

**(Script of the minutes in italics, otherwise my comments).**

***MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DYRHAM AND HINTON PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON THURSDAY 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2017.***

***Members of the Public***

*Note: Some of the content has been removed as it referred to the Councillor's action as an individual not while acting as a Parish Councillor as covered by our code of conduct. The Council can only consider a complaint about someone whilst acting as a Parish Councillor. This Code of Conduct applies to you whenever you are acting in your capacity as a member of Dyrham and Hinton Parish Council or South Gloucestershire Council, including –*

- 1 At formal meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees,*
- 2 when acting as a representative of the authority [REDACTED]*
- 3 in taking any decision as Parish or Ward Councillor [REDACTED]*
- 4 in discharging your functions as a Parish or Ward Councillor [REDACTED]*
- 5 at briefing meetings with officers and [REDACTED]*
- 6 at site visits [REDACTED]*
- 7 when corresponding with the authority other than in a private capacity [REDACTED]*

*Mr C Grose read out a document stating that after an informal ballot of residents in Dyrham that he had brought forward a vote of No Confidence in Councillor Thornton Trippitt due to [REDACTED]*

*She had attended the Community Engagement Forum on 24th October where she had signed in as Caron Thomson of Dyrham and gave a factually incorrect and fictional account of events immediately after the robbery, which was not witnessed by herself, in the process slandering the Neighbourhood watch coordinator Glenn Lawrence, her account was subsequently printed in "The Week In" Newspaper of 1st November 2017. [REDACTED] The Chairman thanked them for attending the meeting and stated that their comments would be noted.*

The actions of the councillor, mentioned in this minute, started when, as a parish councillor she attended a Community Engagement Forum meeting where she appears to have defamed a resident (resident G) without naming him or her village. It was reported in "This Week In", a local free newspaper with a circulation of 40,000.

Ref "The Week In" Issue 498, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2107. Page 23.

The reporter checked the "facts" with her at the end of the meeting. But he was identified by residents when, more than two weeks later, she distributed the relevant page of the newspaper around Dyrham, with an abusive note attached. Later there were further abusive comments on social media.

As her actions started as a councillor, all subsequent actions should have been considered as carried out as a councillor, even if not on official business. And, at any rate, a councillor should not have behaved like this whether or not on council business. That was the conclusion of 42 Dyrham residents who called for her resignation. That number was mentioned by CG at the meeting, but not minuted – why? Perhaps the PC was trying to hide behind their rules and protect their own, which doesn't work in a small community.

Regrettably, the PC has not yet expressed any public regret or sent resident G an apology for the behaviour of one of their colleagues towards him whilst she was on PC business.

### ***Minute 3: Reports on Meetings Attended***

*CTT reported on the meeting of the Community Forum Meeting she had signed in using her correct name (misspelt in the minutes, since confirmed by SGC) and she had made a factual report to the best of her knowledge and is confident that the timings are correct, this was confirmed by Paul Trippit. She wanted to highlight the need to use 999 rather than 101 in an emergency situation.*

This statement even after several weeks of reflection! No apology! What was the chair doing to allow this?

A "factual" report, "correct" timings?? How could she have known the facts and the timings? According to the news report, she admitted at the CEF meeting that she was on "the other side of Bristol" at the time. Did she say "to the best of my knowledge" at the meeting? It wasn't reported. Did she check the facts with resident G when he visited her? No. Instead, neighbours heard what did not sound like a fact-finding exercise.

Here's what she should have said at or before the PC meeting:

"Now that I have had time to reflect on my actions at and following the CEF meeting I attended as a councillor, I realise what I did there, and subsequently, was

unbecoming of a councillor and of a resident. The trauma I experienced at the time of the robbery and from other events may have partially explained my action at the CEF meeting but not the subsequent ones which I had more time to consider. I apologise to the council and Dyrham residents, especially to the person I defamed. I shall send him a personal letter of regret very soon. I think I must protect the good name of the parish council by resigning forthwith”.

The fact that the PC did not persuade her to say that and appears to have protected her by editing CG’s statement and allowing her to make such an ungenerous report of the meeting, reveals their weakness and will have lowered residents’ opinion of the council.

Regrettably, resident G has not had an apology from her yet and it took another five days for her to resign and another week for the vacancy to be advertised – on the notice boards only (as of 13<sup>th</sup> December), which very few people look at (see News section if you wish to be a parish councillor).

**Minute 8: Accounts – payments since last meeting**

|                                      |        |          |
|--------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| <i>Yate Computing</i>                |        | 40.00    |
| <i>3 Shires MP</i>                   |        | 2,392.00 |
| <i>P Lawson</i>                      | 180.00 | 216.00   |
| <i>Yate Computing</i>                |        | 120.00   |
| <i>C Howard Wages October</i>        |        | 236.55   |
| <i>C Howard Stationery</i>           | 0.66   | 4.00     |
| <i>Kevin Pitman</i>                  |        | 560.00   |
| <i>Yate Computing</i>                |        | 40.00    |
| <i>Prestige Grounds</i>              | 250.00 | 300.00   |
| <i>Grant Thornton</i>                | 200.00 | 240.00   |
| <i>Dod PC</i>                        |        | 4.00     |
| <i>Con Des In Wood (noticeboard)</i> |        | 650.00   |
| <i>D &amp; H Village Hall</i>        |        | 100.00   |
| <i>C Howard Wages Nov</i>            |        | 236.55   |
| <i>A Banwell for Go Daddy</i>        | 538.20 | 645.84   |

The bill for the PC’s website for the two months is £40 + 120 + 40 + 645.84 = £845.84 The PC’s precept is £6745 pa i.e. 13% of budget for the year spent on their website in two months when it could be zero per cent if the PC used D&H.com. See blog for facts about S. Glos parish council websites:

[http://www.dyrhamandhinton.com/2016 12 03 Blog.pdf](http://www.dyrhamandhinton.com/2016%2012%2003%20Blog.pdf)

Several payments are unspecified: what are P Lawson , Kevin Pitman, Prestige Grounds, Dod PC, A Banwell for Go Daddy? The latter I looked up and it's a website builder. That implies the PC's website is starting afresh, so all the money spent so far on their existing website may have been wasted. We have the clerk's assurance that the PC website is not in competition with the community website. We shall see. Already, a community item, the Revel Supper, which has nothing to do with the parish council, has appeared.

**(Since writing this, I have been informed by a councillor that the Go Daddy payment was for three years' payment for web hosting, email etc, not a website upgrade. Also, new Data Protection legislation is increasing costs to the parish council. We agreed that a better description of payments in the Accounts section of the minutes would avoid such a misunderstanding.)**

Our PC advocates transparency, so it would make it transparent to rate payers if the reason for each the payment were specified. Also important to rule out any appearance of impropriety: one payment may have needed a declaration of interest whether or not one was there (I'm sure there wasn't).

#### ***Minute 10: Community Benefit Money***

The PC should specify what income they get from the wind and solar businesses, other than in their accounts which few residents read, and publish a running list of their payments to the community. It is also important to remember it's our money not the PC's: their task is to distribute it equitably to our satisfaction, so we need the facts to judge that.

#### ***Minute 15: The updated on oversized lorries***

*The Clerk had found out who to contact in confidence when oversized lorries are using weight restricted roads. It was agreed that this would be sent to all residents who have the agendas and go on the website.*

 spotted and photographed one on Sands Hill/Lower Street, Dyrham last week. Unfortunately, I will have no way of reporting it as unlike the many who receive agendas and minutes, the PC refuses to send them to me, so I shall never get that contact number. Petty? So, would a kind resident please forward the contact number to me? Thanks. And the agendas and minutes, too.

Why do I have to write all this? The PC should not be scoring so many own goals.

WebEd