



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in The Chapel, Kirdford on Monday 18th
July 2016 commencing at 7.00 p.m.**

Present: Cllr. Miss S Pinder (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs. A. Gillett
Cllr. Mrs. J Robertson
Cllr. Mrs. N. Goddard
Cllr. Mrs K Fenney
Cllr. Mrs L Nutting

In attendance: Cllr Mrs J Duncton (County Councillor)
Cllr Mr J Ransley (District Councillor)

71. **Apologies for Absence:** - No Apologies received
72. **Public Participation:** - To receive and note questions, comments or representation made by members of the public. - No members of the Public present.
73. **Disclosures of Interest:** - To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters considered at the meeting. – No disclosures.
74. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** To resolve that the minutes from the last meeting of the Parish Council held on 20th June 2016 be signed as a correct record. UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

To resolve that the Minutes from the Planning Meeting held on 20th June and 6th July 2016 be signed as a correct record. UNANIMOUSLY AGREED

75. **Reports from District and County Councillors:**

Cllr Mr J Ransley reported that the principle of CDC topping up the Grant is approved for this year but will be phased out in future.

Cllr Mrs J Duncton reported items for discussion within the Council including,

- a) WSCC Fire & Rescue teams. The County are happy with the new procedures and the employees are as well. The Council want to keep the services in the county.

- b) GATCOM – it is expected that it will be at least October 2016 until the Government make any decisions.
- c) Waste Reorganisation – It appears that the sites will close for two days a week rather than shorter hours.
- d) Southdown Park Ass. – Cllr Mrs J Ducton is now attending meeting for the Policy & Programme Committee

Cllr. Mrs J Duncton left the meeting at 7.20pm

76. **Crouchlands Biogas:** - Report from Mr I Campbell

- Inspector's decision following the Lawful Devt Certificate received. - in summary it permits the export of gas/restricts the operation to ancillary to agriculture (therefore no change of use to an industrial site) with inputs restricted to Crouchland freehold land in Plaistow/says some installed equipment is not lawful
- Both sides claiming victory (!) but certainly if this was the final position it gives us most of what we want given the natural limitation in HGV traffic & limitation to an "on farm" operation
- It is highly likely that CBG will contest the findings & seek permission for a JR - if the JR found in their favour it would go back to the planning inspectorate for a further decision
- If they go for JR & there is a chance they may win we have to decide in the next 3 weeks or so whether to contest the decision regarding the permitting of gas export (as in our view this part of the decision was not sound) as this would then be the only way of restriction their activity (given the financials of electricity vs gas)
- All this will cost money the majority of which will need to come from the community so Sara is looking into the likely availability of such funds - this must include Kirdford (and other parishes) & I certainly hope Kirdford residents contribute - although there was little evidence of this (I think) previously
- The planning inquiry regarding the refusal of retrospective PP/enforcement notices is scheduled for Sept/Oct - I think Plaistow are commissioning a professional traffic survey for input to this as CBG seem to be operating outside of their stated hours/routes/volumes.
- The EA have prosecuted the pollution of the river Kird although this is in the name of Crouchland Farms not CBG so may not affect CBGs application for a bespoke permit - it's disappointing that they haven't prosecuted individuals who are common to both organisations
- I haven't heard the outcome of the hearing by the Traffic Commissioners regarding CBGs use of the "farm" as a transport operating centre in contravention of their licence
- The EA are progressing the bespoke licence & also continuing to investigate the other major pollution incidents - they have a new Team Leader on the case & she seems very focussed & switched on but I think they are still seem reluctant to refuse a new permit/withdraw the existing one due to possible financial implications
- Meanwhile CBG continue to operate with seeming impunity as WSCC are unwilling to take decisive action by issuing a STOP notice (and indeed both CDC & WSCC seem to be happy to leave it to the PCs to focus on the JR etc)
- Realistically, if this is going to drag on I think the PC will need to consider further funding perhaps by a specific allocation in the next precept??

The Parish Council may need to do some fund raising in the future to help finance the expected appeal. There may be Grants that can be investigated.

77. **Butts Common:** - Cllr Mrs L Nutting reported that there was no news from the Solicitor. The Parish Council voted UNANIMOUSLY to pursue the National Trust over the issue of the flooding. Cllr Mrs L Nutting was advised to instruct the solicitor to write to the National Trust regarding the loss the Parish Council had sustained due to the damage of the Play Equipment sited on Butts Common.

78. **Aircraft Noise:** - Report from Mr I Campbell

- Plaistow unhappy with Peter Drummond & the conflicting claims/disagreements with CAGNE & have not formally joined APCAG. Discussed with Sara & suggested that Plaistow PC ask for a meeting of APCAG to discuss concerns which Kirdford should attend
- Unfortunately, it is very difficult to assess the validity of claims & counter claims between APCAG & CAGNE, but my view is that as they are local APCAG should be best placed to represent local interests and the fact that they represent elected bodies gives some credibility & in fact mirrors a similar organisation to the East of LGW
- Having said this issues need to be addressed with APCAG (hence the meeting) and the membership needs to be looked at as at present several "members" are not "paid up" & are just "CC" members which raises the question of whether APCAG can claim to represent them
- I sent Peter a mail a while back saying that the constitution needs to cover how decisions are taken on behalf of PCs as APCAG will need to take decisions without waiting to each PC to meet
- In summary, there are matters to be discussed with APCAG but on balance best to be members, whilst retaining links with CAGNE - although as previously said this may not be tenable in the longer term

79. **Proposed Development for Plaistow Road:** (Cllr. Miss S Pinder)

There was nothing significant happening to report. The Planning Officers are still reviewing the application.

Cllr. Mr J Ransley left the meeting

80. **Think Villages:** (Cllr. Miss S Pinder)

Garry Colligan of Think Villages met with Cllr S Pinder, Cllr A Gillett, and Cllr Mrs K Fenney and Presented what Think Villages can offer. After a walk around the village Mr Colligan is drawing up some proposals to consider.

81. **Correspondence:** - No correspondence received
82. **Chairmans Announcements:** The Chairman invited the councillors to a 'Team Building' evening to welcome new members and prospective members. Two parishioners have shown interest.
83. **Review Terms of Reference for Committees:** - The Parish Council are happy with the procedures that are already in place, and every user group is individually insured
84. **InTouch Training:** The Parish Council is not happy with the services from the Website supplier, and will defer the training with them. The Clerk to investigate whether a local instructor can help and review the current contract with In Touch.
85. **Documents For Councillors to Read:** - There were no documents to read.
86. **Queens 90th Birthday Celebrations:** - Update from Cllr. Mrs A Gillett. There are still many Commemorative mugs to be sold. Cllr. Mrs A Gillett is seeking other avenues to sell them.
87. **School Court:** - Cllr Mrs L Nutting reported that the original Play Equipment at School Court was in need of some maintenance. The running boards are worn and need replacing. It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that this matter be attended to urgently. Cllr Mrs L Nutting proposed that the Parish Council agree to a second quote being obtained and the work carried out by the firm who offers the lower/timely quote. This was AGREED
Cllr Mrs Nutting also advised that in next years budget the Parish Council should consider a maintenance budget for all the play equipment in the Village.
88. **River Works Update:** - WSCC have been contacted by the Clerk regarding the works needed at Bridgefoot. WSCC are sending a Structural Engineer to investigate and report back the findings to the Clerk.
89. **Footpath Resurfacing Update:** - Cllr. Miss S Pinder has contacted Mr Beckett and the works should be carried out soon.
90. **Parish Notice Board:** - Cllr. Mrs L Nutting has received quotes ranging from £800 - £1000 depending on materials used. Cllr Mrs Nutting to seek further quotes and it was AGREED in principle to obtain another Parish Council Notice Board.
91. **Nat West:** - The necessary forms have been obtained from the Bank for the Finance Committee to consider and make proposals to the Council at the next meeting.

69. **Public Participation:** - No Members of the Public attended.
70. **Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:** - Next Meeting to be held on 19th September 2016 commencing at 7.00pm in The Village Hall, Kirdford

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

The University of Glasgow has been accused of trying to silence dissent on fracking after withdrawing online access from one of its prominent professors.

[David Smythe](#), an emeritus professor of geophysics and a leading critic of the fracking industry, has had his university email address cancelled, and his access to scientific journals cut off.

The action was taken without notice by the university authorities in January a few days after Smythe [posted online a discussion paper](#) critical of fracking safety and regulation in the UK. He has since been attempting to persuade the university to reinstate his access, but so far without success.

Smythe has submitted a series of objections to fracking plans in England, and appeared as an expert witness for community groups opposing plans to exploit coalbed methane near Falkirk in 2014. He has had [a bitter public row](#) with Glasgow University's energy engineering professor, [Paul Younger](#), who has voiced support for fracking.

Smythe, who held a chair of geophysics at the University of Glasgow's geology department for ten years, was made an emeritus professor and honorary senior research fellow when he retired in 1998. Until January this year, he was allowed to use a university email address and to access scientific articles using a university pass.

The university's abrupt decision to end his access could breach his retirement agreement, he claimed. He is currently taking legal advice on the matter.

Professor David Smythe

According to Smythe, the fundamental issue was freedom of expression. "Some people at the university do not like my views on fracking, and they are seeking to silence me," he told *The Ferret*.

"I am surprised and saddened that my alma mater and former employer is now stooping to such base tactics."

He questioned whether Younger, who is a member of the university's governing court, had exercised his influence. This is denied by Younger.

Scientists should be allowed to "slug it out" in public, Smythe argued. "But I cannot now fight my corner since the institution providing me with the essential access to the academic database has unilaterally decided to remove that access," he said.

"The university seems to be adopting as their corporate view the opinions on fracking promoted by Professor Younger." Smythe has published his correspondence with Glasgow University, and email exchanges between the university, Lancashire County Council and the fracking firm [Cuadrilla](#) released under freedom of information law. He said that the documents, which amount to nearly 100 pages and are available below and on [his website](#), back up his allegations.

Some people at the university do not like my views on fracking, and they are seeking to silence me Professor David Smythe

Younger, a former fracking advisor to the Scottish Government, has frequently been quoted on the prospects for onshore oil and gas. Last month he attacked the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, for taking "flight from reason" by hardening her stance against fracking.

He was [reported in The Herald](#) saying that he was “flabbergasted” that all but one of Scotland’s main political parties were “trashing” an industry that would re-employ North Sea workers “in a far safer environment”.

In 2014 Smythe was [told by the university](#) to make clear that his views on fracking were his own and did not represent the university’s current researchers. He was also attacked by Younger for allegedly misrepresenting his credentials as a chartered geologist.

Younger insisted, however, that he had nothing to do with the latest decision to cut off Smythe’s online access. “I have no control over such matters,” he said.

“His allegations are baseless speculation – which sadly is something Professor Smythe specialises in. I was elected to the university court by my peers, and have very specific duties in that capacity.”

Smythe’s name had never come up in his court duties, Younger said. “I have far more important things to do with my time than indulge in the sort of behaviour Professor Smythe fantasises about.”

Smythe was backed, however, by [Dr Damien Short](#), a fracking and human rights expert from the University of London. “The pro-fracking lobby would dearly love to see Professor Smythe silenced,” he said.

“In the interests of open, honest, evidence based academic discussion, I hope the University of Glasgow will ensure that this does not happen and reinstate Professor Smythe’s research privileges immediately.”

He was also supported by the Scottish political satirist, [Alistair Beaton](#), author of ‘Fracked! or ‘Please Don’t Use The F-Word’, a new play to be [premiered at the Chichester Festival in Sussex](#). The play deals with university politics on fracking.

Mary Church, head of campaigns for [Friends of the Earth Scotland](#), said: “It’s remarkable that Glasgow University would risk its reputation by apparently stifling debate and freedom of expression around one of the most important issues of our time...It’s vital that academics who voice concerns about fracking, a new and particularly damaging frontier of fossil fuels, are not silenced.”

The [University of Glasgow](#) denied that it was stifling freedom of expression. “Professor Smythe has every right to express his views,” said a university spokesman.

“His email access was terminated earlier this year, as part of a routine review of email accounts in the [School of Geographical and Earth Sciences](#). Professor Smythe left the University in 1998 and, while he retains the title of emeritus professor, he has no continuing practical association with the work of the university.”



[Prof David Smythe.jpg](#)