

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2009

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. N. Bayliss

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. D. Batchelor of the Parish Plan Working Party
Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

08/103 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. M. Winnington.

08/104 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2009 as a true record.

08/105 Finance

i) The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:

872	Haughton Parish Council	£38.04	photocopying
873	Stafford Borough Council	£47.90	amenity van
874	First City	£1,410.93	Driveme repres
875	First City	£1,276.50	barrister chgs
876	D Batchelor	£83.75	Parish Plan refresh
877	J Forrester	£20.00	safety boots

ii) The financial statements for February 2009 were accepted.

The invoice for village hall costs for the Parish Plan was to be requested

08/106 Seighford Airfield

i) It was reported that the Action Group, which had set itself a target for raising £9k to help pay for representation at the public inquiry, had so far banked over £8k . It was proceeding to the next stage to ask those who had returned questionnaires but had not indicated whether or not they would contribute to perhaps consider a donation.

ii) All members were in favour of moving to Stage 2 which included engaging the barrister to speak at the inquiry.

It was reported that Stafford Borough Council will oppose Driveme's application and seek to see through the enforcement at the inquiry.

08/107 Local Development Framework

The Chairman would circulate his thoughts on the consultation and invited councillors to add any thoughts prior to delivery to Forward Planning at the Borough Council.

08/108 Reports

- i) Mowing – Cllr. Forrester and Mr. D Rawlins had volunteered to carry mowing in the village for the year ahead. Both had signed the health and safety policy and had purchased any safety equipment required.
- ii) Highways – the large pothole in Coton Lane would be reported to CLARENCE. Bridge repairs were reported at the brook in Hextall lane. The clerk would contact J Sly of Highways regarding narrow lane signs.
- iii) Footpaths – Cllr. Thomas would put together a group of volunteers to put a plan forward and obtain grants next year.

08/109 Clerk’s Report

Noted

08/110 Bullrush Cottage

There was nothing to report.

08/111 Parish Plan

Mr D Batchelor reported on the two open meetings and presentations that had been held on 28 February and 6 March. There had been roughly 24 visitors who had put forward some good comments. A meeting of the working party would be held on 26 March to finalise comments in the Plan.

08/112 Public Questions

As there had been comments and letters from the public Mr Batchelor asked whether or not it was illegal to put together an action group. The Chairman replied that it was not illegal but that some members of the public were trying to distract the parish councils and other parties from fighting the Driveme application.

08/113 Chairman’s Questions

Cllr. Thomas asked for approval to plant daffodils on the bank around the churchyard which he received.

Cllr. Forrester reported receiving complaints regarding children playing on the green at White’s Meadow. A children’s play area as included in the Parish Plan was really needed.

08/114 Planning

None.

08/115. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the Parish Assembly would be held on Thursday,16 April 2009 at 7.00 pm to be followed by the parish council meeting.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2009

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

08/90 Apologies

None

08/91 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2009 as a true record.

08/92 Finance

i) The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:

865	Bayliss Agricultural Services	£566.44	mower service
866	First City	£1904.40	Driveme consult
867	Greenaway Timber Products	£149.50	replace cheque
868	Information Commissioner	£35.00	Data Protection
869	D Batchelor	£10.99	A-Z (Driveme)
870	J Hill	£159.97	Dec-Feb salary,etc
871	First City	£36.80	courier service

ii) The financial statements for January 2009 were accepted.

At this point it was resolved to bring forward items 6 and 9 on the agenda:

08/93 Seighford Airfield

i) The decision to proceed with Stage 1 (the engagement of First City planning consultants) had been approved by all members by consultation per the attached summary. A total cost of £20,000 was ratified by the council for further work by First City and the services of a barrister at the inquiry. This assumed that funds could be raised by Ranton and Seighford Parish Councils and by the Action Group.

ii) The result of consultation exercise re the Driveme application in Ranton Parish was a return of 57.3% of households of which 93% were against the Driveme development and over 90% were in favour of expenditure for the parish to be represented by experts at the inquiry.

iii) Funding for the appeal

Ranton Parish Council resolved to allocate £7k to the fund plus a possible £1k saved on the mowing contract if volunteers could undertake the work. Seighford Parish Council has allocated £4k to the fund. The Action Group for Seighford and Ranton which would include Great Bridgeford therefore have a target of £9k to raise to cover the estimated expenditure.

iv) Action Group

The group met for the first time on 18 February and adopted its own constitution with the aim of raising £9k. A bank account would be opened and a treasurer appointed. The group will also help on reports, petitions and any other work in support of the two parishes.

v) Ranton Parish Council's submission on behalf of the parish to the Inspector was sent in before 12 February and the council will be treated as an entitled third party.

08/94 Local Development Framework

This item was deferred. The clerk would provide copies of the consultation to councillors.

08/95 Maintenance

i) Mowing – if the 2009 season mowing contract is to be cancelled as discussed above, volunteers would be needed to carry out the work using the council's mower. Mr. C. Rawlins has offered to cover the churchyard and Cllr. Forrester to cover White's Meadow. That left Stocking Lane and the centre of the village.

ii) Highways – the community gang had cleaned signs and cleared grids and grips.

iii) Footpaths – the County Council was offering rights of way grants and Cllr. Thomas would look at this for the next meeting.

08/96 Clerk's Report

Noted

08/97 Bullrush Cottage

There was nothing to report.

08/98 Parish Plan

The council ratified the wording of the policy statements attributed to the council in the Plan as agreed at the meeting with the Parish Plan Committee.

08/99. Public Questions

None

08/100. Chairman's Questions

A change to the timing of council meetings was discussed. It was agreed that meetings would be held on the third Thursday of the month and would commence at 7.30pm from the March meeting for a trial period of 10 months excluding August and December.

It was pointed out that the Gliding Club was being sub-let to a commercial gliding organisation.

08/101. Planning

The council had no comments on planning application 09/11562/FUL

08/102. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next full council meeting would be Thursday, 19 March 2009 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2009

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
Mr. D. Bourne
Mr. D. Batchelor
Mrs. J. Batchelor

08/77 Apologies

None

08/78 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2008 as a true record subject to adding to item 08/73 'this would only be applicable if there had been maladministration' after compensation.

It was also resolved to accept the minutes of the special meeting held on 5 January 2009 subject to the alteration of 'the north' to 'The Wirral' in para.7 and changing 'inspectorate' to 'planning appeal' in para.12 on page 2.

At this point it was resolved to bring forward items 7 and 8 on the agenda:

08/79 Seighford Airfield

Cllr. Winnington reported that he and Cllr. Sutherland had been very upset that news of Driveme's appeal direct to the inspectorate, as the decision on their application was out of time, had not been given to them but had been forwarded to Bill Cash MP. Cllr. Winnington also told the meeting that the Borough Council chief executive had decided that it should appoint its own barrister.

Cllr. Thomas reported that all correspondence previously sent in to the planning department should be passed to the appointed inspector but the department has said that it may not all be sent. It may therefore be best to send letters again. Rule 66 says that all parties should get copies of statements by Driveme and vice versa.

Mr. Bourne felt that non determination by the Borough Council had caused all this and wondered whether or not the Borough Council could be sued for any costs. Cllr. Thomas thought this would be worth inquiring about.

It was resolved that the following further action would be taken:

- **a further statement would be made to the inspector by Ranton Parish Council. It was felt that access was needed to a planning consultant before appointing a barrister.**
- **All potential costs should be listed in case Ranton Parish Council had to stand alone.**
- **in order to gauge the level of support a new referendum was needed in the parish. A 100% letter drop to the parish would be carried out once the potential costs were known.**

08/80 Bullrush Cottage

It was reported that a neighbour of Bullrush Cottage had had eggs thrown at his car. The agency had paid for a valet of the car.

08/81 Finance

a) The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:

863	Greenaway	£149.50	Xmas tree
864	R Thomas	£226.92	expenses re Driveme

b) The financial statements to the end of December 2008 were accepted by the council.

c) A new draft budget was discussed. The clerk reported that the request for the same precept as last year had been sent to the Borough Council. **It was resolved to accept the new draft.**

08/82 Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – Cllr. Thomas reported that the mower was now in for service.

b) Highways – a list of jobs has been sent by the clerk to the Highways Department for the community gang.

c) Footpaths – Cllr. Thomas has not examined these recently.

08/83 Clerk's Report

The clerk 's report was noted..

08/84. Model Publication Scheme

The Information Commissioner had written to all parish councils in late November concerning a new model publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act which had to be adopted by 31 December 2008. The clerk had adapted a scheme for Ranton based on the template received. The Chairman agreed to study this and put forward any amendments.

08/85. Parish Plan

David Batchelor updated the council on behalf of the Parish Plan working party. The Plan was fundamentally finished but the orientation may have to be changed from landscape to portrait otherwise printing costs would be very expensive. The support for various parts of the Plan by the Parish Council needed to be included.

08/86. Public Questions

David Batchelor had volunteered to become a member of the Rural Challenge Panel and had been accepted.

The clerk was requested to put the third Saturday forward for the October visit of the amenity van if this was at all possible.

In response to a public query the chairman would have a word with a council member who had a poor attendance rate at council meetings.

08/87. Chairman’s Questions

Cllr. Winnington asked that the timing of parish council meetings could be discussed at the next meeting.

08/88. Planning

The following comments were made regarding planning applications:

08/11294/FUL The Creamery, Hextall Old Farm – alterations to layout.
The council felt that any alterations should comply with the original planning guidelines laid down when the barn conversions were first approved.

08/11376/FUL Park Nook Barns – removal of condition 4
The council felt that any alterations should comply with the original planning guidelines laid down when the barn conversions were first approved.

08/89. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next full council meeting would be Thursday, 19 February 2009 at 8 pm.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Bill Cash MP
Borough Cllr. R. Sutherland
Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
about 60 members of the public (including Seighford & Great
Bridgeford parishioners)

The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone . He explained that the meeting had been called to give the latest position on the Driveme planning applications and enforcement notice and to let everyone know that Driveme had appealed against the enforcement. He introduced Bill Cash MP to the meeting and invited Bill Cash to speak as he had new information.

BC – had today received a letter from Ian Curren of the Stafford Borough Council Legal Services Department that it was now aware that an appeal on the application by Driveme had gone straight to the Inspectorate and was therefore no longer a matter for the Borough Council. The inspector appointed for the appeal would want to see expert opinions on noise and all other criteria. BC explained that, as MP for Stone, he represented Ranton but could not represent Seighford/Great Bridgeford as they were in the Stafford constituency. He felt that tribute should be paid to the Parish Council for the way it had dealt with the problem so far but that the appeal would need to be dealt with properly and will be a costly affair.

Cllr. Thomas – was pleased with the news but it meant a new strategy other than that prepared for the evening was required. It was probable that the appeals on the enforcement and the application would now run together. However, some things contained in the enforcement were not included in the application and Driveme might end up with permission for those. The Parish Council needed a different approach and a barrister may have to be appointed so costs will need to be assessed.

Cllr. Winnington – he and Cllr. Sutherland were unaware of the appeal and he thought most of the Borough Council were unaware of it also. Definite notice of this was needed.

M. Castle of Gr Bridgeford – different parts of the ward have different problems with the Driveme proposals. Noise is not a concern for Great Bridgeford but traffic was as the roads were not built for the present level of traffic let alone the increased ones.

J. Arnot of GB – the last metrocount carried out four years ago had found 10,000 vehicle movements along the main road per day. The police agreed that the volume of cars and the 40mph speed limit were too high for the present infrastructure but Borough Councillors had not been able to do anything about this. Cresswell would be even more affected.

A. Evans of Ranton – information on the number of accidents on the roads around the area in the last few years should be compared with those of five years ago.

S. Jeffries of R – felt that legal advice was absolutely essential and may mean a rise in precept. A professional company should be employed to do a proper noise survey of the area and calculate how this will develop in the future.

Chairman – the Parish Council has reserves of about twice the precept at the moment for eventualities but legal fees could wipe these out. An investigation of costs would have to be made.

G. Cashmore of Seighford – could the other villages involved contribute to a joint fund? Would parishioners be able to donate money to this? (The clerk would find out any rules upon this.)

BC – a specialist in this field must be obtained. It might be possible to appoint a young barrister who is not as expensive but was well-informed.

C. Bouchard – why has the application now become Stafford Activity Centre? Maybe to cover all activities.

A. Bennett – new experiences were being advertised on the Driveme/Treatme website all the time. All these activities could be brought to Seighford in the long run. Through the Freedom of Information Act he had found 12 visits to the existing site in the north by environmental officers – would it be possible to find out what these were for?

Cllr. Thomas – it was worrying that, even with enforcement, there could be a creep of usage.

R. Bourne of R – the application amounted to a desecration of rural England and could we not apply to related bodies for help? The CPRE and English Nature were mentioned.

MOP – we must try to come together as communities to fight the application. Seighford and Great Bridgeford need to contact David Kidney Mp to request support.

Cllr. Thomas – it was probable that any inquiry was unlikely to be held before June and would probably be later than that. The enforcement appeal would be decided on what activities had been carried on the airfield in the past not upon what Driveme is doing now. The parish councils have been able to prove that Driveme's activities are not what was done before.

Cllr. Forrester – what is the position now that the Borough Council is not presenting the case on the enforcement? Will residents get another letter regarding the application appeal and the inspectorate?

Cllr. Thomas – everyone can still write as individuals on the enforcement. There would be another letter regarding the inspectorate.

R. Johns of S – who sits on a public inquiry? What does an inquiry consist of?

Cllr. Sutherland – people present are invited to speak but this will depend on how much room there is for the public. The inspector can arrange a site visit. He/she may also commission an independent noise assessor and we should make sure the SBC environmental officer is present when that assessment is made.

BC – the assessment should not be done on one vehicle – if a lot are in action at the same time the aggregate noise could be considerable. All the legitimate uses should be identified so that noise can be measured. The inspectorate, which is based in Bristol, will send out experienced inspectors to gather evidence and report. The inspectorate is loosely part of defra but is really independent.

Driveme will be able to carry on current activities until the outcome of the inquiry. Their activities are unlawful but not illegal.

Cllr. D. Price of Seighford – an action group is needed to represent both parish councils.

Chairman – were any present who supported the Driveme application? There was none. With the recession Driveme would highlight the employment factor. We must do more research into the types of jobs involved to counter this issue.

MOP – the scale of the proposed tracks is much greater than the existing runway. 11% is runway , the rest is presently greenfield.

R. Eld of S – the Swan Hotel in Stafford is currently giving a £15 discount to Driveme visitors and is doing a lot of business through it.

Cllr. Sutherland outlined the many reasons people had given him for opposing the application. He has, however, had views from people supporting the application because of jobs and tourism.

The Chairman summed up the meeting and asked whether or not those present were happy for the Parish Council to continue on its course and spend money in the process. All those present were in favour.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman.

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. N. Bayliss
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
Mr. D. Bourne
Mr. C. Reynolds

08/64 Apologies

None

08/65 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2008 as a true record.

08/66 Finance

a) **The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:**

859	Ranton Village Hall	£217.00	Room hire
860	Audit Commission	£141.00	Audit fee
861	J Hill	£149.31	Oct – Nov salary, etc
862	R. Thomas	£97.98	Xmas lights

b) The financial statements to the end of October 2008 were accepted by the council.

c) The draft budget was discussed and **the council resolved to keep the precept at the same level as last year.** Some of the other headings in the budget may be changed at the January 2009 meeting.

08/67 Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – Cllr. Thomas will book the mower in for its winter service.

b) Highways – the clerk had written to Mr. S. Winnington regarding the mud on Stocking Lane – this is now looking much better. Mud is now a problem on the Woodseaves road and this will be reported to CLARENCE.

c) Footpaths – nothing to report.

d) Christmas Tree – Cllr. Winnington hopes to obtain a tree from Greenaway. Cllr. Thomas has purchased two strings of low voltage lights for the tree. The clerk has applied for a Staffs County Council licence for the tree.

08/68. Clerk's Report

The clerk had produced a précis of the Borough Council's Sports & Recreation Facilities Strategy consultation. Comments will be returned after advice from councillors. The clerk will organise the civic amenity visits in line with this year.

08/69. Seighford Airfield

The chairman gave a briefing on the Development Control meeting on 26 November. The outcome was a site meeting to be held on Saturday, 6 December before a decision is made later the same day. Councillors were entitled to attend the visit and it was hoped they could persuade the Committee members to visit some of the houses at Hextall and Abbeyside.

Cllr. Thomas went through his paper of observations on the meeting and believed there had been further maladministration. The chairman said that his letter regarding this subject to the chief executive had been passed to the planning department to be dealt with which was not what was required. Cllr. Thomas has disliked the whole process of dealing with the Driveme applications and has been dismayed by the lack of integrity. Cllr. Winnington objected to the statement in a paragraph in Cllr. Thomas's paper that ward members were not available to the parish councillor.

The council agreed to write again to the chief executive of the borough council, Mr Ian Thompson, with observations on the meeting. The issues were very serious and he would be asked for an explanation of the process as it is felt to be unsafe

08/70. Cllr. Winnington's complaint against the chairman

The chairman passed control of the meeting to Cllr. Thomas, the vice-chairman, for this agenda item.

Cllr. Winnington felt that the holding of a meeting without proper notice could be a Standards Board issue and wanted assurance that this would not happen again.

The chairman replied that, because of work commitments, there had not been time to alert the public. The meeting was called within a time period of 4.00 – 9.00pm on the 11 November. The meeting itself lasted from 8.00 to 8.50pm at which the only subject discussed was the need to issue a letter regarding the planning department's changing its recommendation to approval of the Driveme application. Cllr. Winnington had declared a personal interest in this application and so could not have had a major input to the meeting.

The statements of both sides were noted.

The council agreed not to hold a summary meeting again.

The clerk agreed to post, rather than email, documents to Cllr. Bayliss in future.

08/71. Bullrush Cottage

There have been no complaints from neighbours regarding activities at the home in recent weeks. It was felt that the home had taken on board the objections raised in recent months and that now only younger children were being cared for.

08/72. Parish Plan

Chris Reynolds, the chairman of the working party, was present at the meeting and informed that there was now a draft plan based on a 63% response to the questionnaire. Deciding on photography was the current issue as all photos should be identifiable as of Ranton parish. Mr. Reynolds was now requesting the parish council’s input – a response to each section where there was a request for action.

The clerk was asked to send a copy of the draft plan to each of the councillors.

08/73. Public Questions

The effect of an approval for the Driveme application was discussed with concerns about the effect on house prices in the area. This, however, is not a planning issue. Cllr. Thomas said that there could be a case to take to the ombudsman for compensation.

08/74. Chairman’s Questions

None.

08/75. Planning

The following comments were made regarding planning applications:

08/11001/REM Church Farm, Brook Lane – reserved matters re siting, layout
The proposed buildings have been changed from the original application and would be a visual intrusion. They would be next to an historic building and out of character with the centre of the village.

08/11101/COU Broadheath Farm, Ellenhall – change of use of building to light industrial
Cllr. Winnington declared a personal interest in this application.
The council had no comments.

08/11149/FUL Chinglea, Brook Lane – garden room to rear.
The council had no comments.

08/11174/FUL,08/11176/FUL,08/11177/FUL and 08/11178/FUL The Stables, Hextall
Old Farm
The council had no comments on any of these applications.

08/76. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next full council meeting would be Thursday, 18 January 2009 at 8 pm.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

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HELD ON THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2008

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Cllr. J. Forrester
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IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
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08/76. Date of next meeting

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The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 30 OCTOBER 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
Mr. A. Davies of Educare
Members of the public

08/51 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Winnington who had to attend another meeting.

08/52 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2008 as a true record.

08/53 Finance

a) **The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:**

855	Haughton PC	£72.88	Photocopying
856	Stafford BC	£68.30	Amenity van
857	P. Jeffries	£89.50	Mowing
858	R. Thomas	£165.59	Mower petrol & spares

b) The financial statements to the end of September 2008 were accepted by the council.

c) The Annual Return had been signed off by the Audit Commission without qualification.

08/54 Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – The last cut for the year had been done in October. A number of repairs had been necessary to the mower during the year but it was not at the end of its useful life.

b) Highways – the Community Gang would be available for three days in January 2009 to clear gullies and covers, clean signs and do any other small tasks required. As there had been no response to the clerk's letter to Mr. Jones regarding Coton Lane she would let John Sly know about the dangers of the mud being left on the road. The clerk was also asked to write to Mr. S. Winnington of Ranton Hall Farm about mud left on Stocking

Lane around the farm. Cllr. Thomas said that the major culvert on Brook Lane needed to be cleared of vegetation and jettied from Brook House Farm to Coton Lane.

c) Footpaths – nothing to report.

08/55. Clerk's Report

Staffordshire County Council Highways Department require Christmas Trees on the highway to have a licence. Ranton's tree is deemed to be on the highway. New low voltage lights will be researched and acquired for this year.

08/56. Seighford Airfield

A short special meeting had been held on 2 October to brief members of the public upon the fact that Driveme has put in a revised application.

i) Cllr. Thomas now gave an update on the re-submission. A statement of objections had been sent to the planning department and the application was likely to come before the Development Control Committee on 19 November. **Resolution: the parish council resolved to send a letter to all committee members with a small presentation of photos showing Ranton village, the agricultural activities this year and the uses to which the airfield was being put.** If the planning officers change their recommendation to approval Cllr. Thomas had prepared representations to the Committee. The speaker on behalf of the objectors has not yet been decided, but Cllr. Thomas was keeping in touch with Cllr. Price of Seighford's planning committee. **The council decided that Cllr. Thomas would write to the planning department and the Committee with an analysis of letters for and against the application which is continually being misrepresented by several parties. David Batchelor would write on this point to the Stafford Newsletter.**

ii) Borough Councillors Winnington and Sutherland have both declared a personal interest in the application as they are friends of the landowner. The councillors have now said they will speak for both sides at the Committee meeting although they have been advised by the chief executive of the Borough Council not to do so. **The council decided that it did not want its borough councillors to speak either way for Ranton and the clerk was asked to inform the Borough Council Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council of this decision.**

08/57. Local Development Framework

Prospective sites for house building have been put forward by landowners in the area and have been marked onto the maps of the area by the Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section. This does not mean that any decisions about development have been taken but gives an opportunity for parish councils to put forward any constraints that apply to the offered areas.

The clerk was asked to put forward views on the inadequacy of the sewerage system in Ranton and the amount of traffic already existing on the narrow lanes onto the consultation site.

08/58. Bullrush Cottage

Mr. Alan Davies, the house manager, was present to give an update on the cottage. There are currently three people at the cottage between the ages of 12 and 16, and the staff do not expect any of these to impact on the community as there is no history to suggest this. The focus for them is upon daily tasks and recycling. Ofsted was notified of the incidents that had occurred previously and has the power to close a home down.

The parish council will maintain an open brief and keep the home on the agenda. Alan Davies will be invited to the November meeting but his presence would definitely be appreciated at the January meeting.

08/59. Parish Plan

The draft plan was virtually finished. There will be a meeting on 12 November aimed at putting pictures to the words. The plan will be presented to the parish in either January or February. The chairman of the Plan Working Party would like a meeting with the parish council on the council's commitment to the plan recommendations.

08/60. Public Questions

None.

08/61. Chairman's Questions

Items for the next meeting would include ideas on the budget for the next financial year, news on Bullrush Cottage and progress with Christmas Tree lights. The clerk was requested to ask Cllr. Winnington for the Christmas Tree itself.

08/62. Planning

The council had no objections to application 08/11005/FUL Hextall Old Farm – demolition of existing conservatory, provision of kitchen extension and large and small conservatory.

08/63. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next full council meeting would be Thursday, 27 November 2008 at 8 pm.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 2 OCTOBER 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. J Forrester

IN ATTENDANCE: Members of the public
Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

1 Apologies

Cllr. Winnington.

2 Revised Planning Application 08/10971/FUL – Seighford Airfield

The Chairman invited Cllr. R. Thomas to comment on the revised submission.

Cllr. Thomas explained the main differences between the original application and the re-submission which seemed to have made little difference to the size and scope of the proposed development. He was hopeful that the planning officers would still recommend refusal but felt that the council should be prepared in case there was a change of mind. A discussion followed and the chairman then asked the members of the public if they still wanted the parish council to oppose the application. All present resolved that the parish council should continue to fight the application.

The parish council duly resolved to maintain its opposition to the application.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
Mr. A. Davies of Educare
Members of the public

It was decided that members of the public should be allowed to have an open discussion with council members and Mr. Davies of Educare.

Cllr. Winnington introduced Alan Davies who is the new Educare manager at Bullrush Cottage in Ranton. AD has only been in the post for six weeks and is in the process of finding out about the problems experienced by local residents. AD was willing to answer questions as long as they were not specific to a child. The chairman explained that there is no legal requirement for the parish council to be informed when a care home company purchases and runs houses in the community, but the council had been assured two years ago that children at the home would not be young offenders.

AD, responding to questions, said that the home is to care for children from 11 to 18 years who had been the subjects of abuse and for whom there was no other care. There was one carer to one child in the day and two to three at night. The children are trained to live in normal circumstances and learn skills such as communication. If they are violent towards themselves or towards others they are restrained. No other restraint is allowed, the bars on the windows of the cottage are for safety only and if a child decides to walk out the carers have no legal right to stop the child. Residents complained that children were seen walking the streets and entering gardens, one with a large screwdriver and, of course, there had been the incident at the Old Stables involving two of the children.

AD informed the meeting that one of those children had been moved away from the area and the other was due to leave in the next two weeks. All children who came to the home were from broken homes and might be young offenders, but they were mainly a danger to themselves, their relatives or their carers. Each child has a care plan with two key workers to train them. The children were normally accompanied at all times but legislation prevents carers going outside a framework. Cllr. Thomas said that there was a general law to stop these children being a nuisance to others.

Cllr. Winnington was asked to whom residents should turn if they had concerns about security. He responded that AD was willing to let residents have his mobile number (07811303658) to contact if an incident seemed likely to occur. Ofsted oversaw the homes and the parish council should write to that body if they had concerns.

AD assured the meeting that he would take all comments back to Hilary Jones, the Educare regional manager and he agreed to come to the next meeting.

The chairman thanked AD for coming to speak to residents and said that the council would make a place on the agenda each month for Bullrush Cottage and it was hoped this would reduce to a regular slot eventually.

08/39 Apologies

None received.

08/40 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2008 as a true record.

08/41 Finance

a) **The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:**

853	J Hill	£177.48	Sal & exes Mar –Sept
854	P Jeffries	£211.49	mowing & bearings

b) The financial statements to the end of July 2008 were accepted by the council.

The clerk was asked to ascertain under which powers the council could contribute to the cost of repairs at the church.

08/42 Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – some small repairs including replacement bearings had been required for the mower. There would probably be four more cuts this season.

b) Highways – the clerk would try to contact M. Webb of the Highways Department to pay a site visit to the village. Community gangs will shortly be carrying out work in the area. There were complaints about the mud lying on Coton Lane which was dangerous for cyclists and a problem for the horse riders at Coton Farm. The clerk was asked to write to the farmer concerned.

c) Footpaths – nothing to report.

08/43. Clerk's Report

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association AGM 15 November 2008. If possible the council would like to put forward two resolutions: one on the ease with which firms can set up as care homes, etc for less than six people without requiring planning permission, and one on the fact that applications for lawful use do not have to be put out for consultation but can be decided by the legal department of the local authority.

The school governor vacancy was noted but the council had no recommendation.

Seighford ward has been included in the Rural Development programme for Staffordshire and the Community Council has been seeking up to four representatives for the Leader Panel which will decide which scheme applications go forward for grants. The council nominated David Batchelor and the clerk would send his details to the Community Council.

Staffordshire County Council has received money for a playbuilder programme and is running roadshows on how to apply for funding for programmes. The clerk will attend the Stafford Borough roadshow at Barlaston on 21 October.

08/44. Seighford Airfield

Cllr. Winnington declared a personal interest in this item of the agenda.
A new application has been lodged by Driveme and responses to consultation were due by 7 October. Cllr. Thomas had had a preliminary view of the plans and the only changes from the original were alterations to the main building and reduced hours worked.

Cllr. Thomas had also queried the lawful use enforcement and John Holmes had responded that notices will be served as soon as possible but Driveme then has six months to comply.

The clerk has sent for a full copy of the application and Cllr. Thomas will send out relevant parts to the team.

The council resolved to pursue the objections to the application.

The clerk was asked to write to the planning department for confirmation that the application would be dealt with as a major one and therefore go to the full Development Control Committee for a decision.

It was decided that a special meeting should be held on 2 October 2008 at 8.00 pm at the Village Hall. Cllr. Winnington gave his apologies for that meeting.

08/45. Parish Forum

The chairman and Cllr. Winnington attended. The main interest had been in the Local Development Framework with more consultation due in October. Borough Council elections were due in 2009.

08/46. Parish Plan

The clerk reported that the working party had decided to produce a draft copy of the Plan for consultation with the residents at an open meeting in October/November.

08/47. Public Questions

S. Jeffries asked that a full seven days notice be given on the notice board of council meetings.

Doxey Bridge is now closed to vehicles but no work has started yet.

08/48. Chairman's Questions

Seighford Airfield is the main issue at the moment.

08/49. Planning

Cllr. Winnington declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting.
The council had no objections to application 08/10922/FUL Hollybank Cottage – conversion of garage and link to house.

08/50. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next full council meeting would be Thursday, 30 October 2008 at 8 pm.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. N. Bayliss
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

08/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Thomas who was away.

08/27 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2008 as a true record.

08/28 Finance

a) **The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:**

851	P Jeffries	£228.23	grass cutting contract
852	Stafford Borough Council	£68.30	amenity van

b) The financial statements to the end of June 2008 were accepted by the council.

08/29. Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – all in order.

b) Highways – The clerk was still to invite M. Webb of the Highways Department to walk along Brook Lane. It was reported that melting tar was appearing on the side roads resurfaced earlier in the year and this was being carried into residents' houses. It would be reported to CLARENCE.

c) Footpaths – All the footpaths on Phil Jones areas were clear except for the one behind Brook House Farm.

08/30. Clerk's Report

Local Development Framework – the clerk was asked to respond to the consultation:

- agreeing with the methodology
- agreeing the groupings of settlements without change
- confirming that green belt should be sacrosanct
- agreeing that individual settlements were in the right group.

The school governor vacancy was noted but the council had no recommendation.

Stafford Borough Council Parish Forum – Cllrs. MacLeod and Forrester would attend.

08/31. Seighford Airfield

Cllrs. MacLeod and Thomas attended the meeting of the Borough Council Development Control Committee on 23 July. The enforcement of cessation of use was agreed by the committee and an order to quit the site within 28 days was given. This must be carried out within six months but could be suspended if a resubmission of plans was received. A briefing note prepared by the chairman and Cllr. Thomas for the parish council had been sent to the members of the Development Control Committee. Cllr. Forrester had been informed but there had been no time to contact Cllrs. Bayliss and Winnington.

08/32. Bullrush Cottage

Cllr. Winnington reported that he had spoken to Hilary Jones, the area manager for Educare, and a meeting with the staff involved would be set up. Of the two boys concerned in the incident, one had been given a three year sentence and was now out of the area. The other had been well-behaved until persuaded by his companion to take part in the break-in. The cottage was given a bad image by cigarette smoking outside and staff had been requested not to allow it. The assistant regional manager and Alan Davies, the new home manager, will attend the next parish council meeting to answer questions.

08/33. Parish Plan

The Plan questionnaires have now been returned and are being analysed. The next meeting is on 20 August when results should be available.

08/34. Public Questions

There were none.

08/35. Chairman's Questions

Cllr. Winnington reported that, during the works on drainage on Hextall Lane, the bridge would be repaired. He also informed the meeting that the bridge over the brook at Doxey was to be replaced so the road into Stafford would be closed for 12 weeks from the end of August.

08/36. Planning

A report on the enforcement at White House, Butt Lane had been received. The owner is complying with the enforcement but has put the property up for sale.

08/37. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday, 18 September 2008 at 8 pm unless a meeting regarding Driveme was required.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. J. Forrester
Cllr. N. Bayliss
Cllr. M. Winnington

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

08/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Thomas who was away.

08/27 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2008 as a true record.

08/28 Finance

a) The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:

851	P Jeffries	£228.23	grass cutting contract
852	Stafford Borough Council	£68.30	amenity van

b) The financial statements to the end of June 2008 were accepted by the council.

08/29. Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – all in order.

b) Highways – The clerk was still to invite M. Webb of the Highways Department to walk along Brook Lane. It was reported that melting tar was appearing on the side roads resurfaced earlier in the year and this was being carried into residents' houses. It would be reported to CLARENCE.

c) Footpaths – All the footpaths on Phil Jones areas were clear except for the one behind Brook House Farm.

08/30. Clerk's Report

Local Development Framework – the clerk was asked to respond to the consultation:

- agreeing with the methodology
- agreeing the groupings of settlements without change
- confirming that green belt should be sacrosanct
- agreeing that individual settlements were in the right group.

The school governor vacancy was noted but the council had no recommendation.

Stafford Borough Council Parish Forum – Cllrs. MacLeod and Forrester would attend.

08/31. Seighford Airfield

Cllrs. MacLeod and Thomas attended the meeting of the Borough Council Development Control Committee on 23 July. The enforcement of cessation of use was agreed by the committee and an order to quit the site within 28 days was given. This must be carried out within six months but could be suspended if a resubmission of plans was received. A briefing note prepared by the chairman and Cllr. Thomas for the parish council had been sent to the members of the Development Control Committee. Cllr. Forrester had been informed but there had been no time to contact Cllrs. Bayliss and Winnington.

08/32. Bullrush Cottage

Cllr. Winnington reported that he had spoken to Hilary Jones, the area manager for Educare, and a meeting with the staff involved would be set up. Of the two boys concerned in the incident, one had been given a three year sentence and was now out of the area. The other had been well-behaved until persuaded by his companion to take part in the break-in. The cottage was given a bad image by cigarette smoking outside and staff had been requested not to allow it. The assistant regional manager and Alan Davies, the new home manager, will attend the next parish council meeting to answer questions.

08/33. Parish Plan

The Plan questionnaires have now been returned and are being analysed. The next meeting is on 20 August when results should be available.

08/34. Public Questions

There were none.

08/35. Chairman's Questions

Cllr. Winnington reported that, during the works on drainage on Hextall Lane, the bridge would be repaired. He also informed the meeting that the bridge over the brook at Doxey was to be replaced so the road into Stafford would be closed for 12 weeks from the end of August.

08/36. Planning

A report on the enforcement at White House, Butt Lane had been received. The owner is complying with the enforcement but has put the property up for sale.

08/37. Date of next meeting

It was resolved that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday, 18 September 2008 at 8 pm unless a meeting regarding Driveme was required.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 26 JUNE 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. N. Bayliss

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)
Mr. S. Horton

08/14 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Forrester who was on holiday and Cllr. Winnington who had to attend another meeting.

08/15 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2008 as a true record.

08/16 Finance

a) **The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:**

850	Nowell Meller	£88.13	Cert of Lawful Use
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b) The financial statements to the end of May 2008 were accepted by the council.

08/17. Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – Cllr. Thomas reported that the mowing machinery was all in good working order.

b) Highways – The clerk was asked to invite M. Webb of the Highways Department to walk along Brook Lane.

c) Footpaths – Cllr. Thomas had cleared access off highways where possible but in some places hedge growth was too great. Phil Jones had sprayed out the paths on his fields. It was decided that the council should seek funds from the Rights of Way department in January 2009 to carry out improvements.

08/18. Clerk's Report

Accepted.

08/19. Seighford Airfield

Cllr. Thomas reported that there was little to do at the moment. He thought that Driveme would be bringing new plans to the Borough Council eventually. The agenda for the Planning Committee meeting on 23 July would be published on 16 July at which point representations on the enforcement would be made by the parish council to the Committee members.

08/20. Bullrush Cottage

The meeting was opened for participation of members of the public. Mr. S. Horton of the Old Stables, Brook Lane reported that his property had recently been broken into by two children from the Bullrush cottage care home and £5,000 Of damage had been done. One child convicted after the event was already on bail for two other offences. The other, a sixteen year old, was due to be charged with other offences of burglary and aggravated burglary. Both children were from the Perry Barr area. Educare, a private company, run the Bullrush Cottage care home but the staff seem to have little authority or means of restraint. When the care home was originally set up four years ago the parish had been assured that it would be used for local and much younger children. It was noted that there was a high level of disquiet in the parish over the incident. The clerk was asked to contact Cllr. Winnington as he was the County Council member for the area and to set up a meeting with the manager of the home.

08/21. Parish Plan

The Plan questionnaires had all been distributed and were due for collection on he weekend of 12/13 July.

08/22. Public Questions

There were none.

08/23. Chairman’s Questions

There were none.

08/24. Planning

None to hand.

08/25. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be Thursday, 24 July 2008 at 8 pm.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 22 MAY 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington
Cllr. J Forrester

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

08/01 Election of Chairman

Cllr. N MacLeod was proposed as Chairman by Cllr. Thomas and was duly elected.

08/02 i) Election of other officers

It was resolved that Cllr. R Thomas be elected Vice-Chairman.

It was resolved that Mrs. M. Johnson be appointed internal auditor.

It was confirmed that Cllrs. MacLeod and Thomas would be the council's representatives on the Village Hall Committee.

ii) It was resolved that Allianz Insurance Ltd should continue as the council's insurers.

iii) It was resolved to continue membership of the Community Council of Staffordshire and of the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association.

08/03 Apologies

None received.

08/04 Minutes of the previous meetings

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2008 as a true record.

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2008 as a true record.

08/05 Finance

a) The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:

843	Ranton Village Hall Committee	£65.02	Room hire
844	Community Council of Staffs	£20.00	2008/9 membership
845	SPCA	£159.00	2008/9 membership
846	Allianz Insurance	£246.57	Mower insurance
847	Allianz Insurance	£342.66	General insurance
848	J Hill	£171.36	Salary & exes
849	R Thomas	£51.50	Expenses re Driveme

- b) The financial statements to the end of April 2008 were accepted by the council.
- c) The council approved the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2008 and it was signed by the Chairman and the clerk/ responsible financial officer. The Return would now be forwarded to the Audit Commission.

08/06. Reports

- a) Mowing & maintenance – mowing had begun. The ball had come off the front cutter blades of the mower but had been repaired cheaply. The costs of a new mower would be investigated after the current mowing season.
- b) Highways – a contract for minor highway repairs had been issued by the Highways Department. Cllr. Winnington reported that a secondary drainage system was to be installed on Hextall Lane which would involve closure of the lane while this was done.
- c) Footpaths – no action.

08/07. Clerk's Report

Accepted.

08/08. Seighford Airfield

Cllr. Thomas had now compiled all the reports and statements which have been submitted to the planning department. The application was now scheduled to go before the Stafford Borough Council Planning Committee on 25 June but this timetable might not be kept.

It was felt that a meeting of the council should be called at least a fortnight before the Committee meeting to resolve on final matters. The clerk would be on holiday but would produce an agenda and summons that the chairman could send out.

08/09. Parish Plan

Cllr. Forrester gave an update on the Plan. The working party was well forward in producing a questionnaire which it hoped to deliver by the 21 June with a target for returns by 12 July.

08/10. Public Questions

There were none.

08/11. Chairman's Questions

There were none.

08/12. Planning

None to hand.

08/13. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be conditional upon the date of the SBC Planning Committee meeting.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 15 MAY 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington
Cllr. A. Bayliss
Cllr. J Forrester

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. A. Bennett
Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

1 Apologies

None.

2 Declaration of interests

Cllr. M. Winnington had previously declared a personal interest in Seighford Settled Estates.

3 Final Submission on Planning Application 08/10086/FUL – Seighford Airfield

The Chairman invited Cllr. R. Thomas to comment on the proposed final submission.

Cllr. Thomas made the following points in support of his contention that there was no proper foundation for the application:

The development is in contravention of the Planning Objectives for Sustainable Development.

The land is agriculturally productive and, with proper application of organic manure, is highly productive. It is not a brownfield site.

The CO2 emissions from the proposed usage would be 2000 tons p.a.

The 'Stafford Renewed' £500M development will create a major employment demand.

Landscaping is important – there is a Staffordshire County Council directive that the countryside must be protected for its own sake and that any proposed use will not disturb this.

The proposals are unsustainable and the benefits do not raise the development above brownfield level.

It is quite categoric that an Environmental Impact report has not been done.

He then recommended the submission and its reports for acceptance by the council and onward transmission to Stafford Borough Council.

The Chairman stated that the application was a highly technical document that had attracted 102 letters of objection and 92 of support. He thanked Cllr. Thomas and all those who had helped to put the council's submission together.

Resolution: the Parish Council resolved to send the final submission to the planning department of Stafford Borough Council. (Cllr. Winnington took no part in the vote).

The submission was then signed by the Chairman and the clerk.

Cllr. Thomas informed the meeting that it was important to know what reports and recommendations the planning officers put to the Planning Committee. These items would be attached to the agenda and could be downloaded from the internet.

4. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Thursday, 22 May 2008 from 8.00 pm. at the Village Hall.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman)
Cllr. R. Thomas
Cllr. M. Winnington – part of meeting
Cllr. J Forrester

IN ATTENDANCE: Members of the public
Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

1 Apologies

None received. Cllr. Winnington had to leave the meeting early.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2008 as a true record.

3 Finance

a) **The following accounts for payment were approved by the council:**

841	Stafford Borough Council	£65.02	Election costs
842	Mr. R. Thomas	£85.51	Documents, discs, etc

b) The financial statements to the end of March 2008 were accepted by the council and the clerk would now proceed to the completion of the Annual Return and the internal audit of the records.

c) **It was agreed that the fidelity insurance cover be increased to £10,000.**

At this point it was decided to bring Item 6 on the agenda forward and allow public participation.

6 Seighford Airfield

Cllr. Thomas summarised the latest position. The comments from Ranton Parish Council concerning planning application 08/10086/FUL should be in by 29 April, but the council could send in further comments until the plans were referred to Committee. The application involved a lot of documents but volunteers were working on various aspects. Borough Council officers have been closely involved with the application and that impetus must be stopped. He hoped the application would be rejected and then it would probably go to appeal. The parish council would then seek barrister help.

There were two area of particular concern:

i) Environmental Impact Assessment – the Borough Council officers have said one is not needed, but it is clear that one is needed and pressure must be brought to bear to reverse the decision.

ii) Enforcement – if a new or retrospective application is put in this seems to allow the Borough Council not to enforce correction or cancellation of any refused activities which are within the application and could thus carry on throughout the three years of the projected development of the new facility.

A great danger is that ,if a favourable decision is made,users can interpret it as they want. The Borough Council will try to control matters with a Planning Agreement but difficulties exist - users can be resistant to these agreements in practice and once the facility is in place it can be used for a wide range of activities within the user description. The runway used at present is some 450 yards long and almost certainly would be rented out for other activities with little or no control when not used by Driveme.

Cllr. Forrester felt that Driveme had no integrity and should be stopped now. Mr. D. Bourne pointed out that it was claimed the runway was a CAA emergency runway. Mr. K. Knight informed that there was no such thing in the UK. There are designated mapped runways but Seighford was not one of them. Mr. S. Hennigan said he had approached the CPRE who had no knowledge of the airfield applications. One of their officials was not convinced by the claimed noise levels and would arrange for an expert to check them. Cllr. Thomas added that the proposed plans show no noise protection for Ranton at all.

Mr. S. Jeffries had spoken to members of the gliding club whose reactions were mixed. There were only two years of their agreement left to run. Every time the power tug was used the club had to pay a £4 fee to Seighford Settled Estates.

Mrs. P. Towner asked about the conditions of the Driveme lease and what was held on the Land Registry. Cllr. Thomas responded that it was a 20 year lease but did not know when it was taken out. Mr. Jeffries queried taking legal advice on pursuing the enforcement but Cllr. Thomas said the difficulty was the time scale for views to be in. The Chairman asked whether or not parishioners present were in favour of the council using its reserves to get legal advice. The meeting wholeheartedly supported this. Malcolm Ford had made a protest about the noise by parking his vehicle on the runway at the weekend. He was threatened but when he suggested the police were called the organisers refused.

The Chairman said that all dates and times would be published on the notice board as soon as known.

The website www.ranton.info was offered as a site for information.

4. Reports

a) Mowing & maintenance – no action yet.

b) Highways – Cllr. Forrester had raised Coton Lane with CLARENCE and officials have been out to look at potholes. Cllr. Thomas had carried out his annual rubbish collection except for Bourne Avenue and the Woodseaves Road.

c) Footpaths – a complaint had been made about an electric fence but this has now been moved further down Coton Lane.

5. Clerk's Report

Accepted.

7. Parish Plan

The next meeting of the working party was to be on 30 April. Cllr. Forrester agreed to be the council's representative.

8. Public Questions

There were none.

9. Chairman’s Questions

The council resolved that Cllrs. Thomas and MacLeod be its representatives on the Village Hall Committee.

10. Planning

None to hand.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Thursday, 22 May 2008 from 8.00 pm. at the Village Hall.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date

Ranton Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008

AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. N. MacLeod (Chairman Of Ranton Parish Council)

IN ATTENDANCE: Members of the public
Mrs. J. Hill (clerk)

1 Apologies

Parish Cllr. N. Bayliss
Borough Cllr. R. Sutherland

2 Chairman's Report

The local elections in May 2007 saw only Cllrs. MacLeod, Thomas and Winnington stand as members who therefore took office again as they were unopposed. Cllrs. Forrester and Bayliss were co-opted to give a full council.

The council's responsibilities include checking the highways and reporting defects, ensuring the grass cutting on the verges and giving comments on behalf of the parish on planning applications. The council may also be asked to comment on adjacent parish applications that affect Ranton, but was not consulted on Seighford Airfield until it asked for the documents. As Ranton Parish Council meets more often than Seighford's it effectively moved ahead in the process and thus was instrumental in the rejection of the Certificate of Legal Use and the refusal of permission for the retrospective plans for hoarding, fencing and portable buildings. With a new Driveme application now in the system an action group has been formed to submit objections.

The Parish Council has also instigated a Parish Plan working party which held its first meeting on 16 April to ascertain how the village would like to evolve over time and how it could control this. Chris Reynolds has been elected chairman of the group which has a grant from defra and financial backing from the parish council to help it.

The precept has been raised by 3% which is the first increase in three years.

3 Borough Councillor's Report

Cllr. Winnington, in his borough councillor capacity, gave the report as Cllr. Sutherland could not be present. The Borough's share of the council tax for 2008/09 had been kept below the level of inflation and the development of the new leisure centre had been commenced at nil cost to the BC. The new refuse and recycling system had now been activated.

Both the Borough Councillors were frustrated by the "interest" process which limited their involvement in important issues. It had now been confirmed, however, that the Seighford Airfield application has been allotted major status and will therefore go to Committee. Objectors and applicants are allowed three minutes to make their case to the Committee.

4 County Councillor's Report

Cllr. Winnington also gave a report as County Councillor. The County Council share of the council tax amounted to £1200 -1300 and this covered highways, schools, farms and social security. As a member of the opposition on the County Council he had fought the sale of the county owned farms and was pleased to see that many of the starter and educational farms have now been retained. Locally the car park had been re-laid at the school by the Highways Department; elsewhere highway problems existed on Coton Lane, Brook Lane and Hextall Lane. Speeding was the main problem on the main roads. The battle was now on to save local post offices from closure and he asked the public to send letters of objection to the closure of Great Bridgeford P.O. Another area of concern was the Council's Mineral Plan under which, due to the need for aggregate for more housing, the quarry at Gnosall might be re-opened.

5 Public Questions

The rest of the meeting was now open for public consultation.

D. Bourne inquired on the interests preventing Cllrs. Winnington and Sutherland from representing the parish on the Seighford Airfield developments especially the Certificate of Legal Use. He also questioned why Ranton had not been on the consultation list and why a stop on development at the site had not been enforced following the refusal on the retrospective plans. Cllr. Winnington replied that the CLU was a legal matter rather than a planning matter so only went to officers; the airfield was not in Ranton parish thus had not been on the initial list; he believed that enforcement could be delayed if another application was in progress. He agreed to find out the exact position on these issues. The new code of conduct rules were very prohibitive forcing both councillors to declare interests.

P. Towner felt that Cllr. Winnington should not be speaking on this issue at all and that another councillor should have been present to answer questions. The Chairman thought that as the questions had only been on technical matters Cllr. Winnington was able to answer.

Cllr. Thomas said there was confusion over the matter of Cllr. Butters representing the parish council as he had said it was not in his parish. Only one person would be able to speak at the call in of the application by the Planning Committee so all the objectors must agree on the best person to represent them.

S. Jeffries – thanked Cllr. Thomas for all the work he had done on the CLU but was dismayed at the inter-parish 'war' that seemed to have broken out. Cllr. Thomas said that this had been due to a misinterpretation and that fences had now been mended and all were working together.

It was asked how the public would find out about the Planning Committee meeting at the Borough. This would be dealt with during the council meeting which would take place after the assembly.

J. MacLeod reported that dog mess had now switched from Brook Lane to Coton Lane and could the parish council do anything about this? The Chairman answered that the only enforcement was to report on neighbours. The issue would be brought to parishioners' attention in the newsletter together with information on free bags.

P. Towner reported that the Hextall Lane bridge was disintegrating and what action there had been? The clerk has reported all the black spots to John Sly but would repeat the process.

The meeting was closed by the chairman.

Signed

Date