

**PLAISTOW AND IFOLD PARISH COUNCIL
CLERK'S REPORT
FOR MEETING ON TUESDAY 27th NOVEMBER 2007
AT
WINTERTON HALL, PLAISTOW**

2. PLAISTOW POST OFFICE

As Members are aware, the Post Office has published the list of those Post Offices in Sussex, in the Horsham Parliamentary Constituency that will close. The proposal is that 49 Post Offices will close, all of which are in the large towns in the County. For all of these Post Offices, an individual 'Access Report' is available on the Post Office web site – www.postoffice.co.uk.

Again, as Members are aware, whilst Plaistow Post Office is not included in the 'List of 49' it will, however, become an 'Outreach' service, with greatly reduced hours of opening.

The Post Office web site says – “The Post Office is proposing to close Plaistow Post Office on a permanent basis and to mitigate the impact of the proposed closure a Hosted Service will be put in place. This would be operated from the existing location, offering the same range of services and facilities, at the following times –

Mondays	9am to 12.30pm
Thursdays	9am to 12.30pm

A total of 7 hours per week.

Alternative services outside of these hours can be obtained from Post Offices at Loxwood, Chiddingfold and Wisborough Green”.

The official definition of a 'Hosted Service' is “a fixed site Post Office branch from which the subpostmaster or his assistants will transact core Post Office products and services during restricted hours each week. The premises are owned by a third party, for example, a shop or community centre”.

The Post Office web site gives exactly the same wording in respect of the only other rural Post Office affected at Barns Green. Here, however, the opening hours are longer –

Mondays	1.30pm to 4pm
Tuesdays	9am to 3pm
Thursdays	1.30pm to 4pm

The alternatives offered to this village are Billingshurst, Southwater and Broadbridge Heath.

There are no 'Access Reports' on the Post Office web site for either Plaistow or Barns Green.

The Clerk has contacted the Economic Development Team at Chichester District Council who has expressed concern not only for the reduction in the service but also for the undoubted adverse effect that the reduced hours will have on Plaistow Stores.

The District Council has said that they urgently need feedback from the community and are asking members of the public to contact them in writing or by e-mail, so that CDC can formulate its own response to the proposals.

It is hoped that a member of the CDC Team will be present at the meeting.

The Clerk has also contacted Itchingfield Parish Council with a view to exchanging ideas.

Members are reminded of the advice given by SALC on the criteria for objections –

- (a) the distance to remaining post offices in the area
- (b) local factors, such as the age of the population or other demographic issues
- (c) the inadequacy of transport links
- (d) any effect on the local economy

There now follows a six-week public Consultation Period, which ends on Christmas Eve.

RECOMMENDATION

Members' views are sought

5. Declarations of Interest by Members

Members may make any Declarations (Personal or Prejudicial) at this point of the meeting but they must, in any event, be declared before commencement of discussion of the relevant agenda item.

6. Chairman's Report

(a) The Green, Plaistow and the National Trust

A new Property Manager for West Sussex Countryside Properties (Mr Duthie) has recently been appointed and, unfortunately, has introduced himself in a rather 'hostile' manner. The problem is centred on Health and Safety matters and the tree recently planted on The Green.

The Chairman in consultation with Councillor Perrin asked that a 'firm' response be made and he has been invited to attend at the January meeting.

The drainage of The Green (the clearance of the ditch at the side of The Green) continues to be outstanding.

A Report on the issues raised in the recent RoSPA Report on the Play Area will be available at the January meeting.

(b) Situation Report on previously reported matters

Notice Boards at Kelsey Hall

The notice board has now been repaired satisfactorily.

Members will be invited to discuss the provision of further notice boards in the Parish at the January meeting, including the Licence for a board at the end of Foxbridge Lane. .

Parish Action Plan and Village Design Statement

A Report will be given at the January meeting

Resurfacing of the footpath from The Drive to the River Lox

This matter has not been progressed. A Report will be given at the January meeting.

Information regarding Dunsfold Park

No information is currently available.

(c) The Clerk

On 17th October 2007, Sue received her Certificate for passing the CiLCA qualification, the latest qualification for Parish Clerks. The initial submission of her portfolio failed on one part of one of the 25 questions, but as this was in respect of something that she had been doing incorrectly for the past 23 years, she didn't really mind! Sue obtained an overall Pass, with 11 distinctions.

9. Police Issues

This agenda item is at the request of Councillor Laidlaw

10. Christmas Decorations

This agenda item is at the request of Councillor Laidlaw

11. Finance

(a) Accounts for payment

A schedule of accounts for payment from 16th October 2007 to 27th November 2007, also detailing monies received, will be available at the meeting

RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to approve payment of the accounts

(b) Budget Monitoring – to 31.10.2007

It has not been possible to circulate this Report with the meeting papers. The Report will, however, be circulated the weekend prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the Report

(c) Budget 2008/2009

Members are asked to note that work will be commencing during December on the draft Budget for the financial year 2008/2009 for consideration by the Finance Committee at its meeting on Thursday 3rd January 2008.

Members are asked to bring to **this meeting** their ideas and thoughts on Capital Projects for the forthcoming year (which could run into future years). Any other ideas can be conveyed to the Clerk before Friday 14th December 2007, so as to enable research to be undertaken, so that as full a Report as possible can be prepared.

RECOMMENDATION

Members' views are sought

(d) Parish Clerks' pay increase

The annual 'cost of living' pay increase has been jointly agreed by NALC and SLCC based on an agreement by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. The increase is 2.49%, payable from 1st April 2007. This information has been passed to WSCC Payroll Services for the appropriate adjustment to be made.

12. Correspondence

A schedule of miscellaneous correspondence received since the last meeting will be circulated to Members at the meeting. Members are asked to note that all items will be available for Members' perusal if they so wished.

14. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 15th January 2008 at Winterton Hall, Plaistow

Sue Kemp – Parish Clerk
14th November 2007