

Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting
held in the Bishop's Cleeve Community Centre
on 4 January 2007 at 7pm.**

Present

Cllr Mrs V Ayres (Chair), Cllr P Badham, Cllr M Beresford, Cllr Mrs I Hatton, Cllr Mrs P Hatton, Cllr G Jackson, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr A Lightfoot, Cllr P Lightfoot, Cllr A Mackinnon, Cllr P Rawlings, Cllr P Richmond, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr P Taylor.

Also Present

B/Cllr S E Hillier-Richardson
County Cllr C Jones.
40 members of the public

07/001 Apologies for absence

07/001.1 There were no apologies for absence.

07/002 Consultation on Proposals for Gloucestershire County Council's Homes for Older People

07/002.1 Cllr Ayres welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr Andrew Gibson and Mr Ian Hargreaves of Andrew Gibson Consulting Ltd and Mr Mark Branton, the County Council's Director of Strategic Commissioning and Performance [Community and Adult Care Directorate].

07/002.2 Mr Gibson explained the purpose of the meeting and the consultation process which had taken place since the publication of the County Council's proposals.

07/002.3 Mr Hargreaves said that residents of homes, their relatives, staff and community and voluntary groups had contributed to the consultation process. He described the future policy in terms of modern standards, better physical environment and layout of buildings, wider range of opportunities and people's increased expectations.

07/002.4 Mr Branton described the national policy direction and the County's response to it. He stressed the importance of ensuring that the Council's services for older people were provided in the right places [avoiding shortfalls and over-provision], some buildings not being fit for purpose and the estates strategy required to meet higher national standards, the requirement to respond to the changing nature of care and that solutions should be economically viable and sustainable.

07/002.5 Mr Branton explained the County Council's proposals which included a new site at Prestbury and a care centre in Cheltenham which would replace Orchard House.

07/002.6 Mr Hargreaves summarised the results to date of the consultation exercise. He said there had been 658 responses and general support for the direction of change. Issues had been raised about the impact of change on residents, public transport routes, garden space, staffing, timescales, costs/funding and the basis of the needs assessment. He said that the staff at Orchard House were supportive of the proposals and that he was aware of the concerns of the wider community.

07/002.7 There were a number of questions asked, and concerns expressed, by councillors and the public including: [a] the value of the meeting which had been held outside the consultation period (an assurance was given that comments would be considered before the final report was submitted to the County Council's cabinet on 15 January 2007), [b] the size of the target audience and whether sufficient effort had been made to provide everyone with an opportunity to comment, [c] a plea that Bishop's Cleeve should be considered a population centre, with its large catchment area of surrounding villages, in addition to the traditional centres of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury, [d] transport difficulties for visiting relatives and whether there would be consultation with bus companies, [e] funding/the economic perspective being the driving force rather than human need, [f] lack of funding and trained resource to enable older people to stay in their homes, [g] the closure of Orchard House not being consistent with the County Council's strategy of strengthening local communities and [h] if Orchard House is unable to be modernised and developed it should be replaced within Bishop's Cleeve.

07/003 Closing Remarks

07/003.1 Cllr Ayres thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the contributions made. She summarised the concerns expressed about the proposed closure of Orchard House and said that the population of Bishop's Cleeve was continuing to expand and its percentage of older people was much higher than the county and national average. This was an argument for retaining a care home in Bishop's Cleeve and there was land available adjacent to the Tithe Barn to accommodate a replacement for Orchard House. Cllr Ayres said that she hoped the County Council's cabinet would consider the strength of the views expressed at the meeting before reaching a decision.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed.....

Dated this 1st day of February 2007