

SWINFEN AND PACKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**6 Highfield Close
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Our Ref: JM

06 May 2010

To: All Members of the Parish Council

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council to be held in the **Barn Restaurant, Heart of England Craft Farm, Swinfen on Wednesday 12 May 2010 (immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting - 7.00 p.m.)** at which the business set out below will be transacted.

Yours sincerely

**Jayne Minor (Ms)
Parish Clerk**

AGENDA

GROW WELL

To receive a presentation from Mr John Polhill, Chairman of Grow Well on a project to develop the garden at the rear of the Visitors Centre at HMP/YOI Swinfen Hall.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under consideration on the Agenda in accordance with the Parish Town Councils (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING YEAR FOLLOWED BY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING YEAR FOLLOWED BY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

5. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 March 2010 (Minute Nos. 08/10 - 14/10). (**WHITE ENCLOSURE**)

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

7. PUBLIC FORUM

Members are requested to consider passing a resolution:

"15 minutes will be allocated prior to the commencement of the meeting when members of the public may put questions/comments on any matter in relation to which the Parish Council has powers or duties which affect the area."

8. SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS

Members are requested to consider membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks which was founded in 1972 to promote the professional standing and knowledge of full and part time Parish, Town and Community Council Clerks. The Society of Local Council Clerks is the professional body for Local Council Clerks. Cost of membership to the Society is £66 (£5 joining fee and £61 full year subscription).

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Members are requested to consider purchasing a copy of the Local Council Administration, 8th Edition by Charles Arnold-Baker available from the Society of Local Council Clerks (regular price £67.00; members price £53.60).

This unrivalled, accessible narrative is accompanied by comprehensive statutory materials relating to parish and community councils. It covers everything from parish and manorial history to laws governing local councils, providing you will all the necessary information and guidance to this complex area.

Now in its eighth edition, this work has been thoroughly revised and updated to take into account recent legislation and developments in this area of law.

Key updates include the following legislative amendments:-

- Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003
- Commons Act 2006
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Planning Act 2008
- Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007
- Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 2006
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- House of Lords clarification of the law on adverse possession of land
- Revised accounting and audit guidance for local councils
- Local Authorities (Allowances for Members) (Wales) Regulations 2007
- Local Authorities (Model of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008

The publication provides answers to all your queries on local council administration.

10. PARISH CLERK'S TRAINING

Members are requested to consider

- **'Working with your Council'**

'Working with your Council' is a high quality information pack with easy to follow exercises, appraised by a Regional Training Manager and closely monitored by a university. The programme is both relevant and practical, enabling the applicant to apply the principles in their workplace. The course consists of six core knowledge topics:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Law Procedures
- Finance
- Planning
- Community Action

and takes up to 12 months to complete.

'Working with your Council' costs £195 (non Society of Local Council Clerks members) or £50 (new members, less than 9 months service with Council income under £50,000).

- **Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)**

This qualification was introduced in 2003 to ensure a countrywide basic qualification for parish and town council clerks. It meets the competent clerk criteria for the Quality Parish Scheme. It specifically tests candidates against a list of core competencies on the work of a parish clerk and takes up to 12 months to complete.

CiLCA costs £150.

11. WEBSITE

Members are requested to consider the development of a Parish Council website.

Mr Ian Smith, Managing Director, Newfangled Media Limited has indicated the site that he thinks might be of most relevance and interest to the Parish Council - the Hammerwich Environment Group site www.hammerwicheg.co.uk.

It is possibly a little too big for what the Parish Council might need, but allows the Parish Council to manage the gallery and documents uploaded to the site. It does not allow the content of all the pages to be changed.

Normally Newfangled Media Limited build sites from scratch so it would cost a lot more but if the Parish Council use something along the lines of the

Hammerwich Environment Group site as the basis, the price would be in the region of £550 plus VAT.

In terms of Hosting, Newfangled Media Limited charge £84 plus VAT per annum for a site of this nature. The domain swinfenandpackington.org.uk is available as are .com/.co.uk/.org.

12. APPOINTMENT OF NEW INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members are requested to consider the appointment of a new Internal Auditor after the retirement of the current Internal Auditor, Mr Alan Birch. The appointed person needs to be competent to undertake and understand Local Council finance. Mrs Mary Danby BA (Hons) MILCM, Town Clerk, Burntwood Town Council has over 20 years exercise in Local Government and having no conflicting interest in the Parish Council would be able to sign the letter of independence as required by the Audit Commission. Mrs Danby would charge £25 per annum.

13. NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENT OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (NSPCC)

Members are requested to consider making a financial donation towards the campaign to raise awareness of the NSPCC Helpline upon receipt of a letter from the Head of the NSPCC Helpline.

14. COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF STAFFORDSHIRE

Members are requested to consider membership of the Community Council of Staffordshire at a cost of £22 per annum.

The Community Council of Staffordshire is actively engaged in protecting and improving the quality of life for all those living and working in Staffordshire, especially the rural areas.

There aim is to enable communities to thrive and to help people to make a difference.

They provide a wide range of advice, information and support to voluntary groups, liaising between statutory and voluntary sectors at all levels and across a wide range of subjects.

15. STAFFORDSHIRE PARISH COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION (SPCA)

Members are requested to consider renewal of membership of the SPCA at a cost of £142 per annum.

The Association was founded in 1939 and:

- Saves you time and money by streamlining your Council's "business" using model documents.
- Provides legal/financial advice.

- Provides free quarterly newsletters to all Clerks/Councillors to keep Councils in touch with the latest developments.
- Suggests sources of funding for projects and provides guidance and advice on public sector borrowing approval
- Provides access to a database of suppliers who provide products and services for Councils, website design, Council notice boards, playground equipment, shelters, bins etc.

16. NEWSLETTER

Members are requested to consider the publication of a newsletter either annually or biannual. This is one of the criteria's to be met by the Parish Clerk when completing the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA).

17. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Members are requested to consider producing Risk Assessments with regard to the Parish Council owned bus shelters and notice boards. This shows that the Parish Council is managing properly (good practice) and is something that external audit look for.

18. ALLIANZ/CORNHILL INSURANCE

Members are requested to consider renewal of the Parish Council's insurance which is due for renewal in June 2010. Premium must include public liability, fidelity insurance (to cover both the precept and monies in the bank), bus shelters and notice boards.

19. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members are requested to receive and note the following planning application decisions:-

Application No.	Location and Description of Development	Results
10/00113/FUL	Swinfen Farm Developments Heart of the Country London Road Lichfield Erection of two wooden huts for retail use (resubmission of application 09/01168/FUL)	Refused

**20. STAFFORDSHIRE PARISH COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER MARCH 2010**

Members are requested to receive and note the SPCA Newsletter dated March 2010 (**ENCLOSURE**).

21. BANK MANDATE

Members are requested to sign the new bank mandate in light of the appointment of the new Parish Clerk.

22. COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF STAFFORDSHIRE - PARISH PLANS

The Community Council of Staffordshire have asked if the Parish Council could complete a survey regarding the progress of Parish Plans throughout the county (**ENCLOSURE**).

23. SWINFEN HALL HOTEL - ROOM HIRE

Further to Minute No. 14/10 (16 March 2010) Members are requested to note the following information:

1. Benjamin Wyatt Suite (can seat up to 22) £250* including VAT
2. Frederick Room (can seat up to 12) £200* including VAT
3. Lichfield Room (can seat up to 12) £200* including VAT

*plus any catering that is required on the day e.g. tea, coffee and biscuits would be charged at £3.50 per person, per serving; mineral water would be charged at £3.50 per bottle.

24. STATIONERY/POSTAGE

Members are requested to confirm the action taken by the Parish Clerk, after consultation with the Chairman, of the purchasing of stationery items and postage on behalf of the Parish Council and reimbursement thereof.

25. STANDING ORDERS

Members are requested to consider producing and adopting Standing Orders. The Parish Council can devise its own rule book for the routine conduct of its business. These rules, called Standing Orders, including procedures required by law. Standing Orders represent agreement among Councillors and help the Chairman to manage the meeting.

Members are requested to consider passing a resolution which can be included in the Standing Orders so that Members who wish to can receive agendas via the e-mail as all meetings must be properly convened. This means that the Parish Clerk must, by law, send a signed summons to each Councillor at least three clear days before the meeting. A summons (rather than an invitation) reminds Councillors of their duty to attend.

26. VAT REGISTRATION

Members are requested to consider applying for VAT registration.

27. NEW MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a 'publication scheme' of documents available

for public inspection. The intention is to facilitate the release of information and provide openness and transparency across the public sector.

The Information Commissioner has now approved a new Model Publication Scheme, which must be adopted by all public authorities by 31 December 2008 and will be effective from 01 January 2009. Under the revised scheme the Parish Council needs to adopt two documents:

- (a) The Model Publication Scheme. This is a generic document, covering all public bodies and must be adopted entirely and without modification.
- (b) A completed "Guide to Information" which specifies what information the Parish Council will routinely publish, in what formats that information will be available, and whether the Parish Council will charge for providing the information and if so the level of charge. The Information Commissioner has not been prescriptive about how the "Guide" should be presented or promoted and it does not need to be approved by the Information Commissioner.

The Parish Council will be in breach of the Act if it does not adopt an approved scheme and publish in accordance with it. Unlike the previous scheme (when 10,000 parish councils had to write individually to the Information Commissioner confirming they had adopted the model scheme) parish councils are not required to inform the Commissioner that they have adopted the revised scheme - it will be assumed that they have done so unless the Commissioner hears otherwise.

A council can apply charges to recover costs for photocopying, postage etc. Such charges must be justifiable, clear and kept to a minimum, and a schedule of such charges should be one of the documents published under the publication scheme.

Members are requested to adopt the new Model Publication Scheme together with the Guide to Information. (**WHITE ENCLOSURE**)

28. THE HIGH SPEED RAIL PLANS

Members are requested to debate the impact of the High Speed Rail plans and the impact thereon to Swinfen and Packington.

Plans for a new high speed rail network, featuring 250 mph trains, have been announced by Transport Secretary Lord Adonis.

The preferred route would plough through acres of farmland to the east and north of Lichfield before joining the West Coast Main Line at Elmhurst. The route cuts over the A51 at Freeford, slicing through Whittington Heath Golf Course and Darnford Moors Golf Course.

At the A38 slip road, near Britannia Enterprise Park, proposals envisage the line sourcing over the dual carriageway and the industrial estate itself on a 685m long viaduct, across Streethay and running parallel to the West Coast Main Line through Curborough.

A six month consultation is due to open in the autumn, with a Government decision due next summer.

Construction could start in 2017 with the high speed network opening in phases from 2026.

29. WEEFORD CHURCH

Members are requested to consider making a financial donation towards Weeford Church. The Parish Council has every year donated an amount of money to help maintain the burial ground at Weeford as it is the local parish church. £300 was the figure donated last year.

30. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

Members are requested to receive and note that an appeal has been made following refusal of planning permission by the District Council with regard to the following application:

Land at: Heart of the Country, London Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire

Proposed Development: Erection of two wooden huts for retail use (resubmission of application 09/01168/FUL)

Inspectorate Appeal Ref. No.: APP/K3415/A/10/2126222/NWF

Appeal Starting Date: 09 April 2010

Appellants Name Swinfen Farm Developments

The appeal is to be decided on the basis of an exchange of written statements by the parties and a site visit by an Inspector.

The Parish Council originally submitted "No objections" in respect of the above application.

31. STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING FROM STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

Members are requested to receive and note the new Local Policing Structure for the area. The new Structure will be up and running for the beginning of April 2011. This is a significant development and feedback is welcome. (**ENCLOSURE**).

32. NEIGHBOURHOOD HIGHWAY TEAM - PARISH VISIT 2010/2011

Members are requested to compile a list of works that could be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Highway Team.

Normal tasks include:

- Footway edging off and tidying
- Cutting back brambles/growth
- Cutting back epicormic growth of highway trees
- Removing isolated weeds
- Re-opening drainage grips
- Sign cleaning/adjusting
- Painting tubular post/rail fencing

- Tidying areas

Tasks not included:

- Potholes
- Patching
- Gully emptying
- Road markings
- Any major works

All work must be within the constraints of the publicly maintained highway (**ENCLOSURE**).

A programme of scheduled visits is attached. (**ENCLOSURE**).

33. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman will move:

That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (Section 2) (and as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

34. CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT - PARISH CLERK

Members are requested to approve the Contract of Employment in relation to the new Parish Clerk. (**PINK ENCLOSURE**)

35. PARISH CLERK'S SALARY

Members are requested to approve the payment of the Parish Clerk's April and May 2010 salary. (**PINK ENCLOSURE**)

36. DATE, VENUE AND TIME FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING