partnerships and Parish Plans.

#### 4. **County Councillor and District Councillor reports & questions**

Cllr Harangozo's written report was noted.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. **Finance, procedure & risk assessment**

##### 5.1 **To receive the financial report and to approve the payment of bills**<sup>4</sup>

The financial report was received and considered and checked by a member against the invoices and statements before the cheques were signed. On a proposition by Mrs Horne, seconded by Mr Walsh, it was agreed that the payments as listed in the financial report for November should be paid, plus CCC £3757.65 (interactive sign), Buchans £172.21, C Westgarth £26.13 (Christmas lights events reimbursement).

SCDC (Rates)	£129.00
Royal Mail (PO Box renewal)	£120.30
Grounds by Rounds (grass cutting)	£103.64
Jason Moore (bus shelter repair)	£916.50
A Marsh (pavilion cleaning)	£150.00
R T Abraham (handyman)	£35.00
LG Stoehr (salary)	£144.69
LGS Services (admin support)	£1435.51

Credits received from the recreation ground/pavilion and the precept and sponsorship for the Christmas lights were noted.

##### 5.2 **Assets Review**<sup>5</sup>

Dr McCabe's report was considered. It was agreed to report to SCDC that dog bins in Milner Road and Hillfield Road were not being emptied and a dog sign (on order) was required at the Drift. Responsibility for wire fencing by the recreation ground is to be clarified. It was agreed to revisit the finger posts project which was still outstanding and this was carried forward to next meeting to allow the Focus Group to make recommendations regarding positioning and cost implications etc. General maintenance items as identified in the report is to be put in hand.

##### 5.3 **Freedom of Information Policy Review**<sup>6</sup>

On a proposal by Dr McCabe, seconded by Dr Chambers it was agreed that the current model policy already meets the Council's requirements and is to be put into the required format. It was also agreed that the current charging at cost for any papers etc should continue but that the Council reserves the right to waiver any costs under £5 as this is not cost effective to administer.

##### 5.4 **Budget Working Group – to agree membership & set date of meeting**

On a proposition by Miss Westgarth, seconded by Dr McCabe, a working group was set up with the following terms of reference:

- a working group to prepare a recommendation to the next Parish Council meeting on the budget for 2010. The working group is asked to take the baseline budget which will be prepared by the Clerk and consider this against the principles that were agreed last year and add any special projects etc to it before making recommendation to the Council

Membership Mr Walsh, Dr Chambers (convenor), Mrs Horne, Mrs Morison and Miss Westgarth,. The meeting will take place on 7 January 2009 at 8pm at the home of Dr Chambers.

It was agreed to seek clarification on the new development planning levy and its trigger points and operation and if this is in the place of community benefit via a S106 Agreement or in addition.

#### 6. **To receive reports and members items and consider recommendations contained therein**

##### 6.1 **Planning Committee**<sup>7</sup>

The report was taken as read. It was noted that Northern Affordable Homes had received approval for eleven houses with numerous conditions. There was some confusion over a decision notice which had been received for S/1531/08 - Westfield Farm, Royston Lane which the Committee thought had been withdrawn.

6.2 Affordable Housing Working Group

Mr Halford reported on the meeting he had attended at SCDC to discuss the terms of the Northern Affordable Homes development; notes of which had not as yet been received and these are to be chased.

6.3 Recreation Ground Working Group<sup>8</sup>

The draft constitution is to be carried forward to the new year, and it was agreed that this is not to be on the agenda until a firm proposal and recommendation has been received from the Recreation Ground working group.

6.4 Transport Working Group

The outcome of the Minor Improvement Scheme bid is not as yet known.

6.5 Tree Group – Long Road Trees

A request has been received from a farmer in Long Road to remove the overhanging branches on the horse chestnut trees. It was agreed to contact Denis Vacher at CCC to see if he would be willing to undertake some work if not then quotations are to be obtained. It was noted that the trees were not suffering from a fatal disease.

**7. To consider matters arising out of correspondence/communications received**

7.1 Sustainable Communities Act<sup>9</sup>

It was agreed that anything which enhanced the Parish Council's powers and ability to enhance the lives of its parishioners was to be supported. As the Parish Council could not use the new Act unless adopted by the principle authorities also it was agreed to write to both CCC & SCDC urging them to adopt the Act.

7.2 Herringland Charity Trustee Vacancy – to appoint<sup>10</sup>

Mrs Morison declared an interest as a trustee. In response to the letter from Dr Hoskin on a proposal by Miss Westgarth, seconded by Dr Chambers Peter Mitton was appointed as trustee to the charity.

**8. Closure of meeting**

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed ..... Chairman ..... date

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NB:

- Unless indicated otherwise all actions arising from the Council's decisions in these minutes will be carried out by the Clerk as Proper Officer on the Parish Council's behalf as part of her normal duties.
- These documents below are listed as background information to the correspondence and documents that the Council considered and do not form part of the minutes.

<sup>1</sup> Communities and Local Government – Code of Conduct for local authority members and employees consultation

<sup>2</sup> Email from David Rush at SCDC

<sup>3</sup> District Cllr's report (email dated 08/12/08)

<sup>4</sup> Finance report

<sup>5</sup> Assets review

<sup>6</sup> Freedom of Information Policy

<sup>7</sup> Planning report

<sup>8</sup> Sustainable Communities Act

<sup>9</sup> Recreation Working group draft constitution

<sup>10</sup> Letter of nomination from A Hoskin for Herringland Trustee