## WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of Wootton Parish Council held on Wednesday 8th September 2010 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall, Wootton.

**Present.** Cllrs. J Wheeler, P Quirk, C Bennett, M Woolfenden, , S Rowse, , D Price, J Cunningham, W Hall, T Corby, S Cruse & K Wright. In attendance: M Alexander (Clerk) Pc Ian Evans & 1 Member of the public (Nicole Tynan of Bedford Road) Paul Vann (BBC), Simon Collier and Pat Willoughby (David Lock Consultants)

**FC10/85. Apologies for absence.**
Cllrs R Wallace, G Lloyd & P Prescod

**FC10/86. Declarations of Interest.**
None.

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**FC10/87. Reports from outside organisations.**
Pc Evans' written report was available to members at the meeting. PC Evans took the opportunity to advise the Members of his departure from duties in the Wootton/Stewartby area, as he was taking up a new post within the Police Service from 1st October 2010.

Cllr Cunningham updated the members on various issues involving the village, both directly and indirectly including, the threat of redundancies at the Borough Council, the reporting of a local resident to the dog warden for allowing their dog to run amuck in the recreation ground including fouling in the children's play area. Cllr Cunningham had also complained to the highways authority regarding the standard of workmanship with the road repairs in and around Keeley Lane. Also Members were advised of a new bus route coming into service (Grant Palmer) which would be travelling to Stewartby, Hall End, Green End etc. and a new bus stop would be provided at Fields Road, outside the Healthy Living Centre.

Members were pleased to receive a presentation from Paul Vann (Bedford borough Council) and his colleagues from David Lock Consultants - Pat Willoughby and Simon Collier. The presentation in the main focused on the 'employment' section of the new development and in possible variations to the original planning application for the site. It was felt by the consultants that these changes better reflected the wider environment and its current needs than the previous planning document. Members were given an information pack to take away from the meeting and consider. The presentation then went into Q&A including concerns about the waterway, whether it would be moving or still, the proposal of an 80/100 bedroom hotel within the development, and potential traffic increase. However, Cllr Bennett urged the Members to consider the level of all round employment the various offices, warehouses and even hotel could bring to the village. Councillors were encouraged to email Paul Vann at the Borough Council with any concerns they may have – paul.vann@bedford.gov.uk

**FC10/88. Open Forum**

None.

**FC10/89. Chairman's Announcements.**

Chairman gave a verbal report regarding the recent work of the Council and this would be made available to Members in due course in written format.

**FC10/90. Minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 28th July 2010.**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th July 2010 were accepted as a true record.

**FC10/91. Committee Reports**

a) Members of the Full Council were pleased to receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held 11th August 2010, and the Plans Sub Committee, held 25th August 2010.

b) Members of the Full Council were pleased to receive and adopt the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting held 25th August 2010.

**FC10/92. Accounts**

The members were pleased to receive and approve the minutes of the Accounts Sub Committee held on Wednesday 25th August 2010.

**FC10/93. Reports from Committee Chairs**

a) Cllrs Bennetts' written report is attached for Members information. However, as part of that report was to advise Members that an application for Ward Funding via Cllrs Hill and Cunningham was mentioned, Cllr Cunningham took the opportunity to advise that so far, there were more requests for money, than has funds available.

b) Cllr Quirk updated the Members on various projects around the village, including the forthcoming installation of lighting columns, the order for the DSD to install the new Cemetery pathway had been sent, as had the application to BBC for a grant which may help pay towards the cost of the new driveway. Also the contract for the Community Payback Workers had also been signed and sent, and we were awaiting confirmation of a start date. Cllr Quirk had met on site at Church Row to investigate the nature of works which could be undertaken there, given the wildlife aspect of disturbing the site, and it was agreed with 2 conservation officers (RSPB and Marston Thrift) that most of the weeding should be done by hand and not a rotovator, which would obviously be much harder and time consuming. This issue was still to be discussed with the Project Manage. The Clerk was asked to contact Mr Lowe and advise him of the current lighting situation.

c) No report from Cllr Prescod

d) No report from Cllr Lloyd

e) Report of Cllr Rowse and the Minutes of the Traffic Management Strategy, are attached.

**FC10/94. Any other Business**

This Council was receipt of a letter from the highways authority, rejecting our request to call one of the roads on the new Fields Road development after the late Jean Sherwood. Cllr Price advised the Members he had drafted a letter, which members agreed to send to the highways authority, the Borough Mayor and Cllr Cunningham asking them to reconsider our request. Clerk to send.

Cllr Woolfenden commented on the overgrown hedges in the area of the Library and asked that Cllr Cunningham make a request to get them cut – Cllr Price also commented on the overgrown hedges at the corner of Keeley Lane and Bedford Road, which Cllr Cunningham was also asked to report to the Borough Council.

Cllr Hall requested that when forwarding or sending messages on the email that for the sake of clarity, that it would be good practice to use the full name followed by its acronym in brackets the first time it was used, thereafter only using the acronym.

**FC10/95. Chairman's Report – Roles and responsibilities**

Having requested members of the public and press to leave under S 12A Part 1 LGA 1972 the clerk and the one member of the public present left the meeting. The Chairman reported on discussions he had had with the Deputy Chair and the clerk and outlined the problems that existed in relation to the management of the Council's financial affairs. The chairman emphasised that the finances were now in good order and that the Council has always been, and still is, financially solvent.

He went on to say that present good state of affairs was the outcome of assistance given to the clerk by a commercial firm - Susie B's.

In order for the good state of affairs to continue he suggested that Susie B's, (Sue Bolton) be given a contract for, in first instance, a term of one year in the sum of five thousand pounds to act as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to the Council.

This would lead to a reduction of responsibilities for the clerk which reduction would be reflected by reducing the clerk's grade by two levels. The clerk had indicated that she was in broad agreement with the proposal.

The matter was then debated, proposed, seconded and agreed by all present

Chairman…………………………………………………………………………………………….

Date of next meeting is Wednesday 27th October 2010