

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on May 8, 2008 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall at North Woodchester.

Present: Cllrs Bastin, Brown, Hamilton, Lead, Syrett, Swait and Wigzell
In attendance: Duncan Hayes (Clerk), former councillor Hemming, District Councillor Glanfield and former councillor Colcombe

1. To elect a chairman

The meeting was opened by former Chairman Bastin. Councillor Wigzell was proposed by Cllr Bastin and seconded by Cllr Lead. Councillor Wigzell was elected Chairman in a unanimous vote. Cllr Bastin stood down and Cllr Wigzell took the chair, thanking former Chairman Bastin and all retiring members.

2. To sign acceptances of office

Acceptances of office were signed by all members

3. To receive declarations of interest in items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of interest

4. To accept apologies for absence

There were no apologies

5. To receive comments from members of the public

Retiring Cllr Hemming endorsed the comments of Cllr Wigzell regarding the retiring Chairman and offered his best wishes to the new council

6. To sign declarations of interests

Declarations of interest were signed by 6 members. Cllr Syrett had an outstanding question to be resolved and will forward his declaration to the Clerk as soon as possible

7. To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on April 24, 2008

The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by Chairman Wigzell

8. To elect a vice chairman

Cllr Hamilton was proposed by Cllr Lead and seconded by Cllr Bastin. Cllr Hamilton was elected unanimously.

9. To elect members of the planning and finance committees

Elected to the planning committee were Cllrs, Syrett, Hamilton, Lead, Swait and Brown. Elected to the finance committee were Cllrs Bastin, Swait and Wigzell

10. To agree a list of signatories for the council's bank account

The council agreed that all seven councillors should be signatories. The bank mandate was passed for circulation to Cllrs Brown, Lead and Syrett for completion. Retiring councillors will be removed from the authorised signatories

11. To appoint a snow warden

Cllr Swait agreed to continue with these duties

12. To appoint a watercourse warden

Cllr Syrett agreed to take on this duty

13. To appoint parish emergency coordinator

Cllr Hamilton agreed to take on this duty

14. To appoint a village hall representative

Cllr Swait agreed to continue with this duty

15. To appoint a design statement representative

Cllr Lead agreed to take on this duty

16. To appoint parish plan action plan group

The following areas were assigned: Youth, Cllr Syrett; Environment, Cllrs Syrett and Brown; Highways, Cllr Swait; Website, Cllr Bastin; Events, Cllr Brown; Local Enterprise (including post offices), Cllrs Bastin, Hamilton, Wigzell and Swait.

17. Opportunity for councillors to express their visions for Woodchester

Cllr Hamilton emphasised the success of the Parish Plan and its positive feedback in providing the council with a mandate to act. He emphasised the importance of the environment and the danger of facilities being lost. He said the council should act to preserve what is best without being too conservative. He pointed out the value of Woodchester as a pleasant working environment as well as the importance of working with others.

Cllr Lead pointed out that he is new to the area, but said that factors that attracted him to Woodchester were the geographical beauty and architectural interest as well as the diversity of community.

Cllr Swait expressed concern about the potential loss of shops in the village as these represent a key aspect in keeping alive community spirit.

Cllr Brown emphasised the people of Woodchester. She felt that the duty of the council is to enhance the quality of life for residents as well as preserving the environment. She also felt the council should do all in its power to prevent the loss of shops.

Cllr Syrett echoed the views of other councillors and emphasised the geographical community as well as families. He felt the council should act to encourage sensible development and enhance the quality of life. He also pointed out the value of shops to the community.

Cllr Bastin emphasised the importance of representing the interests of the village and suggested the council should return to the parish plan to revitalise it.

Cllr Wigzell emphasised the importance of the parish plan action plan and design statement, which can both make a difference. She suggested the council should focus on its leadership role as the issues the council chooses to respond to have a big impact. She underlined the importance of the quality council, parish plan and design statement projects.

18. To approve expenditure and sign cheques as per annex

The expenditure was approved and the cheques were signed

19. To note the latest financial statements

The statements were noted. The council spent less than budgeted in the last financial year and the finance committee is to review this

20. To receive the Clerk's Report

The printed report attached to the agenda was presented. In addition the clerk noted that lottery grant information had been received. The clerk reported an approach from the North Woodchester Post Office to request support for a change of use application. The clerk advised councillors against commenting on this until a formal consultation is received as part of the planning process. The clerk informed the council that Highways is planning to fell a number of poplar trees beside the cycle trail. Cllr Brown suggested that a review of village flora could be a matter for the environment group in future.

21. To note planning applications and decisions from SDC

The planning applications and decisions were noted, including a rejection by the Planning Inspectorate of a barn beside Frogmarsh Lane.

22. To note correspondence received

The correspondence was noted. The clerk informed the council that the remittance advice for the first tranche of the precept has been received.

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23. To receive reports under the Parish Plan Action Plan

The clerk reported that the village website is receiving an increasing number of hits. These statistics have only been running for a few weeks and monitoring will continue. Cllr Wigzell reported on the success of the litter pick with a turnout of around 40 residents and 20 large sacks of litter cleared. A request has been received to clean signposts around the village, but the council felt this is the responsibility of the County Council. Cllr Wigzell reported on the planned open gardens on May 26.

24. To discuss the future of bus route 46

The council heard that no representations had been received from residents regarding the funding of this service, despite notices in all bus shelters, on the parish notice boards and on the website. Cllr Hamilton pointed out that the issue of a bus service between Cheltenham and Nailsworth was a bigger issue than the three parishes involved and is the reason that these services are normally funded at county level. The council was disappointed that no detailed information about usage had been provided but felt that it would be irresponsible to spend taxpayers' money on the service when there seems to be no public interest. The council felt it is regretful to lose the service but felt obliged to vote unanimously against funding the trial project.

25. To discuss possible use of wood from fallen trees

The council felt that unless a need for wood has been identified, such as for benches, there is no need to pursue this at this stage. However, the council did feel it would be useful to ensure that trees subject to TPOs are replaced when they fall.

26. To discuss the possible location of a new dog waste bin

The clerk is to investigate the possibility of locating a dog waste bin at the junction of Church Road and Southbank

27. To delegate a councillor to respond to SDC street cleaning consultation

Cllr Syrett agreed to respond to this on behalf of the council

28. To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting

Former Cllr Hemming raised the issue of the planning inspectorate report into the proposed barn at Frogmarsh. He pointed out that the planning committee may wish to consider writing to SDC asking why this application ever went to committee. He pointed out that SDC had failed to emphasise the main objection of the earlier report into a similar application, where the planning inspector pointed out the adverse effect on the Conservation Area. He also suggested the planning committee may wish to confirm that once a planning inspector has opposed a development twice there is no future need to consider a new application.

One member of the public asked if the council has considered a bus shelter at the stop opposite Woodchester Garage. The council agreed to investigate.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Chair.....

Date.....