

Minutes of a Meeting of the Preston Parish Plan Steering Committee held on 9th July, 2008 at the Half Moon and Seven Stars, Preston

Present: David Theoff, Duncan Scott
Roger Ayling Karen Wright
John Simpson Pip Hazleton
Oliver Chapman Patricia Simpson

Apologies for absence were received from: Louise Perryman, Lorna Listbrain, Martin Ferber, Roger Burville, Alan Coller.

The Chairman welcomed a new member, Pip Hazleton to the Committee.

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held 11th June were adopted as true record, with a correction under AOB - "Planet Thanet" should read "Thanet Earth".

Accounts

The Chairman reported that the Treasurer had paid all accounts to date. It had been agreed at the last meeting to offer a donation of £50 to Preston Cricket Club for their appeal for money to buy cricket balls, but it was decided to hold this sum in abeyance for the time being because it was thought other monies may be forthcoming to the club.

Young Persons Action Plan

J. Simpson, P. Simpson and D. Theoff had attended a meeting with several young people from Preston, when they met with Yvonne Holder, DDC Youth Strategy Officer, and Katie Parker Brown PCSO. The young persons were asked to specify what facilities and equipment they would like to help them spend more constructive leisure time, and they requested football nets on the recreation ground goal posts, more places to sit and a teen shelter and the provision of a Youth Club.

Subsequently Yvonne Holder has promised to find out whether it would be possible for the Outreach Youth Worker to work in Preston, with a mobile youth club vehicle, subject to a space in the timetable; some football nets have been purchased.

A further meeting with the youth has been arranged for 10th July, when the site for a teen shelter will be discussed. Ms Holder advised the adults to help the teenagers to write a letter to the Parish Council requesting the provision of the facilities and equipment, and to assist them to formalise a Youth Action Forum.

Village Hall Refurbishment

JS reported he had suggested to the Village Hall Committee that they should formulate a proposal for the renovation of the whole recreation ground area, with particular attention to the southern boundary which needs to be cleared of weeds, dead wood and tree suckers, cutting back of the ornamental trees and levelling and reseeding of the cricket boundary. This would reclaim between 25 and 30 feet of land. He will encourage the committee to apply for a grant from one of the many sports grants available for new sports equipment including cricket score board and sight screens, and renovation of the turf.

He had recently visited the Planning Department at DDC for preliminary discussions about a proposed new village hall and had been advised the existing footprint would be the most favoured site. A detailed design statement to explain any encroachment of a new enlarged hall onto the recreation ground detailing community need and justification of enlarged premises would be essential.

JS had also telephoned the Highways Department to discuss the expected closure of the car park, disruption to traffic flow and congestion outside the school during school term times while work was in progress, and had been advised that there were no restrictions on our ability to undertake the work as long as the site was rendered as safe as possible with fencing, the school was given adequate warning of the work and children had a safe passage to the school entrance.

Newsletter

DT reported that the newsletter had been distributed all round the parish and he had taken several copies to Wingham and Ash and placed them in the Surgery, Estate Agents, and other appropriate sites. PS said the next issue is planned for publication in late September. KW had found a sponsor for the next issue.

Speedwatch

OC reported that when Katie Parker Brown PCSO, had addressed the Parish Council meeting on the PACT scheme she had indicated that the two most serious concerns were usually, as in Preston, anti social behaviour and traffic speed. Following the establishment of a Youth Forum it was felt that anti social behaviour is now being addressed. Katie Parker Brown proposes to conduct a traffic and speeding survey through the village at different times during the day over a period of time, subject to the availability of the appropriate equipment and the approval of her manager.

It was important to recognise that excessive speeding by drivers through the village may be an inaccurate perception and the results of the surveillance should be analysed carefully to use the information gained appropriately.

DT said that when he had attended a Neighbourhood Watch Forum, it was indicated that a mobile PACT Surgery was available to visit on demand and it was agreed to request the attendance of this facility when we hold the Village Society open day proposed for late September. He also reiterated his disappointment that he had written to Chief Superintendent Matthew Nix in May, requesting clarification of the provision of a named PC for Preston but to date, apart from an acknowledgement of the letter, he had had no response.

KPB had promised to attend Parish Council meetings at regular intervals to maintain contact and to report on PACT initiatives.

Neighbourhood Watch

DT reported that the renewed Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is gathering interest, Elmstone is now established and more volunteers are coming forward to cover Preston. The Parish Council has agreed to provide £200 for associated costs to set up the scheme including the provision of new signs to be placed around the village.

Community Facilities

KW reported she had found a sponsor for the next newsletter and continued to canvass for support from local businesses for resources for the community.

PH suggested the setting up of a "One Hundred Club", i.e. one hundred individuals/households undertake to contribute £1 per month, which supports a monthly/quarterly lottery of a percentage of the income, the excess to be used for community fund raising. She undertook to find out more about such a scheme.

Village Clean Up

A "Litter Collection" day is about due, DT will remind Alan Coller.

Footpaths and Bridleways

DT had received an optimistic report from Lorna Listbrain indicating that one landowner who had formerly resisted the TROTS scheme had now acquiesced, and she was hopeful for the success of a series of linked bridleways being established.

Village Design Statement

RA confirmed that the VDS was sent to Dover District Council some weeks ago for their information and we were awaiting an indication that they will accept it as Material Consideration in future planning for the parish. However, recent responses from DDC have been disappointing and indicate a resistance to the exercise. DS is in communication with various government agencies including Planning Aid and Caroline Flint at Ministry of Housing to elicit support and clarification of the legislation.

DT had previously been offered support by Kit Smith, a Cabinet member of DDC, and will contact him to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

Village of The Year Competition

DT had been notified that Preston had been shortlisted in the Communications section of this competition and a meeting had been held with the adjudicator on Saturday 5th July, attended by DT, OC, PS and LP, the results will be announced in August.

Village Society

It was moved that this Committee now becomes the Village Society, approved by all members

Proposed R. Ayling

Seconded O. Chapman

It was resolved to maintain the title Parish Plan Committee for the time being, running in parallel with the Village Society, until the Village Design Statement has been published, at which time all funds will be transferred to the Village Society.

It is proposed to organise a Village Society Open Day for late September, but first a letter will be circulated to all local village organisations named in the village directory informing them of the forming and structure of the Village Society and inviting them to send a representative to a meeting in August when the participation of all the organisations in the Open Day will be discussed.

It was considered to be essential that a Social Events sub-committee should be formed and should include a representative from the other village groups.

Any Other Business

VDS Cover - John Greig had previously circulated the members by email a draft design for the cover of the VDS document. Those members who had seen the draft were very impressed with this design and approved its use with a possible adjustment for the appendices.

Steam Rally – It was generally agreed that the Village Society should support and encourage the Steam Rally organisers next year, and although we had been disappointed in not being able to present the whole planned exhibition this year we realise we need to plan earlier for the event and to make more use of the money raising and public relations opportunities offered by the occasion.

Date of next meeting: 13th August 2008 8 p.m. in The Moon and Seven Stars