



Kemble & Ewen Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Kemble Village Hall on Friday 4th May 2007.

Present: Parish Councillor R Pettit, Chairman
Parish Councillor D Ball, Vice Chairman
Parish Councillor G Moreman
Parish Councillor G Collins
Parish Councillor L Hetherington

In attendance: I Yates, Parish Clerk, plus 30 members of the public.

Speakers: County Councillor Shaun Parsons
District Councillor John Birch
Parish Councillor Roger Pettit
Andrew McIntyre, Kemble School
Mike Harris, Waste Communications Manager, Cotswold District Council

1. **Apologies.** Apologies were received from Celia Moule & Pat Ayres.
2. **Minutes** of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Friday 5th May 2006 were approved and signed.
3. **Matters arising** from those minutes.

SP confirmed that the 63 additional police officers would be appointed over a 4 year period with one per district, & that 12 were already in post. He explained that the Chief Constable was responsible for allocating them & they tended to work in urban areas.

4. Reports.

4.1. County Council. County Councillor Shaun Parsons gave his report. He outlined how the £600m budget was allocated between departments & emphasised the squeeze on funds due to new government stealth taxes, reduced government contributions, higher costs & an ageing population. He also recognised that residents wanted Council Tax kept as low as possible & stated that the County Council increase this year of 3.4% was below the rate of inflation. He confirmed that it was a struggle to maintain services & that a cut in administrative costs was essential to balance the budget. He highlighted that waste disposal would be a significant cost in the future as the landfill tax meant alternatives to current practices had to be sought. He reported that the Government had given the council a very good report & that it was the fastest improving council in the country.

Turning to Highways, he stated that the major problem on the main roads was one of enforcing speed limits. He advised that in the autumn, the County & District Councils would be taking over responsibility for parking matters from the police. The point was made from the audience that it would be essential that sufficient public parking spaces were provided by the Council, enabling people to park legally & not in restricted areas.

In response to a question on prioritising traffic at The Thames Head Bridge, which had also been suggested at last year's meeting, he agreed to raise this with Highways. **[action – Cllr Parsons]**. He stated that raising the height of the bridge would not be an option as funds were to some extent prioritised on accident numbers. In response to a question on potholes, he explained that if there was a safety risk involved, the pothole should be mended within 24 hours of the report being received. With no funds available for resurfacing, the policy was to make & mend. The good work being done by Lorrywatch was noted, headed by Marian Gilliland & Nicola Barrow.

The Poole Keynes sign post at the junction of Washpool Lane & the Ewen Road was mentioned as encouraging lorries to use the narrow lane. It was agreed that the Parish Council would investigate. **[action – Parish Council]**. The state of the pavement in Church Road from the surgery to the War Memorial was also raised as a concern. **[action – Parish Council]**.

4.2 District Council. Councillor John Birch reported that of the 44 District Councillor seats, 38 had been won by the Conservatives in the 3rd May election. He also noted that 12 had been uncontested & urged people to get involved locally, both at District & Parish level, so that electors had a choice at the ballot box.

He noted that the District Council Tax increase had been kept at 2.4% for the second year, & that the top management level had been reduced from 22 to 6 personnel to save costs. He was pleased to announce the closer working arrangement with Tewksbury District Council, whereby Bob Austin would be a joint CEO for an initial 6 month period. He hoped this would lead to major cost savings through sharing facilities & skills, as was already happening with electoral & print services. This was essential as the Government would be looking for comparable savings to those which would have been achieved had a unitary authority been created in place of the District & County Councils.

He noted that a summer sports day had been arranged for Coates with District support & if successful, he hoped Kemble youngsters could join in the following year.

Turning to the station car park, he reported that it had now been established that it was owned by Network Rail who let it to First Great Western. Both parties were involved in discussing its' resurfacing, & capital requisitions had been put to both boards. Concerning the recycling bins at the site, First Great Western viewed them as a security risk & wanted them removed. JB confirmed he would continue to lobby for their retention & indeed space for more.

Concerning the difficulties of getting emergency vehicles to the bungalows behind Station Road, JB reported that he was in discussion with the builders of the new estate & would try & use the lack of provision of rainwater tanks at each property (as required in the original permission) as leverage to gain permission for access via the estate.

He confirmed that putting direction arrows in the Forum Car Park was on the schedule of works to be done. It was noted that tickets were not transferable between town centre car parks due to different charges applying. He agreed to find out why tickets could not be passed on to someone else if there was unexpired time still on them. *[action – Cllr Birch].*

4.3 Parish Council. RP reported that Christian Brann, Jenny Courts, Mark Bainbridge & Sohrab Sorabjee had decided not to stand again as councillors. He thanked them all for their hard work & their commitment to the local community. With 4 vacancies on the Council, Roger encouraged people to think about putting themselves forward to fill the posts. He saw communications as very important for the community, & two key parts of this were the Annual Report & the Parish Plan exercise. He thanked everyone who had contributed to the plan, which would set the agenda for the next 4 years, & thanked Jenny Courts for leading the process.

He reported that road safety continued to be a priority – he noted the successes of the last 12 months which included the speed warning sign on the A429 & the imminent 20mph limit on School Road at key times. He thanked Laura Hetherington for her work here & encouraged people to join the Traffic Group to push for further changes, including a 30mph limit on the main road.

Turning to Planning, he noted that the Council was awaiting developments at Kemble Airfield. Over 40 applications had been considered during the year, & the work at Brookside in Ewen had been contentious, with pressure being applied to the District Council to take action.

Looking at KAP, he stated this had been another very busy & successful year with funding secured for a skate ramp extension & cycle track. He explained that more was needed for the older age group & urged people to come forward to help with this work.

He thanked the VHMC for an excellent start to the refurbishment programme & for all their work.

He finished his report by also thanking the following for their contributions to the local community: Councillor David Ball for managing the grass cutting contracts; Pete Measures for maintaining the cemetery; Everett Austin for his work on the war memorial; Brian Ayres for the War Graves; June Telling & Brian Robbins for their work as Orderlies; Pat Ayres for the Newshound column &

Poole & Partridge Fund; Penny Wheeler for the Parish Magazine; & the Clerk & all the Councillors for their commitment. Finally he thanked John Birch for all his work on the parish's behalf during the year.

4.4 School Report. Andrew McIntyre thanked the Parents Group for all their excellent work over the last year. He was also grateful for the help given to the school by the local community & by Kemble Farms. He thanked everyone, particularly Jo Moreman & Emily Lawlor, who had worked on the new mosaic on the school wall.

He reported that Barry Parsons was leaving at the end of the school year, having worked very hard for the school over the last 12 years as Headmaster. A replacement was being sought for September. The school roll stood at 92 and it was hoped to increase this slightly by gaining approval to increase the 2007 intake, which was oversubscribed, from 15 to 17.

He noted that work on the school wall & parking area was due to start shortly & that the school & Parish Council had both worked to get approval for the 20mph speed limit outside the school. He reported that the after school club had been set up but there were not enough children to continue to run it at Kemble so the children were now transported to Anne Edwardes in South Cerney. It was hoped that a holiday club would be run at Kemble. In conclusion he reported on the range of activities the children enjoyed & mentioned two forthcoming fund raising events: Promises Auction 18th May & School Fete 23rd June.

4.5 Poole and Partridge Fund. The Clerk reported that the Charity Commissioners had written to Pat Ayres advising of the options available to transfer the funds to the VHMC & the Parish Council would consider these as soon as possible.

5. **Guest speaker: Mike Harris, CDC.** Mike explained the current recycling/composting rate of 41% needed to increase significantly over the next few years – the national target was 70% by 2010/11. The 2 existing local landfill sites would be full within 10 years & Landfill Taxes on any sites would mean that more waste had to be recycled, to avoid large increases in Council Tax in the future as such costs would have to be passed on to the public. He noted that 20% of methane gas came from landfill sites so this was another compelling argument for reducing this means of waste disposal & encouraging recycling. His presentation outlined ways people could 'slim their bin'.

Turning to the changes proposed this autumn, he confirmed that wheeled bins would be replacing plastic sacks for household waste. He then outlined the options that District Councillors would be considering, which included a move to fortnightly household waste collections, weekly kitchen waste collections, & cardboard recycling at the kerbside. Mike confirmed that plastic recycling at the kerbside was not economically viable at the moment. Comment was made from the meeting that a 2 weekly collection was not viable on public health grounds.

RP thanked him for coming to the meeting & giving such an informative talk.

6. **Finance.** The finance report was considered. RP thanked the Clerk for her work on the report.
7. **Any Other Business.** None.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Signed:

Dated: