

PURITON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Parish

Bruce Poole

Member ILCM; Cert HE Local Policy

The Chippings 21 Stoneleigh Close Burnham-on-Sea Somerset TA8 2EE

Tel: 07887802922 E-Mail: bruce.poole2@btopenworld.com

Office Hours 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

The **Annual Parish Meeting** of **Puriton Parish Council** was held in The Village Hall Riverton Road Puriton on **Tuesday 8th April 2008** commencing at 7.30 p.m. when the following business was transacted:

PRESENT Councillors M P Herbert (Chairman) and the clerk Mr B Poole.

In addition there were twenty two members of the public present including the speaker Mr Brian Halliwell together with the following Parish Councillors Mesdames J Fletcher S Tizzard Messrs D Good M Healey G Lavick and J Miller.

APOLOGIES None

MINUTES The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 10th April 2007 was read by the clerk and thereafter approved as being a correct record and signed as such by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Can I first of all thank everyone here for attending this evening, Both the Public and Councillors. During my chairmanship over some 3 1/2 years we have seen many changes and hopefully you'll agree for the good.

Your parish council has strived to supply and meet your desires and wishes, and yes I know not always as quickly as we would all like. However we are getting there.

Under the guidance of our Clerk Bruce Poole we have set off on the road towards quality status, this means eventually we will have greater influences on many of the services and decisions made by our senior LA's.

As a council for this village it is hoped that we can all work together, Council, Public and the various Charities/Committees towards the same goals in ensuring this **village is a safe and happy place to be.**

Some of you will have heard of the Governments White Paper regarding more power to local communities and devolving decisions making powers down the tiers as far down as parish councils, therefore it is critical that as a parish council we remain in constant touch with your need and wants. So when we can influence decisions we do so, on the important matters you raise.

For example:

Policing of our community so we feel safe to walk our village day or night in the knowledge there is help and support when we need it, speeding issues, Planning matters, road improvements, housing and many more. However it does come at a price we need to be active as a parish we need public support, not only as individuals but also from the many bodies of volunteers and charitable organisations that exist in this village. In the near future work by the SDC and County will come to the front on an away forward and how we can engage in this process.

So what else have we started or succeeded in this last year, requests for extra Dog Bins these if not already are due for installation, the maintenance of foot paths stiles and hedge rows are facilitated by this council, Highways successes; we have after many years achieved better signage and notices of bad bends at the ROF entrances and this has dramatically reduced the numbers of incidences, improved writing on Hillside to make mums aware of the schools crossing, dropped kerbs for our wheelchair people, clearing drains when blocked so you can walk uninterrupted along our footpaths and roads

These are typical examples of what can be achieved by this parish and its councillors once a clear requirement and need has been identified by our **village members.**

We continue with the extensive maintenance of our rural surroundings and open spaces and footpaths even though we are increasingly receiving less and less financial support from our District and County Councils.

The village community has several registered charities. Namely:

The Playing Fields committee

The Village Hall committee

The W I

LAT, who continue to be supported by the police and county officers?

PPCC

Pre School Group and many more

They all provide a meaningful and positive service to our community and I wish them all the best for the forth-coming year and hope they can fulfil their aspirations, and rest assured we are here to help in some form or another.

Many of these bodies are supported financially by your precept in the form of grant funding along with other organisations such as SDC, SCC, Police, Viridor and the Lottery. The specific projects and requests are monitored by the Finance Committee of your council throughout the year so we can ensure things happen. Of note is the increased play facilities located around your village hall and I congratulate the dogged determination of those bodies for such wonderful achievements. There are hopefully more to come and discussions are still proceeding with regard to a potential skate park facility to be located within the confines of the village.

So in conclusion, I hope this brief report gives some idea what the Parish Council is about and where we are aiming to be. We need greater involvement from the community to make things happen which is recognised at Government level through the White Paper "Stronger and Sustainable Communities" to which I referred earlier.

The following reports were also provided to the meeting.

PURITON PLAYING FIELDS

It has been another successful year for the Charity, although there is always more work to be done than we have hands to do it!

We have made some important improvements to the lighting in the Range at the Sports Centre, and the building has been made more secure by the addition of galvanised coverings to the doors. At the Riverton Road field, we have provided disabled access for the multi-use games area and youth shelter. This was done with the help of a Parish Council grant.

The Local Action Team have been offered a site at Riverton Road for a skate park, but since the trustees held a meeting with them in the summer, the LAT have not been in contact with us to carry this project further.

The focus of the trustees' efforts this year is on raising funds for a lift in the Sports Centre and for the refurbishment of the children's playground at Riverton Road.

In addition to bowls, archery, target shooting, football, cricket, youth club and dancing classes, the Sports Centre is now home to a junior karate club.

For bookings, contact Sandra at Puriton Post Office, 01278 685355.

VILLAGE HALL REPORT

As chairman of the Village Hall Committee, it gives me great pleasure to submit the following report.

There has been a lot of activity within the Village Hall during this last year.

As you are aware we managed to raise the funding to lay a new floor with the support of Viridor, the Parish Council, and a grant from the Puriton Inn and donations from the Bingo club. A huge thank you to all of those organisations.

A new PA system has been installed for user groups and people hiring the facility. Thank you to Mr Roger Mason for the work involved.

The Puriton Players held their annual pantomime, Mother Goose which always brings local people together to take part in and watch their performances.

We are actively trying to raise money for a much needed perimeter fence, replacements toilets in the ladies loos, and a new carpet and decoration to the doctor's surgery.

Mark Healey
Chair

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

It has been a busy year at Somerset County Council.

At the start of the year much effort and attention was focused on Somerset's bid for a unitary council. This would have meant the abolition of the County Council and all of the five District Councils in Somerset and the start of a new Unitary Council to take on all their responsibilities. But it encountered much opposition and the government finally vetoed the plan in July.

The Somerset County Council has spent much time and resources on the ISiS project. This is a joint venture with Taunton Deane Borough Council and the international business giant IBM. It is designed to transfer many of the Councils' back-office functions to a joint venture company in the interests of efficiency and it is expected to produce substantial cost savings and service improvements. The contract was signed at the end of September and the new company is called 'South West One'. Somerset and Avon Constabulary are expected to join as extra partners very soon. Much attention is focused on the project across the local government world.

The County Council and the five District Councils all signed up to the Somerset Waste Partnership in October. This joint partnership is responsible for the collection and the disposal of waste. There is potential for economies of scale and an improved re-cycling service.

The County Council has been awarded a 'Four Star' rating from the Audit Commission. This is the top score available and the Council is proud of its achievement. It scored particularly well in Social Services.

At a more local level it was a great shame to see the end of an era with the closure of the Royal Ordinance Factory. I expressed my concern over the closure to the Weston Daily Press when asked.

I was happy to have been able to get the reinstatement of the 102 bus service back through our village, and also to have been a part of the launch of the Puriton Newsletter which has been a tremendous success. Congratulations to all those concerned.

I can also announce that finally the County Council has now stated that Highways will be looking at the A39 as a priority and as always I will battle on our behalf to get something done on Puriton Hill and at the Silver Fish junction to make the road safer and relieve the constant tailbacks.

I am sorry I am not able to be at the meeting in person but hope you have a successful annual meeting. If there is anything I can help with I am always here to be of assistance.

Mark Healey County & District Councillor

THE 2008/09 PRECEPT

The Clerk Mr Poole gave a power point presentation in respect to 2008/09 Council Precept a copy of which is attached to the minute book.

GUEST SPEAKERS

PCSO Linda Ebdon

She gave a short address in respect to the new proposals the police force and other agencies were endeavouring to implement which a scheme entitled "PACT". She answered a number of questions and then departed from the meeting.

Mr Brian Halliwell

Mr Brian Halliwell spoke at some length on the programme for the decommissioning of the installation. A number of questions were asked. He then departed from the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS – GRANT FUNDING CHEQUES

It was announced that the following grant funding cheques had been forwarded to the respective organisations:-

Section 137

Citizens Advice Bureau	150.00
Age Concern	150.00
St Margaret's Hospice	150.00

Major Grants

Playing Fields	1000.00
Village Hall	1000.00
Sunshine Pre-School	1000.00

Those representatives present gave a short resume of their organisation's activities.

One speaker Michelle Evans gave a very informative background to the recent fund raising in respect to St Margaret's Hospice

OPEN FORUM

A number of general questions were asked. This was then followed by refreshments.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and gave special thanks to the volunteers for the preparation of the refreshments.

The Meeting concluded at 9.15pm.