



Kemble and Ewen Parish Council: Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Kemble Village Hall on Friday 6 May 2011

Present: Councillor R Pettit, Chairman
Councillor D Ball, Vice-Chairman
Councillor G Collins
Councillor M Binks

In attendance: F Garnet-Lawson, clerk, plus 23 residents of the community

Speakers
Chris Conners - Kemble Primary School
Shaun Parsons, County Councillor (SP)
John Birch, District Councillor (JB)
Roger Pettit, Parish Councillor (RP)

- 1. Apologies for absence:** **Action**
Mr and Mrs J Clarke

- 2. Approval of minutes from Annual Parish Meeting** held on Friday 7 May 2010 were approved and signed. (proposed D. Ball seconded M Binks)

- 3. Matters arising from those minutes:**
 - 3.1 Doubling of train track through Kemble will now take place (time unspecified). Rail commuter parking problems will probably get worse – especially as commuters drive to Kemble from Cheltenham and other stations further up the track. Although GCC is talking to Great Western trains about enlarging the pay-for car-parking, this will not stop those who insist on parking on the roadside. **GCC**

SP noted that the Parish Council may have to consider double-yellow lines as the only effective solution if problem persists. A residents' survey or evidence of support would be required to implement this. SP would support if requested. **KEPC**
 - 3.2 Spending per head on education – SP reported that this not likely to increase. Gloucestershire has good scores for educational results despite the amount of money spent. If Gloucestershire were to receive more, then other counties would receive less and despite some areas of the county being deprived, the county does not score enough 'points' on balance to make more money a possibility. **closed**
 - 3.3 Footpath: Clayfurlong Grove to Thames Bridge – completed this year **closed**
 - 3.4 Poor state of roads in relation to neighbouring counties – SP said that this was due to 80 years of backlog work, as well as the poor winter weather of the last 2 years. GCC is committed to maintaining major roads first, even if this means controversial methods of prioritising pothole repair. **closed**
 - 3.5 Church Road pavement and lighting – still an issue, - several residents have fallen here recently. **GCC**

KEPC to raise pavement again with GCC Highways with a view to a joint inspection **KEPC**

with the highways engineer to agree a suitable course of action.

KEPC

Extra lighting on Church Road would have to be paid for by parish council. KEPC will add this to the list of potential projects.

Reports

action

4. Guest speaker – Chris Conners Headteacher Kemble School

Chris became head teacher 4 months ago. He enthusiastically outlined his ambitions and ideas for the school and its role in developing the children through excellent and challenging education which includes social skills, music, sport and creativity as well as academic subjects – and hard work.

He described several new ideas and initiatives that he and his team hope to introduce, eg Merlin interactive teaching resource; joint curriculum sessions with parents, encouraging the wider community to take part and to use the school's facilities; and even greater parent participation.

All residents are welcome to visit and help!

5. County Council: County Councillor Shaun Parsons gave his report

As last year, the main issue for the County Council continues to be financial budget cuts in the face of higher demands for expenditure on education, children's services and as a result of an increasing elderly population.

GCC is achieving savings through reduced numbers of senior staff, greater use of short and fixed term contracts; reductions in library services and other measures, whilst hoping to maintain services to the vulnerable.

SP is taking action regarding the footpaths in Keynes Country Park and although the fund for running SOEDEC will stop at the end of August, he is hopeful that a partnership of local users, or other interested parties, will take over to maintain the service in some form.

Questions from residents:

- Will GCC consider becoming an unitary authority like Wiltshire?:
 - SP: it was considered, but decided against. However the Districts are operating in an increasingly unitary way, by co-operating and working more closely together eg on waste disposal.
- Why are Gloucestershire roads so poor in relation to those in the rest of the country – see above and as last year's response. Ie historic neglect of the county's roads over many years.
- Park and Ride schemes – SP explained that it was difficult to justify the costs of running these.

5 District Council: District Councillor John Birch gave his report

JB congratulated on his re-election. Will now be able to deliver on pledge to freeze the council tax for 4 years and continue to improve recycling rates.

Questions from residents:

- Roundabouts – why were these so poorly maintained:

JB explained that this he had tried to get sponsorship of the roundabouts adopted as a scheme, but that this was turned down due to internal opposition. It may be re-visited as an idea at some point in the future.

- Park and Ride – JB explained that the CDC does not own any suitable land nearby, and the cost of buying this and running the scheme would be prohibitive. Tetbury and Stow District councils owned many of their own car parks and were therefore able to set their own charges independently.
- Residents raised the question of payment on exit of the car parks – not only fairer but only need the cost of one or two machines rather than many like there are at present. JB to investigate.

JD reported that the 50p tariff is very popular and is worth collecting.

- He encouraged the Parish Council to apply for an extension of the Community gardens lease.

6 Parish Council: *Chairman Roger Pettit gave his report*

- RP reported that three councillors (Withiel Cole, Sara Lawlor and Gabi Somerville) had not stood for re-election this year, and thanked them for all their work and contributions throughout the year, and wished them success in their wider roles. Welcomed Graeme Reay as the new the village orderly
- He also thanked Pete Measures for maintaining the cemetery; Brian and Pat Ayres for all their many actions; Steve Marsh for updating the web site and the Parish News team for their hard work producing the parish newsletter, and all the councillors and many other people who have taken part in doing things for the villages over the last year.
- The precept has been frozen for the fourth year in a row. Present financial position is sound, the new footpath at the playing field had been completed and hope to be able to undertake more of the Windmill Road landscaping project this year.
- The Community Gardens lease runs out in February 2012. KEPC had the land professionally valued this year and placed a bid to CDC to purchase the land but this had not been accepted. The negotiations will start again later this year, and will apply for a lease extension meantime. Concerned that many initiatives on the site can't take place until a long-term future is guaranteed for the site and disappointed with CDC's response given that the initiative met many CDC objectives and a similar sale had been agreed recently at Tetbury .
- Top Farm plans currently comprise a 70 bed nursing home and 36 houses, including 12 affordables, but may be subject to further review. Formal application expected shortly. Noted that Kemble Farms Ltd has made efforts to incorporate and ameliorate residents' concerns, although these did not overcome the fundamental objections.

Questions from residents:

- Top Farm: RP reassured residents that when the application was received, the parish council would use all the many letters that had been received its response to the CDC. It is likely that a further parish residents meeting will be held if and when a formal application is made.
- Community Gardens – although there is support for buying the land, also noted that there were others who did not want to spend parish council money to do so.
- Church Road pavement (see earlier)
- Airfield warehousing proposal: RP reported that there has not been an application yet, and that although it is technically in Wiltshire, the CDC also had to be consulted. The Parish Council was keeping abreast with developments. Noted concerns about the volume of traffic on the A429 as a consequence of the potential development additional to existing commercial activities.

- 7 Finance:** the clerk gave the financial report and explained the differences in spending in comparison to this year.

Residents were reminded that they can ask to inspect the end of year accounts and other public documents and invited them to ask the clerk for a suitable appointment if they wished to do so.

- 9 Any Other Business:**

- none

Meeting closed at 8.45pm with a vote of thanks for the Parish Council.