

QUORNDON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Quorn Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 13 May 2008 at 7p.m
in the Council Chamber at Quorn Village Hall
under the Chairmanship of Cllr P. Child, Chairman of Quorn Parish Council.

PRESENT

Cllr P Child (Chairman)
Cllr I Bexon
Cllr J Bloodworth
Cllr D Cawdell
Cllr K Paterson

Cllr T Rodgers
Cllr T Stirling
Cllr T Tyler
Cllr E Harrison

County Councillor T Kershaw (for Minutes 01-06)

22 electors

Mrs L Swinfield – Parish Clerk
Ms K Newman – Administrative Assistant

08/01 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G Glover (holiday), Mrs S Templeman (holiday) and Borough Councillors R Shepherd and D Slater (prior engagement)

08/02 MINUTES

The minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 4 April 2007 were received and approved as a correct record.

08/03 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman welcomed everyone and paid tribute to former members of Quorn Parish Council who had left since the previous Parish Meeting: Jo Backus, John Maltby and John Hutchinson, who had been a member of the Council for over 25 years, and Chairman for 16.

He also expressed the great loss felt by the Council following the sudden death of Councillor Peter Webster, shortly after his election as a Member in May 2007. Cllr Webster had placed his considerable talents at the Council's disposal, in the capacity of a volunteer, for some time previously, and he was much missed.

Over the previous year, the Council had completed the Banks project and held a successful and enjoyable opening ceremony.

A new Clerk and Administrative Assistant had been recruited and a new Parish office set up and running.

The project to save the Old School was well underway. A business plan had been sent to Leicestershire County Council and the project would hear in June if it had been successful in acquiring the buildings.

The Stafford Orchard renovation project, known as Parks for People, had passed Stage I and if successful at Stage II would receive around £650,000 of Heritage Lottery Fund money for renewal and improvement of park facilities. A final consultation had been carried out at the May Day event on May 3 and an application for planning permission would be submitted in June.

New seating and lighting had been installed in the Village Hall, along with new ladies' lavatories including a disabled persons' facility, and there were plans to renovate the gents' along the same lines.

Funds raised to support various projects included £1,000 from Charnwood BC for lighting at the Banks, a £6,800 Arts grant from Charnwood BC for the Village Hall seating and lighting, £7,451 from Charnwood BC for a children's slide at Caves Field, £300 from Astra Zeneca for a children's slide, £2,000 from Charnwood BC for the Christmas lights and a £15,363 grant from Leicestershire CC's FLAG fund for the upgrading of the Ladies' lavatory in the Village Hall.

Day to day life in the Parish Council included the removal of around 1,300 bags of rubbish from the streets of Quorn over the year (with the Borough Council collecting a further 5,200 or so), installing eight new 'heritage' litter bins, the repairing of over 25 street lights, cutting back 30 areas of vegetation from footpaths in the village, installing fencing at Caves Field, repairing two bus shelters, new hand rails in the Memorial Gardens, implementing a rolling maintenance programme for play equipment and street furniture (including the repair, renovation or replacement of benches and play structures), putting up a new public noticeboard and persuading the Environment Agency to de-silt and clear the brook.

In 2007/8, £2,381 had been disbursed in Section 137 payments.

The Chairman thanked various people who had contributed to the life of the village over the previous year: the retired Clerk Mrs Kathryn Paterson, the Centre Arts team who put on the village film shows, concerts and other productions; the Christmas Lights team of Joan Bloodworth and Terry Stirling; the village design team, whose Village Design Statement had now been adopted as supplementary planning guidance; the May Day team; the Quorn in Bloom team; Jane Hollingsworth, who manages the Memorial Garden and the planters; the Environment Agency, which had refurbished the steps in the Memorial Garden; the Quorndon magazine; the village website staff; the Police; the Officers of the County and Borough Councils; Tree Warden Peter Gamble and Footpath Warden Ken Brown; Beryl Holland, the former Village Hall Bookings Clerk, who helped staff the Parish Office on Saturdays; David Southwart, the Council's honorary internal auditor; Chris Lester, the village handyman; Derek Allen, who undertook many repair jobs and Carole Allen, who kept the Village Hall spick and span; Ken Hornridge, the weekend litter-picker; Parish Clerk Lindsay Swinfield; Administrative Assistant Katharine Newman; his fellow Councillors; and the parishioners of Quorn.

08/04 POLICE REPORT

No Police Officer was present at the meeting and there was no report.

08/05 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Parish Accounts to 31 March 2007 were noted. The Chairman of the Finance Committee explained how the precept was used as seed funding for grants from other bodies. Section 137 grants were awarded by the Parish Council to local organisations for community purposes and were usually of the order of £100. Questioned about the Gratuities Fund, he replied that it was an amount set aside, paid to the previous Clerk as a lump sum on retirement, in lieu of a pension; this facility had now ceased.

08/06 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

County Cllr Kershaw explained his role representing Quorn at County level, and explaining County Council policy and action at Parish level. He gave as an example the Old School project, saying he hoped to see the school in use soon. It would need a lot of work but would be a significant asset to the village.

This year, he had been appointed to the Chairmanship of the County Council, the first Quorn and Barrow Councillor to fill the office since Mr George Farnham, but his County-wide responsibilities notwithstanding, he would continue to do his best for his constituency and could always be contacted via County Hall.

08/07 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Both Borough Councillors were attending the Area Forum. The Chairman read out their written report (appended to these minutes), and commented that the Parish Council had, by working with the Borough Council, succeeded in securing the building of some affordable housing in the new Meynell Road development.

Cllr Stirling remarked that he had always found the Borough Councillors very helpful but their report sounded more like a party political broadcast than a reflection of the previous twelve months in Quorn – he had expected more emphasis on events in the village.

08/08 ITEMS RAISED BY ELECTORS PRESENT

Mr Mike Stead, of Sanders Road, asked if the cost of bye-elections was borne by the Parish and if so, what the cost of the most recent bye-election had been. Cllr Bexon replied that paying for bye-elections was indeed a Parish responsibility and the February 08 bye-election had cost £2,687.72.

Ms Alison Jacques, of Castledine Street, informed the meeting that she was the chairperson of ROSSCOE, (Residents of Sarson Street, Castledine and Orchard Estate), which had been formed in January 2008 to address local problems, particularly environmental ones, in this part of Quorn. They had received assistance

from the Borough Council, the Police and Rawlins College, and would appreciate recognition and support from the Parish Council. The Chairman thanked Ms Jacques and reminded the meeting that members of the public were welcome to attend monthly Parish Council meetings and to raise village matters in the Public Participation session before each meeting.

Mr Ian Birl, of Victoria Street, said that the revised Parks for People plan for Stafford Orchard was encroaching on the present football pitch. As the pitch had been a feature of the Park for well over 30 years, and the original plan had allowed for a full-size football pitch, he wanted to know if the new plans were set in stone or if it would be possible to revise them to allow for a football pitch. The Chairman responded that the original plans had been revised following a village consultation, and the revised plans had also been the subject of consultation, which was now in its closing stages. In response to a supplementary question from Mr Birl, Cllr Bexon explained that it was a requirement of the Lottery funding that the grassed area not be dedicated to football, although football was not excluded. There was no reason why slots for goalposts could not be installed. Mr Birl said that Stafford Orchard was the only place where village football matches could be played.

Mr Jeremy Simpson, of Woodhouse Road, said that the Stafford Orchard pitch needed levelling and that permission should be refused for fairs and other events that cut the turf up, as the resulting ridges and furrows were a Health and Safety hazard. The Clerk said that work of this nature would cost at least £40,000. Mr Simpson suggested applying to Sport England for funding. Cllr Bexon said that the Stafford Orchard pitch had only ever been used as a kickabout space; it was not used for formal league matches.

Mr Michael Ball, of Quorn said that Cllr Bexon was mistaken and that Stafford Orchard had, in the past, been used for formal matches. It was hoped to re-form the village football team, and in that case the Stafford Orchard pitch would need to be up to FA match standards.

Mr Birl asked where youngsters were going to learn to play football, if the only village centre pitch was removed. Cllr Bexon pointed out that it was agreed that goalpost sockets should be installed, but the Parks for People project had to find a middle ground between the wishes of some parishioners and the requirements of the Lottery funding. Once the park was renovated, it was up to the village how it was used.

Mr Alan Southam, of Wood Lane, suggested incorporating a football pitch of the minimum size for League Matches. The Chairman noted the suggestion and said it would be fed in to the consultation process.

Miss Alison Watts, of Orchard Estate, pointed out that Rawlins College was at present building new facilities for football, including a new pitch, changing rooms and floodlighting, courtesy of a substantial grant from the Football Foundation, so it was not true to say that Stafford Orchard was the only football pitch in central Quorn.

Mr Ball said the new pitch was unsuitable for League matches, as it was artificially surfaced.

Mr Steve Rippin, of Deeming Drive, asked why the bandstand had been moved into the grassed area. Cllr Bexon responded that it had been done (a) to avoid a major tree, which is subject to a Tree Preservation Order, situated at the entrance to the enclave in which it was originally proposed to site the bandstand, (b) because the original proposals would have resulted in a large structure being erected unacceptably close to the houses in Stoop Lane and (c) to allow a more generous area for the audience.

Mr Justin Waring, of Barrow Road, said he was unhappy that there was no representation from the Borough Council or the Police at the meeting. He wanted recycling bins to be installed around the village, to try to reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill. He also wanted the Council to commit to making the park available for football. Cllr Bexon said that the Council would check whether a League-sized football pitch could be accommodated in the Park.

Mr Simpson said the original Stafford Orchard plan, published in the *Quorndon* magazine, had made no mention of getting rid of the football pitch. The information on the second consultation plan had not been made public in the same way.

Mr Rippin said that the current pitch size should be maintained. As they had not been published in the same way as the original plans, he had not known about the latest proposals until very recently, and had been told that this meeting was the appropriate forum to make his views known. Cllr Bexon said that the changes were made to reflect the results of the consultation on the original plans, and the Council had been putting the

revised plans into the public domain via the Parish web site and noticeboard for several months. Cllr Cawdell said that there had been a face-to-face consultation exercise on May Day, and questionnaires had also been taken to the Apple Tree public house.

The Clerk stated that no members of the public had approached her to discuss football facilities on Stafford Orchard.

Mr Ball said that he appreciated the other work proposed to improve Stafford Orchard, but he wanted to keep a full-sized football pitch.

The Chairman summarised the discussion, and said that the comments made would be taken into consideration by the Council.

Mr Sam Reed, of High Street, asked if there was a byelaw to forbid drinking in the streets in Quorn, as he had noted people drinking on the pavements, and empty bottles and beer glasses left on benches and at bus stops; and if there were not such a byelaw, would it be possible to institute one?

The Chairman replied that there was no such bye-law in Quorn. The Parish Council had considered it in the past, but had not taken it forward. It might be something to consider in future and he would put it on a future agenda. He knew that one public house employed staff specifically to clear up glasses left outside, but he agreed with Mr Reed that glasses left around until they could be collected represented a hazard. He undertook to talk to the Highways Authority about the encroachment onto Highway land of tables on pavements.

Mr Southam proposed the following motion, which was seconded by **Ms Jacques**:

“That Quorn Parish Council implement without further delay its previously stated intention to recognise the previous Chairman John Hutchinson’s service with a tangible and permanent tribute, this tribute to have a high visual impact within the boundaries of the village.”

On being put to the meeting, there voted FOR the proposal, 14; and AGAINST the proposal, 0; with 15 abstentions; and the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

The Chairman undertook to consult with Mr Hutchinson about the motion and, if appropriate following that consultation, to arrange for it to be discussed at the June Parish Council meeting.

Miss Watts said that at a normal Parish Council meeting the layout of the tables made it difficult to see the Councillors. She wanted to know which Councillor was the Rawlins liaison person. Cllr Bloodworth said that both she and Councillor Templeman regularly attended Rawlins liaison meetings. Miss Watts said that she had not been informed of this and wondered why. Cllr Bloodworth advised her to speak to Elizabeth Warren and ask for the minutes of the meetings to be sent to her.

Mr Southam proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman of the meeting, which suggestion received applause.

Meeting ended 8.40 pm

Chairman Date