

MINUTES OF A PITCHCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
IN THE PARISH CHURCH ON
THURSDAY 13th SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Nigel Shaw Chairman
 Cllr Philippa James Cllr Beverly Gorton
 Cllr Felicity Broom Cllr Michael Little

In Attendance: County Councillor Keith Rippington
 1 Member of the Public

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Council accepted apologies from District Councillors Nigel Cooper, Julie Job and Keith Pearson.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24th MAY 2018

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

5. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS:

- a. **County Councillors Report.** The County Councillor Keith Rippington updated the Council on the proposed A46/A4173 junction improvement scheme and also reported upon the detail of a recent Council meeting that he had attended

County Councillor Rippington left the meeting at this point.

- b. **District Councillors Report.** District Councillor Nigel Cooper provided the following report in his absence:

“CHANGES AT SDC

In August SDC Councillors appointed a new Chief Executive , Kathy O’Leary, to replace David Hagg who is retiring in October. Kathy is currently Deputy Chief Executive (Strategic Director of Resources) at Tandridge District Council in Surrey. Kathy original background was in planning.

Which neatly leads onto my second item :-

PLANNING

As you know SDC was the first Council in Gloucestershire to adopt a Local Plan (LP), that was in November 2016. At that time it was agreed that the LP should be reviewed every 5 years, that process has already started. The Government have made several pronouncements regarding planning and have set a target of 300,000 new homes to be built per year. Current figures vary depending on which statistics you look at, and whether its "starts" or "completions", 150,000-175000, a considerable increase whichever way. A new national standard method for calculating housing numbers has been announced. This means that our revised plan must make provision for an additional 5698 (minimum) new homes across the district during the new plan period (2018-2038). Our current plan calls for 456 per annum, the new figure equates to 638. There are currently existing permissions for 5761 dwellings, and another 1301 allocated to sites, awaiting planning permission. The net result is that we have to find land to accommodate another 5698 homes.

This will be subject of intense debate and consultation about the various options open to us over the next 2 years, our new LP draft must be submitted for examination and public enquiry by the end of 2020."

c. Chairman's Report

1. Speeding. A resident has expressed concern at speeding, particularly up the Pitch. I have asked if any particular vehicles could be identified.

The Council agreed to ask if this issue could be considered by the Gloucestershire Highways as part of the Junction Improvement Scheme.

2. Unsafe Tree. A resident has expressed concern regarding tree branches overhanging the power supplies to properties. I'm not sure if this tree is in the verge or the field, or who is responsible for the verge for that matter.

The Council noted that Western Power will, if necessary cut back the tree where a power line was at risk. As the tree concerned was in the hedge the owner of the hedge was otherwise responsible for safety of the tree

3. Glos2050 A few months ago I circulated to Councillors the plans being floated for the 2050 Gloucestershire Super City (<https://glos2050.com>)

We have also learned from Nigel Cooper's report (*above*) that Stroud District will have to accommodate a further 6000 homes over the next 20 years, which seems to be a doubling of the number the district has already been told to accommodate. This is all very well but even if we escape major development the environment for much of the district and resulting social stress will be compromised. Some of you may recall that I commented on the last round saying, okay we can just about do that, but what about all the houses we don't know about. Well now we do. Or do we? 20 years is actually not a very long period and we should be planning for longer periods, so the theory behind the 2050 plan is good, but do we actually want Gloucestershire to become a creeping Metropolis?

Council Members noted the developments and agreed to partake in the 2050 survey on an individual basis.

4. Parish Boundaries. The District Council is reviewing the boundaries of Parishes with a view to changing boundaries and possibly merging Council's. This sounded rather suspicious. Do we have any idea on what is being planned or who will make the final decisions?

The Clerk agreed to forward to the Members the Governance Review for individual members to partake.

d. Members Reports.

Brambles from the Church to Wragg Castle Lane. *The Council agreed to ask Highways to ensure that the footpath is cleared from brambles.*

Pincot Lane. The Members discussed a suggestion that the very dangerous exit from Pincot lane is closed off, as had been done for Styles Lane near Brookthorpe. It was noted this would cause difficulties for the properties adjoining Pincot Lane, as for most of them there was no alternative access to the A 46 and the route via Wick Street was very difficult. *It was agreed that this bend/junction needed to be made safer and the Parish Council would look further at means of achieving this, including altering its geometry/location.*

6. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE A46/A4173 JUNCTION.

The Council have been invited to meet with County Highways to discuss the proposed junction improvement scheme. Details of the scheme were discussed at some length by members and it was agreed to make the following observations to the designers:

Firstly the Council wished to thank Gloucestershire Highways for what we all thought was a very well thought out scheme which should make a major improvement. Although all other things being equal, the Council would have preferred a roundabout, having been close to this problem for so many years we appreciate the challenge this road junction presents.

Comments/questions were as follows:

1. There is no objection to the removal of the Bus Shelter on the A4173. Can it be relocated on the reconstructed bus stop on the A46?
2. Have all the driver sightlines been checked for adequate visibility? In particular when exiting the A4173 onto the A46 has visibility of traffic coming from the right been checked having regard to the cross-section of the road.
3. We think there may be a risk of vehicles coming from Painswick and turning up either the A4173 or the Pitch blocking traffic coming from the A4173. Would a "Keep Clear" marking improve matters?

4. It was pointed out that if a vehicle was turning out of the Pitch (at this point the driver would primarily be looking right to ensure no fast traffic was coming from the Stroud direction) it might conflict with a vehicle leaving the A4173, particularly if that vehicle were turning right.

5. Traffic up and down The Pitch, albeit within the speed limit, presents a hazard to pedestrians, particularly those vulnerable due to age or disability, and we think it may be appropriate to provide a "544.1 Pedestrians in road ahead" sign on entering.

6. Currently vehicles coming down the A4173 and wishing to turn right into The Pitch have to make a rather odd manoeuvre, partly into the oncoming traffic, and certainly potentially confusing anyone waiting at the junction who does not know its idiosyncrasies.

Under the new scheme they would need to turn onto the central turning right lane of the A 46, drive a few yards toward Stroud and then turn right across the oncoming Stroud to Painswick Lane.

Whether this is more hazardous than the existing manoeuvre is unclear. It is probably much the same, however we believe a number of people may think differently. This will lead to some drivers avoiding the junction and instead turn into the village at one of the two entrances opposite the entrance to the Village Hall car park. This of course has its own problems, including the very narrow stretch approaching the crossroads at the top of the Pitch. However we do think there will be an increased use of this alternative and steps to make access to the village road safer at this point should be taken. There is probably nothing that can be done to improve the very narrow junction adjacent to Old Weavers.

The lower entrance however can easily be improved, in particular to make it safer for vehicles turning from the A4173. At the moment there is not enough room for a vehicle -- even a very short one -- to turn into the lane if another vehicle is waiting to leave. Whilst it is not possible to widen this section for any distance, it should be quite inexpensive to widen the carriageway for a few metres such that a vehicle waiting to leave does not block one wishing to enter the lane. An added benefit of this would be that fewer vehicles would use the Old Weavers approach, which is narrow, difficult for vehicles, and very hazardous for pedestrians who have no choice but to be in the carriageway.

There are some services in the verge, but adequate widening should just clear the telephone pole. There is a telephone junction box currently close to the carriageway which might need a reinforced cover.

Having concentrated on the physical design of the junction we must not however ignore the question of reducing the speed limit. Even with the improved design there is no logical justification for the present excessively high speed limit."

7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE UNDERGROUNDING OF THE ELECTRICITY CABLES.

Cllrs Michael Little and Philippa James updated the Council on a recent meeting with John Mills from the Cotswold Conservation Board, when he visited the village to familiarise himself with the scheme "on the ground" and take photographs to compliment the bid which has been submitted.

8. GIGACLEAR INSTALLATION.

The Chairman reported Gigaclear will shortly be rolling out delivery of fibre optic cabling throughout the Parish. It was reported that there had been some problems with the earthworks subcontractor in other locations and it was agreed to look further into this prior to the arrival of the project to Pitchcombe.

9. CYCLING PROVISION

The Council agreed to appoint Mr Nick Smith as its representative on the Parish Cycling Group forum who are trying to improve the cycling route provisions throughout the District.

10. PLANNING

The Council resolved to Object to Planning Application S.18/1798/LBC, Old Weavers, Pitchcombe, Stroud, Gloucestershire. Two storey extension and two storey garage, furthermore it agreed to ask for it to be considered by the Development Control Committee if the Officer is minded to support the application.

11. FINANCE

- a. **To approve the Accounts for payment. The following accounts were presented for payment:**

Clerks Salary / Expenses	157.09
HMRC (April to September)	192.00
Total Invoices for payment:	349.09

The accounts were approved for payment.

The Council agreed to a quotation from Tree Maintenance of £290.55 trim the Laurel Hedge and remove the debris.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 13th December 2018 in the Parish Church at 7.30 pm

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.28 PM**