

SADBERGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 15th April 2008 in Sadberge Village Hall

Present: Councillor Scaife [Chair]
Councillors Best, Glew, Schott and Vickers

In attendance: Councillor Brian Jones Alastair Mackenzie – Clerk

1. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Councillors Brown and Heywood.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

3.1 The minutes of the meeting on 4th March 2008 were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

3.2 The minutes of the meeting on 18th March 2008 were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

4.1 Proposed development at Cherry Tree Farm, Beacon Hill. The independent report on the revised application says that the business plan is viable and that there is a need for a temporary dwelling on the site.

The following points were made during the discussion:-

- Because of the threat from avian influenza ("bird flu"), poultry units containing more than fifty hens have to be registered. Also, European guidelines state that people should not live within a certain distance of poultry.
- It would be difficult to prevent free range hens from coming into contact with wild birds.
- It should be possible for Mr. Littlefair to buy a house in Beacon Hill for use by his stockman. This would be sufficiently close to Cherry Tree Farm.
- The planning application is likely to be considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 30th April 2008. People wishing to express opposition to planning applications are now allowed longer to make their points. They can also ask questions of the Planning Officers and can come back with additional comments once the Planning Officers have had their say.

It was decided to write to Darlington Borough Council to reiterate Sadberge Parish Council's concerns about the proposed development at Cherry Tree Farm.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

4.2 Caravan on agricultural land north of Lea Close. It has been observed that Mr. Walker-Coates has been installing kerb stones and cutting back trees and bushes. These do not appear to be the actions of someone preparing to leave the site in the near future.

It was decided to write to the Borough Solicitor requesting that prompt and robust enforcement measures are taken to remove the caravan and dog kennels from the land if Mr. Walker-Coates has not left by the specified date.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

4.3 The Clerk has still to write to Darlington Borough Council asking for clarification about the ownership of the land between 1 Hillside Terrace and Stockton Road.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

4.4 Stray cats in Dale Road.

Representatives of the National Animal Sanctuary Support League (NASSL) have succeeded in trapping four cats. One had tumours in its mouth and had to be put down. The others have been neutered and moved to NASSL's cat sanctuary.

It is proving difficult to trap the cats, but NASSL will persevere.

Stray cats have also been seen in the Laurel Terrace area.

The Clerk will write to NASSL thanking them for their efforts and asking them to continue the work.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

The Clerk will contact the new owners of 10 Dale Road to let them know about the operation to feed and trap the feral cats and to check that they have no objection to this continuing.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

4.5 The plaque on the village green has still to be refurbished. The village hall stage will be available during the week commencing 21-Apr-2008.

4.6 Councillor Scaife reported on a meeting that was held in Bishopton on Tuesday 8-Apr-2008 to discuss the proposed wind farms at East and West Newbiggin.

An action group has been formed to oppose the wind farms. The next meeting of this action group will be held in Bishopton Village Hall at 6:30 p.m. on 8-May-2008.

The wind turbines would be five times the height of the Angel of the North.

Councillor Brian Jones has written to the Managing Director of Durham Tees Valley Airport. The Airport and the MOD have both objected to the proposed wind farms.

Sadberge Parish Council re-affirmed its opposition to the wind farms.

4.7 New bridleway linking Sadberge to Middleton St. George and Darlington. Yvonne Ramage has found out who owns the forest track to the north of Sadberge Hall. There are three different owners, which will make things rather more complicated. Yvonne will continue to work towards getting the new bridleway established.

4.8 Road leading to Well House. Dave McGuckin of Darlington Borough Council's Highway Maintenance team has proposed a scheme to reconstruct the road leading to Well House. The scheme would involve putting in new sub strata layers where required, laying a new surface and installing kerbing along the edge of the road beside the village green at Spring Garth. The total cost of the scheme would be about £3,200 and Sadberge Parish Council's contribution (for the kerbing) would be £650.

After discussion, it was agreed to accept Dave McGuckin's proposal provided that Darlington Borough Council agrees to carry out any future repairs if the new kerb is damaged by heavy vehicles (in particular, the bin wagon). The Clerk will contact Dave McGuckin to make the necessary arrangements.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

4.9 The Clerk has sent an email to Dave Winstanley to ask about the possibility of turning some of the grassed area in The Orchard into additional parking spaces, but has not yet received a reply.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

5. Planning

5.1 The Council considered planning application 08/00287/FUL, which is for the reconstruction of the existing bungalow to incorporate a ground and first floor extension and a conservatory to the rear at 10 Dale Road.

The following points were made during the discussion:-

- The "reconstructed" house would be completely out of keeping with both the bungalows on the western part of Dale Road and the houses to the east.
- Because it is at the end of the row of bungalows, and is adjacent to the two-storey houses in the eastern part of Dale Road, turning 10 Dale Road into a two-storey house would not be too disruptive to the character of the road if the design was in keeping with the other houses on Dale Road.

- Allowing this bungalow to be turned into a two-storey house might set a precedent that would make it difficult to prevent other bungalows from being turned into two-storey houses in future. That would spoil the character of the area.
- The original builder placed a restrictive covenant on the property title of 10 Dale Road to the effect that it must remain a single storey building. The builder, Mr. Abdale, was proud of the design of the two roads and wished to ensure that the character of the neighbourhood was not spoiled by inappropriate development.

The Clerk will contact Mr. Abdale to find out more about the covenant.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

After discussion, the Council decided to object to planning application 08/00287/FUL for the following reasons:-

- The proposed design is out of character with the surrounding dwellings.
- Allowing one of the Dale Road bungalows to be turned into a two-storey house might set a precedent that would make it difficult to refuse permission for the same to be done to other bungalows on the same road.
- The covenant on the property title does not allow the bungalow to be turned into a two-storey house.

5.2 The Council decided not to comment on planning application 08/00105/FUL.

6. Land on the north side of east Close to the west of Pleasant View

It was agreed that the Parish Council has no objection to a local resident clearing the nettles, etc. from the small piece of open land on the north side of East Close to the west of Pleasant view.

7. Bus service for Sadberge

7.1 The Clerk and Councillor Brian Jones will meet Darlington Borough Council's Transport Policy Manager to discuss the arrangements for the consultation about the design of the new bus service for Sadberge and the other villages to the north-east of Darlington.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

7.2 If necessary, the Clerk will call an extra meeting of Sadberge Parish Council to discuss the consultation process.

7.3 What has happened to the money from Reiver Homes?

8. Darlington Association of Parish Councils

Councillor Brian Jones gave a report on the matters discussed at the DAPC meeting on 6-Mar-2008.

8.1 The DAPC has suggested that Darlington Borough Council should appoint a Cabinet member for the rural area. Cabinet member Jenny Chapman will come to a DAPC meeting to discuss how the rural area can be represented.

8.2 Darlington Borough Council is reviewing its financial support for rural communities. Each parish council will be asked how it uses its grant from the Borough Council.

The Clerk will write to Councillor Brian Jones outlining how Sadberge Parish Council would use grant funding from the Borough Council. The main uses are (a) implementation of the Parish Plan and (ii) the annual village festival.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

9. Speed of vehicles on Hill House Lane

9.1 There is a continuing problem with vehicles speeding on Hill House Lane. Councillor Brian Jones has asked Michael Straugheir (Traffic Management Officer in Durham Constabulary) to arrange speed monitoring. Michael Straugheir has asked Darlington Borough Council to carry out the monitoring, but there is no fixed time-scale at the moment because the Borough Council are waiting for additional radar units.

9.2 The Council thanked Councillor Brian Jones for his efforts.

Councillor Glew and Councillor Brian Jones left the meeting.

10. Closure of Sadberge Post Office

10.1 The Clerk gave a report on the efforts to set up a post office counter in the village hall.

- The Sadberge Village Hall Association Management Committee has agreed in principle that a post office counter can be set up in either the Dance Studio or the Pre-School Room (with the Pre-School Group moving to the Dance Studio).
- Setting up the post office counter would cost somewhere in the range £5,000 to £10,000+, depending on whether it is possible to obtain a second hand counter.
- A local resident is willing to take on the role of Subpostmistress, but does not want to put in any up-front funding.

10.2 The following points were made during the discussion:-

- The Post Office is apparently asking for a £4,000 - £5,000 "goodwill payment". If this is correct, this would effectively rule out any possibility of opening a post office counter in the village hall. Is the Post Office trying to put a hurdle in the way of re-establishing a post office in Sadberge?
- For older people, it is a long walk up to the village hall from the centre of the village.
- Is there anything to prevent the Post Office from closing down the new post office counter after a year or two?
- Could the money from Reiver Homes be used to pay for installing a post office counter?

10.3 It was agreed that Sadberge Parish Council supports, in principle, the efforts to establish a post office counter in the village hall.

10.4 The Clerk will arrange a meeting of all interested parties – including the Post Office – to discuss the options for establishing a post office counter in the village hall.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

11. Calor Village of the Year competition

11.1 Arrangements are in hand for the Calor Village of the Year judging visit on the morning of Friday 18-Apr-2008.

11.2 It was decided to enter Sadberge for the 2008 Calor Tees Valley Village of the Year competition.

ACTION: Councillor Scaife /
A Mackenzie

12. Village Festival

12.1 Arrangements are proceeding for the village festival on Saturday 21st June 2008. Further forms need to be completed to satisfy the Public Events Safety Advisory Group (PESAG).

12.2 The theme for this year's festival will be "A Midsummer Dream".

13. Parish Plan

13.1 Work on implementing the Parish Plan has continued to be delayed by the need to focus attention on the campaign to preserve a bus service for Sadberge and the efforts to establish a post office counter in the village hall.

13.2 Alastair Mackenzie will arrange a meeting of the Steering Group.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

13.3 Local residents have started work on the village garden opposite Pleasant View. The Clerk will write to Pam & Burt Clayton thanking them for their efforts. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

14. Newsletter

14.1 A draft of the next issue of Sadberge Parish News will be presented at the next meeting.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

15. Sadberge Parish Meeting and Sadberge Parish Council Annual Meeting

15.1 The Sadberge Parish Meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 20th May 2008, with the Annual Meeting of Sadberge Parish Council following immediately afterwards.

15.2 If possible, refreshments (i.e. teas, coffees, etc.) will be provided.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

15.3 The Clerk will organise a flyer to inform residents about the meetings.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

16. Correspondence

The Council noted the following correspondence:-

16.1 Letter from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) about an Open Day on Saturday 10-May-2008.

16.2 Letter from Darlington Borough Council about the Local List of Validation Requirements for Planning Applications.

17. Next meeting

The Annual Meeting of Sadberge Parish Council will held in Sadberge Village Hall at on the evening of Tuesday 20th May 2008. The Parish Council meeting will follow immediately after the Parish Meeting, which starts at 6:30 p.m.

**Alastair Mackenzie
Clerk**

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 15th APRIL 2008

I hereby certify that these minutes are a true record of the meeting.

Signed: Councillor M Scaife _____ Date _____