

GERMOE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Germoe Parish Council held on Thursday July 24, 2008 at 7:00pm in the Church Hall, Germoe.

Present: Cllr G.Ross (Chairman) Cllr T.Martin
Cllr Mrs E.Clarke (Vice-Chairman) Cllr J.Taylor
Cllr A.Felstead
Cllr S.Geake Mr C.Chapman (Clerk)

Visitors: CCllr Robertson, KDCllr Keeling Mrs Doeser, Mr Francis and Mr Hollis.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from KDCllr Mrs Greenstreet, Cllr Mrs Mackenzie, WPC Butcher and PCSO Mitchell

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda

of gifts (received as a result of being a member of the Council) of a value greater than £25

There were no declarations of gifts of a value greater than £25.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Cllr Mrs Clarke proposed, Cllr Felstead seconded, all others in favour that, subject to the hand-written amendments, the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Meeting held on Thursday July 10, 2008 are a true record and the Chairman signed them as such.

4 MATTERS ARISING AND NOT COVERED IN THIS AGENDA

CCllr Robertson reported that nowadays Cornwall Highways will only cut hedges at junctions and at vision splays and indeed wherever visibility (and therefore the safety of road users) is an issue. He has arranged for the flail mower to cut the hedge of the Tregonning Hill road as it turns south towards Ashton.

Cllr Martin entered the room during discussion of the following item

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs Doeser said that, although she and her husband are newly resident in the parish, they are very concerned about the proposed closure of the Post Office at Ashton and keen to be involved if that will help. She had earlier telephoned the Post Office and reported that should a Public Meeting be convened the Post Office will send a representative. Andrew George has indicated that he would be willing to attend such a meeting. She further reported that she had recently walked to the Post Office in Breage (which is one of the named alternatives) and had found walking along the A394 (where there is no pavement) difficult and dangerous.

Both Mr Francis and Mr Hollis agreed that the closure of the Post Office would represent a loss to the Parish. Speaking of Planning Application PA08/00961/TCA Mr Francis questioned the meaning of the word 'lopping'. He stated that permission had been granted in the past to lop a sycamore tree and that it had been felled.

Speaking of the proposed closure of the Ashton Post Office, CCllr Robertson said that

- the Post Office had been required by Central Government to close 2,500 branches nationally
- the Community Scrutiny Committee has called upon the County Council to seek a judicial review, not least because under the closures deprived urban areas are treated differently from deprived rural areas

- it was unfortunate that Cornwall had been paired with Dorset where, because of earlier closures, only twenty-three branches will be lost compared with a loss in Cornwall of sixty-two
- the data used by the Post Office is flawed in that
 - Cornwall is reported as having 700,000 inhabitants when it only has 500,000
 - Dartmoor is not part of Cornwall as stated in the document
 - information concerning transport links supplied by CCC to the Post Office has not been used
- The OneCornwall team has been tasked to see what work can be given to local Post Offices to help make them financially viable.

6 PARISH MATTERS

Members discussed the proposed closure of Ashton Post Office. Amongst many points made and questions raised were the following

- what will happen to the store after closure of the Post Office?
- is the store well-supported now?
- the loss of business to Post Offices is the result of EU requirements to seek competitive tenders for supply of services
- Germoe residents are already disenfranchised by the Post Office
- the loss of the facility will have a detrimental effect on residents of Germoe
- Godolphin Post Office (one of the named alternatives) closed some years ago
- nationally, the proposed closures appear to be at odds with the new Sustainable Communities Act
- the Post Office's stance towards Post Masters can only be viewed as threatening
- preliminary decisions about closures have been made purely on grounds of location
- the decision to close Ashton is based upon out-of-date information
- following closure, Mr and Mrs Keeling have offered the room for use as a community store
- a single journey to Breage on the bus presently costs £2.10
- at a time when nationally we are being encouraged to leave the car at home, closure of Aston Post Office will require Germoe residents to make increased use of their cars
- parking at Breage can be very difficult
- Central Government displays a complete lack of interest in rural communities
- the Post Office is is nothing less than a necessity in rural communities
- there is an air of inevitability about it all and protest is futile
- closure will add to household expenses in the Parish
- the loss of the Post Office will prejudice the existence of the shop

The Clerk was asked to write to the Post Office expressing Germoe Parish Council's alarm about the proposed closure of the Post Office at Ashton. He was also asked to prepare notices for the boards asking residents to write to the Post Office explaining how closure would affect them personally and to send these letters through the Parish so that all relevant information might be collated.

7 PLANNING

Applications

PA08/00960/F Mr P.Hollis – Erection of an extension to dwelling – Old Pottery, Tresowes Hill. It was noted that this application had been withdrawn

PA08/00961/TCA Mr P.Hollis – Lopping of three conifer trees and one sycamore tree – Old Pottery, Tresowes Hill. Cllr Geake proposed, Cllr Mrs Clarke seconded all others in favour that Germoe Parish Councillors should return this application with the following observation “Germoe Parish Councillors do not believe that any of these trees are worthy of a Tree Preservation Order. Nevertheless, they would object to the felling of the sycamore tree.”

PA08/01143/F Mrs D.Peart – Erection of a single-storey extension to dwelling – Tolpedn, Newtown. Cllr Geake proposed, Cllr Felstead seconded all others in favour that Germoe Parish Councillors support this application.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Ordinary Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday August 28, 2008 at 7:00pm in the Church Hall, Germoe.

Signed.....

Dated.....