

Sevenhampton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16 September 2015

Present: Lynne Jackson (Chair), Bill Jenkin (Vice Chair), Gordon Day, Harry Boyd, Matthew Cain, Tex Cook, Di Brown, Diana Cook (Clerk)
Paul Hodgkinson (County Councillor)
Darren Fradgley (Arqiva representative)
11 parishioners

1. **Apologies:** Robin Hughes (Sandywell Ward Councillor)
2. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. Lynne Jackson (Chair) declared an interest in agenda item 12c (Planning application for communications mast at Nash Barn, Ref No.: 15/03546/FUL). Cllrs. Matthew Cain, Bill Jenkin & Gordon Day declared an interest in agenda item 12b (Planning application to define a public footpath in Brockhampton, Ref No.: 15/03793/PPROW)
3. **Standing Order 1(e)** was suspended and no specific length for extension determined.
4. **Presentation** was given by Mr Darren Fradgley of Arqiva regarding the communications mast that his company wish to erect at Nash Barns (Planning permission ref no 15/03546/FUL). As Cllr Lynne Jackson had declared an interest in this topic, she left the table and listened to the presentation from the floor. Cllr. Bill Jenkin took over as Chair.
Mr Fradgley thanked the meeting for the opportunity to speak and explained that the timescale Arqiva were working to was very short, only a few weeks. They have identified that Sevenhampton & Brockhampton has very poor/non-existent mobile phone coverage and even SOS alert coverage does not exist in the villages. These areas of no coverage are called 'not spots'.
Arqiva are a telecommunications company and have involved Harlequin group who have submitted planning applications on Arqiva's behalf. The Government (Department of Culture, Media and Sport) will fund the cost of the base station which will then be managed by Arqiva for the next 20 yrs. The funding will stop in March 2016. This is why Arqiva want to secure planning permission by the end of October.
A flag wave was organised a couple of weeks ago (Sep. 3rd) to aid the Parish Council's response, according to Mr Fradgley.
Question & Answers.
Q. Why then has the planning application only just been submitted?
A. Arqiva see it as an opportunity to provide coverage for not-spots.
Mr Fradgley presented some plan drawings showing the proposed fenced compound holding 6 equipment cabinets around a 23m high lattice tower which would hold 6 antennae and 2 receivers. He declared that a strong lattice structure would be needed to provide rigidity and hold line of antennae.
Q. Why not use monopole masts?
A. Typically these are for 1 or 2 providers and these cannot be brought to the table as they can't be shared by all 4 major providers (EE, Vodafone, O2, 3 Mobile). There is part funding from the European Union and therefore no one provider can be favoured over another.
Q. Arqiva have looked at 18 sites in the area but many are low lying and couldn't possibly be suitable. Why weren't more sites offering 'line of site' examined – eg. Elsdown Covert?

A. Because the sites must be close enough to not-spots.

Q. Arqiva did consider sites further afield than Elsdown though – why? Elsdown is nearer to Brockhampton and Sevenhampton.

A. The first consideration has to be line of site. Referring to a map, Mr Fradgley identified these sites as masts at Cleeve Hill and Kilkenny.

It was pointed out that because Elsdown had a very good 'line of site', then a shorter mast may be needed if that site was chosen. Mr Fradgley responded that they also needed a willing landowner.

Q. But why haven't Arqiva considered Elsdown?

A. There is only a copse on Elsdown and no barns to disguise it, unlike the site at Nash.

Q. Is it possible that some people were approached but it has not been declared in the report?

A. Yes it's possible.

Q. On the map showing signal coverage *after* the mast installation, there are still not-spots identified (in white). How is this?

A. This is only a computer simulation and the antennae can be tweaked after installation. The green and blue colouring shows different strengths of signal.

Q. Do you take aesthetics into consideration?

A. Yes. A range of bodies have been approached. For example Cotswold Conservation Board gave no objections.

Q. In the Government's report accompanying your planning application it refers to moving towards 100% coverage, will this happen?

A. It is unlikely that 100% will be reached.

Cllr Tex Cook declared that he had approached Harlequin in August regarding coverage and also asked them why Elsdown Covert wasn't considered. They provided him with a projected coverage map but did not respond with regard Elsdown.

Q. If the council knew about this in August why wasn't information given out? Especially those living so close should have known more. The project was started in 2013 and then put on hold for a year, restarting mid 2014 but the first we knew of it was this summer!

Cllr Matthew Cain declared that this was 'a choice of one'.

A. The Government has set a target. There is consultation until 9th October (according to Mr. Fradgley – although comments to CDC Planning dept. close on 29th September) and Planning Committees only meet once a month.

Q. Perhaps we should have been approached in Spring?

A. That is unfortunate.

Mr Robert Jackson (local farmer & owner of planning application site) explained that approximately 3 years ago all local landowners had a letter asking if they were interested in hosting a mast. After his response he heard nothing for a year. Then the company came to test 'line of site' using a camera on a stick. Since May of this year there has been a lot of activity – for example the quality of access to the site.

Q. I understand that telecommunications and wind turbines can't be close because of microwave diversion – is this so?

A. The telecommunications is above the turbine so there will be no problem.

Q. But what about turbulence? I have read that small and medium scale wind turbines should be considered.

A. Arqiva have done a lot of work in-house on this and consider it unproblematic.

Q. Why isn't the wind turbine identified on the planning application maps?

A. Because it isn't on the ordinance survey maps and an alternative chart shows a different elevation.

Q. Why was the timescale so long?

A. Harlequin approached landowners who then reported back to decision making bodies who needed to identify whether sites were feasible. There was a fault with the information from Ofcom regarding the not-spots.

The Council declared that the first time they had heard about the proposal was an e-mail to the Parish Council from Harlequin on 27th July; this communication included a letter addressed to Cotswold District Council. There is now an issue with the consultation period and funding cut-off point.

Mr Fradgley said that they have consulted Cotswold District Council, Conservation Board and the Parish Council. There is a firm end date and the project must end in March 2016.

The Parish Council denied that there had been any consultation with it prior to 27th July.

Q. What happens at the base station regarding noise?

A. There are hardly any levels. Noise levels can be offered and information gathered from another Authority (undisclosed).

Q. What about equipment cooling systems in the summer?

A. It does have an air-con for hot weather.

Q. Immediate residents have not been referred to in the application, nor has there been any approach to those residents, re noise and visual impact. Why?

A. I accept that there has been no reference but the Planning Authorities will identify that.

Q. What about the noise from the lattice tower – not just from the equipment? I challenge the need for a lattice tower, a monopole can hold that many antennae.

Q. You say that Arqiva will operate the mast for 20 years. If technology moves on, and the mast becomes redundant, what then?

A. Arqiva have an obligation to remove redundant masts.

Q. What happens if more antennae are needed?

A. That is subject to planning regulations. Three additional antennae and 3 additional dishes can be added. Nothing can be added without District Council's approval. Once there, if another organisation wants to use the facility then they can but they must go through the District Council.

Q. What capability has the proposed equipment?

A. Every mast has 4G equipment but Arqiva cannot guarantee the level of capability (so far). The installed equipment can only have 4G if it has line of site to a 4G mast.

Q. How many sites do you have so far?

A. 18 are being built, only 3 are operating so far.

Q. If 4G was installed, would it affect Freeview – as for many locally Freeview signal is weak.

A. The Government has reserve funding in case it happens, but Arqiva are not aware of it.

County Councillor Paul Hodgkinson reported that Chedworth village was in a similar consultation process with Arqiva from January to June of this year. Chedworth Parish Council was in favour of Arqiva's proposal but then they pulled out. He is unsure why.

The Chair summarised the situation –

The lack of consultation and time scale has been very poor.

There is an issue with the process

There is an issue with the choice of site – because of nearby residents to the proposed site and Sevenhampton coverage.

The Chair asked if item 12 b on the agenda should be brought forward and it was agreed that it could be so that interested parishioners could hear the discussions and then be in a position to leave.

Question and Answer session was then closed and Mr Fradgley was thanked for his input.

- 12c. Given that this was the first scheduled Parish Council meeting after the first approach by Harlequin (July 27th) and the summer holiday period influenced councillor availability, the Council considered that Arqiva's deadline was too short. The following opinions were aired:

- The Council, in principle, favoured the improvement of mobile phone coverage

- The deadline for response (29th Sept) was considered too short
- Opposition to a mast is only that of the proposed Nash Barn site
- If Council oppose, wouldn't it be granted anyway?
- If Council oppose, there is a fear that there will be no mobile phone site development
- The Council would wish to know if Elsdown was ever considered in site selection
- The Council felt forced into a position and are highly critical of the process. They do not feel that all sites have been considered.
- There was a reminder that only planning issues should be in consideration
- It was disclosed that the nearby residents had received no notification from Cotswold District Council (CDC) about the planning application.

It was resolved that Cllr. Gordon Day will draft a letter to CDC and circulate it to members for approval prior to it being sent to Cotswold District Council's Planning department.

5.
 - a. **Notice Board Maintenance.** The clerk reported that Mr Box had now maintained all notice boards and that he had kindly done the work free of charge.
 - b. **Bakers Wood Road** (aka Lane) The clerk reported that there were no plans to top-dress the road following its resurfacing. Cllr. Cain enquired whether the gully at the lower end of the road was still going to be done. The clerk advised that AMEY had stated that they still intended to carry this work out.
 - c. **Defibrillator.** The Village Hall committee has agreed to place the defibrillator outside Rhodes Memorial Hall as there is no electricity point in the bus shelter, the venue previously proposed by the Council. The Village Hall committee, however, would not be responsible for its insurance.
 - d. **Footpaths.** Cllr Jackson advised that a letter had been sent out to all local landowners advising them of their responsibilities regarding keeping footpaths and bridlepaths (PROWs) clear. An accompanying leaflet from GCC/AMEY gave additional information. A PROW officer from AMEY has offered to meet with the Clerk to explore the possibility of including publically owned footpaths in the Parish in their rolling clearance programme. This will be pursued by the clerk.
6. **Gloucestershire Archives Office.** The clerk advised the council that she had received a request from Gloucester Archives office for 'match funding' to improve and extend their facilities. They would appreciate a promise of funding in the near future with a hope to receive it before the end of the financial year. A figure of £500 was suggested. The Council resolved to support this request, as they use the facility to store records, and will discuss the amount to be donated at the next Council meeting.
7. **Right to Buy.** The Council has been asked to support GRCC in their request to the Government for rural exemption from the 'Right to Buy' proposals. Six members were in favour of supporting this request. The Clerk to draft a letter for approval.
8. **Licensing Policy.** Having considered the consultation document from Cotswold DC showing proposed changes to their *Statement of Licensing Policy* the Council declared that they had no comments to make.
9. **Broadband Update.** Although many residents have experienced improvement with fibre to cabinet, there are still some areas, Upper Sevenhampton particularly, that have been excluded from that scheme and consequently have poor internet speed. Cllr. Jenkin advised that it had been announced that Gigaclear will be supplying 'fibre to premises' to these properties. However, a search on Gigaclear's website produces an apparent difference between Lower & Upper Sevenhampton who would appear not to be included. Paul Hodgkinson advised the council that Seven Springs had had support from Gigaclear and properties in that area were now hooked up with cable direct to the property. However, he advised that the Council approach Fastershire about the discrepancy.

10. A date for the **Parish Clerk's appraisal** was set for early October. Appraisers will be Cllrs. Lynne Jackson, Bill Jenkin and Di Brown.
11. **Financial Matters**
- a. **Accounts** for Period 3 were circulated (see addenda) together with budget comparison with previous years. Cllr Day explained that the Council usually had a surplus at the end of a year but, as they had contributed to the repairs to Rhodes Memorial Hall's roof last year, expenditure in 2014/15 had been greater than usual.
 - b. The renewal of the **Parish Online** mapping service was approved. The Parish Clerk would circulate the passwords to all Councillors so that they could access it.
 - c. The renewal of the domain service providers for the **Parish's website** was approved. Cllr Jenkin recognised that the website may need to be changed in the future.
 - d. The Clerk circulated figures of her **expenditure and salary**, which is now due. This was approved.
 - e. **An internal audit** will be carried out by Cllr Di Brown. A mutually acceptable date to be identified between the Clerk and Cllr Brown in the near future.
12. **Planning Matters**
- a. Cllr Harry Boyd attended **planning training** at Cotswold DC for 2hrs on 26th August which included examination of *The Local Plan*. The last plan expired in 2011; the new plan runs till 2031 and is evolving. Different types of development, enforcement, material planning considerations were explored together with how decisions are made and how these are communicated. The intricacy of CDC's planning website were demonstrated but difficulties in obtaining planning alerts are still being experience by him.
 - b. Cllr Lynne Jackson has received a letter directly from Gloucestershire County Council inviting comments on the **Brockhampton additional footpath** application (15/03793/PPROW). This is the same letter that is part of the document support on the CDC Planning website. It calls for comments on the application by 10th October. It was thought that the Council's original letter of 16th June from Chair, Cllr. Lynne Jackson, may have been overlooked. It will be re-sent to the author of the letter - Miss Juliette Walker, Highways Records, Shire Hall, Gloucester GL1 2TH
 - c. This agenda item, re planning application for a mobile phone mast, was moved to earlier in the meeting.
13. **Date of Next Meeting** confirmed as November 18th 2015. The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

SEVENHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL UPDATE PERIOD 3 (AUG - SEP 2015)

Barclays Bank Account

Opening Balance **£7,099.32**

Receipts

£

Date

04.9.15 Precept 1,250.00

TOTAL 1,250.00

Balance **£8,122.72**

Payments

£

Date

20.7.15 Planning training 15.00
 Clerks training (2
 x£95) 190.00
 Clerk's expenses
 17.8.15 Printing- Village Live 21.60

226.60

Leeds Building Society - Way Forward

Opening Balance **£8,474.42**

Receipts

£

Date

0.00

TOTAL

Balance **£8,474.42**

Payments

£

Date

0.00