

MINUTES OF A PATTINGHAM AND PATSHULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 30TH JULY 2018 AT PATTINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

Present: Councillors: Councillors R Lines (Chairman), Councillors D Billson (Vice Chairman) T Mason, M Finch, W Hurford, J Dyas, K James, G Deane and Mrs A Davies

Also present Miss J Cree – Clerk

Public Forum

Mrs Carol Rolader and Cheryl Mackay addressed the Council over their concerns over the loss of the Saturday Bus Service when National Express take over the contract from the 2nd September. The loss of this service will have a major impact on residents of the Parish that need to travel to work on a Saturday or visit friends and family. Also they were concerned that people trying to get a job, may be penalised through their job seekers allowance; is no bus service on a Saturday a valid reason to refuse a job offer?

It was noted that a survey of usage on the bus passenger numbers was taken, but it appears that this was when the very hot weather and World Cup was happening, and the bus passengers were even lower. Perhaps a further survey with normal circumstances should take place before the service ceases. They asked for the Parish Council to support their objections on the loss of this service.

The Clerk had already written to the County Council asking them to confirm, and explain the reason for making the bus service weekday-only? The Chairman read out a response received from Helen Fisher cabinet member for Highways & Transport at the County Council:

Thank you for your email correspondence regarding the withdrawal of the Saturday service from Service 10A and 10B from the end of August. As you may be aware this service will be taken over by National Express as the current operator, Arriva, confirmed that they no longer wished to operate the service. The majority of supported bus services in the County now operate on a Monday to Friday basis to ensure that the available budget is spent on protecting access to essential services. Following the re-procurement exercise for service 10A and 10B it has proved necessary to remove the Saturday element in order that the service is delivered within the available budget.

I understand that patronage on the Saturday runs is lower than those operated during the week.

Yours sincerely

*Helen Fisher
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport*

The Chairman asked Cheryl Mackay to assist the council in preparing a list of bullet points relating to the loss of the service, and the impact on parishioners, for the Parish Council to forward in a reply to the Cabinet member Helen Fisher.

It was noted that the Challenge Committee when it meets in September will be looking at a report on the bus services at the District Council.

95/18. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies of absence were received from, S Hubble, S Hughes. An email apology was received from J Tomlinson just prior to the meeting.

96/18. Declarations of Councillors' Interest.

None were declared.

97/18. To receive for confirmation and adoption, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th June 2018.

The minutes of the meeting detailed above were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

98/18. County / District Councillors to address the Council on any matters relevant to the Parish

Keith James. - Member for the Perton and Pattingham Division of Staffordshire County Council report:-

The County Council will no longer be represented at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Meetings as the Police Authority will be amalgamated with the service to jointly use office facilities and budgets to administer the service in future now that Parliament has endorsed the arrangement.

County Highways have responded to my request to carry out urgent repairs to West Beech Road to tackle potholes along this route. The teams that carry out this work are completing the roads that are not major highways now that major highways have been attended to around the whole of Staffordshire. As the teams have been extremely busy after last winter. Other work has been delayed in making repairs to roadside signs and drainage clearance that they also attend to in the areas waiting for action.

The County Council are concerned that because the changes being handed out by the Government on Rate support will be reduced. There are going to be problems in road maintenance, community services that are to be reviewed. It is therefore necessary to request Parish Councils to assist in providing contributions by way of village volunteers to carry out tasks that will take up many of the duties of keeping the areas that they live in good order.

Arriva Bus Services have informed the County of new schedules that have been made to routes in and around Staffordshire. The explanation for these changes centre on their need to cease running services that are underused and unprofitable. I understand that this will cause many people in rural areas great inconvenience. South Staffordshire District Council are looking for bus operators to step in with quotes to run the Connect Service in South Staffordshire after the County withdrew this facility.

Councillor K James reported that funding for the County has changed, Government subsidy has been cut back and will cease in 2020. However the County now get funds from the business rates, but they only receive 50% of them, so income is decreasing and demand on services increasing. A large proportion of funds raised from Council Tax goes on Critical Service needs, future support from the Parishes will be being discussed at SCC in the future.

Councillor K James said a site visit is being arranged with Mark Keeling to look at the problems in Pattingham, The Chairman Cllr R Lines and District Councillor T Mason will try to attend this visit subject to availability. It was noted that there are many outstanding items, the left hand bend warning sign at Nurton Bank, and water is still evident near Perton Lights – even during the recent drought period suggesting it may be from a broken pipe. Cllr K James said he will report this to Dianne Firkin to look into.

K James left the meeting at this point.

99/18. Outstanding matters from the County Council

Including:

Broken left hand bend warning sign at Nurton Bank, Wolverhampton Road ref #4102489 - Status is 'waiting for inspector to visit site' over 6 MONTHS - AND THE INSPECTOR STILL HASN'T VISITED THE SITE? – This to be looked at during the site visit mentioned above.

100/18. Bus service update

The information received was discussed in the public participation. The letter received from Cabinet Member Helen Fisher was put onto the Parish Council's website. Cheryl Mackay is to prepare a list of points for the Parish Council to forward to the Cabinet member and copy County Councillor K James in on this correspondence.

It was also reported that National Express, who are the new bus operator from September, have attached notices to the bus stops and bus shelter. In addition, they have also attached a red metal timetable noticeboard to the exterior of the oak frame without permission. The Clerk has spoken to the person in charge who authorised the installation and they have apologised. She has asked that they move the noticeboard to another bus stop or lamp post and arrange to repair / cover the cost for the damage caused by drilling into the wooden frame.

Members asked that the Chairman and the Clerk progress this further and if it can't be put onto another bus stop, then the noticeboard to be moved to a post at the side of the shelter.

Another alternative would be to purchase a small A4 oak framed noticeboard at a cost of circa £380.00, if the board cannot be relocated suitably then the Parish Council will ask for National Express to purchase a more aesthetically pleasing board for the bus shelter.

101/18. Usage of the Tennis Courts – Proposal from Cllr M Finch

There was no proposal to discuss.

102/18. Usage of the football pitch update

The Chairman has prepared a draft contract for the football teams and these have been sent out for comments. Wombourne Pool Bar FC have agreed and confirmed they wish to play at Pattingham. No response has been received from the Pattingham football team. Only one of the Trysull Tigers U14's teams wishes to play at Pattingham. The

other has opted for Ounsdale Leisure Centre. Trysull Tigers are unable to commit to line-marking at the present time. Cllr Dyas suggested that Wombourne Pool Bar FC may have someone to do line-marking, although it was not clear if they had the necessary equipment.

Members agreed a budget of £200 for the pitch to be professionally measured and marked out using a laser-guided line marking machine. Members also agreed a £15 cost for each service of the changing rooms, likely to be on a weekly basis throughout the football season. Councillor Mrs A Davies agreed to ask the caretaker from the village hall if she would be willing to undertake the cleaning of the changing rooms as she is a self-employed. Councillor Mrs A Davies also agreed to get 3 new sets of keys for the changing rooms cut.

It was agreed to circulate the contract to all members for information.

103/18. Update on Cutting back / crown lifting trees on the park

The Clerk had previously asked Andy Cousins at the District Council to arrange for the trees to be cut back on the field. His response was negative suggesting the parish council were responsible for tree maintenance and the district council would only respond to trees in a dangerous condition. The chairman had contested this point and requested formal evidence. A copy of a lease had been sent from the district council that did not contain any reference to tree maintenance – apart from the tenant was not allowed to fell or harm any trees. The item has been pushed back to the district council for better clarification. Dependent on that outcome, members agreed a budget of £1000 for any necessary tree maintenance.

104/18. Speeding in the Village – Update from Cllr J Tomlinson

As Cllr Tomlinson was not present this item was deferred until the next meeting.

105/18. Highways Grant – Cllr J Dyas to report

Councillor J Dyas has successfully applied for, and secured, a grant of £2096.40 from the first round of Staffordshire's Road Safety Grant Fund. He has obtained costs on Speed Indicating Devices (SID), but will investigate further details regarding poles etc for the next meeting. The funds have to be spent by April 2019, in conjunction with informing Highways.

106/18. Parking Buddies - Discussion/Decision

It was noted that we have some parking buddies allocated to the Perton/Pattingham area and these had been at St Chads school for a short time before the 6 weeks holidays. Members discussed purchasing additional Parking Buddies and deferred a decision for a future meeting after discussions on the SID signs in item 105/18 above.

107/18. Patshull Estate being marketed for sale by the Crown Estate - Discussion

A letter was received from Crown Estates informing the Council that it will be selling the land / buildings owned by them in Pattingham & Patshull.

The Chairman contacted them immediately and asked to open discussions on the Millennium and Jubilee permissive footpaths, with a view to extending the leases. The

Parish Council are also a tenant of the Crown Estate having renewed the lease on the recreation ground at Burnhill Green last year. The Chairman has enquired about buying the land currently leased.

Members were also concerned over what is the agreement / covenant with the Crown Rooms re allowing the Parish Council to use the rooms to hold 2 meetings per year. The Chairman / Clerk to investigate how this arrangement works.

It was noted that as soon as this letter was received it was posted onto the parish council website.

108/18. Vacation of office by failure to attend meetings - Discussion

Last September Mrs Joan Burton ceased to be a member of the authority due to a failure to attend meetings throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of her last attendance. Over the past few weeks there has been correspondence sent from the Clerk at Perton (Mrs Becky Hodgetts) to David Pattison the South Staffs monitoring officer, about the disqualification of Mrs Joan Burton. Mrs Hodgetts had received advice from the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association and she had understood that the law had been wrongly applied and that there was some misconception regarding the rule relating to the routine noting of councillor apologies. She was seeking confirmation from David Pattison that Pattingham & Patshull Parish Council had not acted properly.

To clarify; although Mrs Burton had submitted her apologies for the missed meetings, the Parish Council recorded these apologies, they were not formally agreed and proposed, seconded and voted upon. Therefore these do not comply with the ruling of the Local Government Act of 1972:-

85.— Vacation of office by failure to attend meetings.

- (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3) below, if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to **some reason approved by the authority** before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority.

The action of simply 'noting' an apology is NOT sufficient to negate the effect of the s 85(1) of Local Government Act 1972. Therefore Mrs Burton lost her seat on the Council in September 2017, as she had not attended a meeting since March 2017.

Before contacting Mrs Burton to clarify the ruling the Clerk contacted David Pattison in September last year, and he confirmed that the 6 months had expired and she could no longer be a Councillor.

To ensure that this position is un-changed David Pattison has reviewed our minutes from March to September 2017 and has confirmed that everything is in order. He has also contacted the SPCA to inform them that their advice had not been fully understood, and the SPCA have contacted the Perton Clerk on this matter. He has also spoken with Mrs Burton and explained the situation to her.

The Chairman has contacted the Clerk from Perton Parish Council directly on this matter.

This was noted.

109/18. Bulbs for Village Green

It was agreed to purchase crocus corms from the budget set for the landscaping of this area earlier in the year (for the bank at the rear of the oak bus shelter). It was noted that the wild flower seeds had been purchased but due to the drought conditions, and time of year, they had not been sown, and will be sown in the autumn 2018 / spring 2019.

110/18. To discuss the future of Live and Local for the Parish

The following email has been received from Colin Ringrose

“Please register with the District and County Councils the villages disappointment that we will not now get 2 shows a year from Live and Local (L & L).

L& L is subsidised by the Arts Council. However the villages L & L supports need to be in counties that in turn support L & L. Staffordshire no longer does so sadly.

Over the last 10 years we have enjoyed some fantastic professional shows in the village hall. We have one lined up for May 2019 and it may be our last. I have served on the board at L & L for as many years. I feel I can no longer stay on the board if our county support is not re-established. The villages in Staffordshire get more back far more from the scheme than the county puts into the scheme. Does the County not realise this?

The pensioners in the village really enjoy seeing unusual professional shows that they would not otherwise get to see.

The Live and local scheme brings professional theatre into rural communities that would not otherwise be able to arrange for themselves.

Please pass our concerns up the line.

Thank you

Colin”

County Councillor K James reported (Before leaving the meeting earlier) that he had previously communicated the reasons for the County Council’s decision to withdraw funding to the Arts Council to Mr Ringrose. It was noted that this decision is due to reduced funding from central government and the burden to fund social care.

111/18. Report from the Clerk.

Diamond wedding celebration

Complaint re Church bells ringing at night

The above were noted.

In addition the Clerk reported that a member of the public had contacted her about an overgrown footpath from Westbeech Road to Nurton Hill and continuing over the road. The hedges are very overgrown.

It was noted that it is the land owners responsibility to cut back hedges, but members asked the Clerk to forward their contractors details and also details of the relevant people to contact at County Rights of Way.

112/18. Accounts for Payment.

Ratification list for June - July Pattingham Parish Council

Chq No.	Payee	Description	Amount (inc VAT)
722962	R Taylor	Supplies for mower	£14.26
722963	Watkins and Jones	Plants for planters	£200.00
722964	J Teague	Repairs to play area	£427.90
722965	SSDC	Loan repayment	£1,500.00
722966	Old Peoples Welfare	Grant	£2,500.00
722967	J Cree	July wages	£582.45
722968	Inland Revenue	July payment	£154.27
722969	John Teague	Repairs to Burnhill Green	£69.57
722970	Amazon	Paint for railings and supplies	£112.35
722971	Dittons	Grass cutting x 1 cut	£375.00
722972	Viking Direct	Stamps and ink cartridges	£41.26
722973	A Horton	Contract grass cutting	£135.00
722974	JPE	Cutting of footpaths	£685.00
722975	Dittons	Grass cutting x 2 cuts	£750.00
722976	Amazon	Further paint supplies	£65.90
722977	A Horton	Invoice for August	£135.00
722978	Inland Revenue	August payment	£154.27
722979	J Cree	August Payment	£582.45
722980	A Horton	Additional works completed	£15.00
722981	Amazon	Wild flower seeds	£99.02
DD	EE	Monthly charge	£28.16
DD	Utility Warehouse	Monthly charge	£11.60
DD	BT	Monthly charge	£46.08
			£8,684.54

113/18. Items for future Meetings

Litter issues on the Playing Fields

Signage on the Tennis Courts

114/18. Dates of Next Meetings –

10 th September 2018	Pattingham Village Hall
15 th October 2018	Crown Rooms, Burnhill Green
19 th November 2018	Precept - Pattingham Village Hall
3 rd December 2018	Pattingham Village Hall

DRAFT