

Old Stratford Parish Council

MINUTES OF OLD STRATFORD ANNUAL OPEN MEETING
Held on 15th April 2008 at the Memorial Hall, 2 Deanshanger Road

Present:

Cllrs Mr R Whittaker (in the chair), Mrs P Bowdidge, Mrs B Bucknell, Mrs S Harris, Mr A Pateman, Mr P Plummer, Mr T Searle, Mr T Stretton & Mrs L Ward
Also present were Cllr Mrs L Mobaraki (SNC) and 17 members of the public

1 Apologies

Cllr Mr B Clayton (work commitments), PC M Wallace (Northants Police Safe Community Team)(holiday)

2 Minutes of the 2007 AOM (previously displayed nb)

Minutes of the AOM meeting had been approved at the May 2007 meeting

3 Any Outstanding Matters

(a) Allotments

Although agreed at last years meeting to proceed, the PC had not been supported by the landowner/agent for the Blackhorse Field (Towcester Road). OSPC were therefore attempting to negotiate with Cemex (Passenham Quarry) re 1acre of 100 Acre Field (Deanshanger Road)) - as the Compulsory Purchase route was both fraught and expensive. An ER fund had been set up

(b) Passenham Lane and Gravel Extraction

There was some prevarication by NCC Contractors who had recently changed tack on a solution to the Mill Bridges. Traffic and SatNavs were causing more HGVs to use the lane

(c) Low Flying Aircraft

Minimum height is 1000ft (320m) over built up areas . AFT rules are left to the pilots (explained). Complaints by aircraft number as most are not on radar or registered flight plan

4 Petitions or Questions from Electors

(a) Two letters expressing concern about the action taken Towcester Road > Minute 9

5 Adoption of Accounts

Outlined by the clerk, especially the current level of Precept levied, Earmarked Reserves and the Memorial Hall refurbishment paid for without cost to community charge payers.

* Proposed by Neil Lygo-Baker seconded by Cllr Mobaraki (SNC) that a vote of thanks be noted for the clerks generosity in donating part of his unclaimed salary to village projects

- (a) **To receive Accounts 2006/2007** } No comments and formally adopted
- (b) **Observation of Finance 2007/2008** } Approved
- (c) **Budget Proposals 2008/2009** } Approved

6 Report from Northamptonshire Police (Through the clerk)

Safe Community Teams consisted of dedicated Community Beat Officers and CPSOs who were responsible for local patrolling of OS. Urgent calls were responded by Instant Response Units (which may mean due to the grading system meant that some 'non urgent' calls would not receiving immediate response). Any comments to PC Mike Wallace who attended the last PC meeting **(Some of those attending were dismayed at lack of Police presence who 'were failing to fully engage with the public they served')**

Crime figures from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 were as follows:

<i>Violence</i>	6 > 8	
<i>Robbery</i>	0 > 2	
<i>Burglary Dwelling</i>	5 > 5	
<i>Burglary Other</i>	10 > 9	<i>(from garages and sheds etc)</i>
<i>Theft from M/V</i>	14 > 33	<i>(small team of thieves caught thought responsible)*</i>
<i>Theft of M/V</i>	5 > 4	
<i>Veh Interference</i>	0 > 0	
<i>Veh Damage</i>	6 > 9	
<i>Criminal Damage</i>	4 > 9	
<i>Drugs</i>	1 > 0	
<i>Theft (Other)</i>	7 > 16*	

Total Crimes 95 (increase on last years 61)

(This shows a steady rise year on year (for all villages on the MK border))

7 Report from District Councillor

2007/2008 Due to poor health and unforeseen extended family circumstances over the last year I have not been as engaging and proactive as I would have liked to be.

I sit on Resources R&D Committee, Audit Committee and Appeals Committee as and when required I work with working groups on financial, legal or personnel matters which are the areas I have most skills in. Unfortunately I have had to give up some of my volunteer work.

Over the last year we have seen some challenging times...

The transfer of housing stock, the increased responsibilities on local authorities without central government funding to back them and the closure of our Local Post Office which is key to rural sustainability.

Post Office Below you will find a copy of the letter of representation I submitted:

Dear Sirs,

I write in the capacity of District Councillor as a community representative to object to the closure of Old Stratford Post Office. To support this objection I have forwarded to you a petition with in excess of 80 signatures, I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this.

Post Office Ltd's decision process failed to account for the following social economic aspects:

- *45% of Old Stratford residents are home during the day (working mothers, disabled people, elderly and home workers) and rely on such facility. Due to poor transport links and the limited mobility of a large number of residents the closure of the post office can increase hardship for the most disadvantaged groups. Compared to other villages in Northamptonshire Old Stratford has a higher percentage of elderly residents that do not have traditionally relied on such facility.*

- *Old Stratford has in excess of 30 small businesses that rely on such facility to support their daily operations.*

I understand that the local Post Master has chosen the option to close the facility but Old Stratford Community are confident that an alternative home for the Post Office can be found in the village. Without any formal agreement the Post Master has indicated that he might be able sublet the existing space.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Post Office Moving Forward I have been in discussions with ACRE and other government departments and officers with a view to bring some post office facilities to the village

2008/2009 My theme for the year will be empowerment of the elderly.

Whilst dealing with matters relating to the post office closure I often heard those supporting its closure saying 'only a few elderly people use it'. Age should not come into these matters. With an

aging population it is even more important that the views of the elderly are heard and taken into consideration after all it is their hard work which has brought us prosperity and it is our duty and responsibility to look after their interests.

Over the coming year I intend to engage more actively with the local community so that I can make their views heard. If you belong to a local community group and would like to invite me along for a session please get in touch. I am also pleased to continue speaking to you on my walks through the village and to receive you at my home as usual.

Contact details: 21 Hall Close, Old Stratford, Milton Keynes, MK19 6NH

Home: 01908 307048 Mobile: 07703 361581

Concessionary Travel Passes

People aged 60 and over and disabled people of any age who qualify under the categories listed in the Transport Act 2000 are illegible to the National Concessionary Bus Pass introduced on the 1st of April 2008 which is valid during off peak hours defined as 9.30am until 11.00pm Monday to Friday and all day at weekends and on Bank Holidays.

If you have any queries, please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 01327-322322 or email locallink@southnorthants.gov.uk

Deadline looming for youth project bids!

The deadline is looming for young people in South Northamptonshire to get their hands on nearly £96,000 to spend on activities for them and their friends.

The deadline for entries for the Youth Opportunities Fund is Friday, 25 April.

To make sure it's spent on the right things, the cash is given out by fellow young people from across the county.

Our Youth Council will allocate the money to young people between the ages of 13 and 19-years-old across the district who come up with the best ideas for youth activities in their area.

They can be anything from a music group, to a chess club to a girls' football club to a weekly DJing event. Young people just need to come up with an idea, fill out a form and wait to see if their idea is a success.

Youth Councillor Kirsty Whitmore said: "This is the third year of the fund and we are very determined this year to encourage as many young people as possible across the whole area to put forward their ideas for things to do and places to go. The Youth Opportunity Fund is run by and for young people with facilities from South Northamptonshire Council – the really key thing is that young people make the application and young people decide which applications will go forward There's only two weeks to go so we're urging people to get their applications in as soon as they can."

The Youth Opportunity Fund is a national initiative which allocates money for youth projects across the country.

Contact Laurie Berruto on 07748 808093 for a form or email laurieberruto@hotmail.com.

After Cllr Mobaraki answered a number of questions and gave assurance to respond, especially on issues including Passenham Gravel and her lack of response on the Traveller issue previously raised, she was thanked for attending and chose to remain

8 Report from County Councillor

Not present – no report submitted (Cllr Mobaraki said he was on holiday)

Telephone No: 01908 260302 E-mail: awalker@northamptonshire.gov.uk

* The clerk to advise Cllr Walker on his lack of support and on NCCs lack of progress on a number of issues

9 Towcester Road

The Chairman introduced the item and spoke about the two letters from residents – one did not support the sentiments of the other and outlined the meeting held between OSPC and NCC.

At the February PC meeting as a result of enforcement the clerk was asked to report on the following:

- a. The need for double yellow lines given the village road status of the old A5
- b. Whether matrix type blocks paid for by residents could be laid to protect grass areas; and
- c. The need for enforcement given that a number of residents had more than 1 car

* The clerk advised that the historic DYL Towcester Road remained after the A5T was built. The road (subject to high levels of traffic from north MK, forms part of the main diversionary route when the A5T is shut or major M1 diversions

Matrix blocks are not agreed by NCC as the grass verges were not for MVs to park on, and finally; The wide verge and footways were part of the highway and therefore enforcement was justified Discussed at length with an exchange of views without resolution – the clerk to arrange separate public meeting with Police, NCC, MGWSP & Cllr Walker. Residents were to consider their own position due to the damaged verges. The Puffin Xing when installed may also dictate what further action the PC may take

10 Any Other Business

None

With no other business the meeting close at 9.00pm