

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on 12th May, 2016 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 6pm

Present: Cllrs. Hamilton, Lead, Warnes, McNealey and Baldauf

In attendance: County Councillor Dorcas Binns, District Councillor Philip McAsey, the clerk and two members of the public

2016/41 To elect a chairman and vice chairman and for relevant councillors to sign Acceptance of Office forms.

Cllr. Hamilton welcomed Cllr. Phil McAsey, newly elected District Councillor to the meeting.

Cllr. Hamilton was nominated as Chair by Cllr. Baldauf and seconded by Cllr. Lead. Cllr. Lead was nominated as Vice Chair by Cllr. Baldauf and seconded by Cllr. Warnes. Both were re-elected unanimously.

2016/42 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Swait and Baynham-Honri.

2016/43 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

2016/44 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

The gate post off Tower Drive is in a poor state of repair resulting in the gate not moving freely. The ownership of the gate and post is uncertain and therefore councillors agreed it is difficult to find a solution.

Cllr. Binns confirmed that Gloucestershire Highways are dealing with pot holes as best they can. The situation is hoped to improve with changes to the contract currently with Amey. Sections of the A46 between Stroud and Nailsworth are due to be re-surfaced as part of the programme of improvements for this financial year.

2016/45 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 3rd March, 2016

These were agreed and signed as a true record by Cllr. Hamilton.

2016/46 To receive the clerk's report.

This was received.

Since the clerk's report was written, the Hill's solicitor had been in touch with questions which need to be resolved before a lease can be drawn up.

Following the arson attack on the bus shelter at Frogmarsh, the bus shelter on the opposite side of the road has also been damaged. The seat was destroyed and the rear wall damaged. The Police have been informed.

In terms of Gloucestershire's Devolution Bid, Cllr. Binns explained that some work has been commissioned looking into the feasibility of Cotswold District joining Oxfordshire to form the 'Coxit' bid. This is likely to conclude that it is not feasible for such a plan.

Being largely rural, Gloucestershire has been reluctant to elect a Mayor and a decision has now been made not to pursue this option. As a consequence of this, the bid is progressing, but it may take longer than if a Mayor were to be elected.

Initials.....

- 2016/47 To acknowledge the work of Rhiannon Wigzell in her role as District Councillor and to thank her for her support with the Parish Council.**
Cllr. Wigzell was respected as a very active member of the Parish Council which she chaired for a number of years and through her achievements as District Councillor, particularly with planning issues. Cllr. Hamilton expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish Council for her work within the village.
- 2016/48 To review membership of committees, representatives and working parties.**
It was resolved by councillors present to continue with membership as it stands. The clerk will confirm with Cllrs. Swait and Baynham-Honri that they are willing to remain in their current roles.
Cllr. Hamilton clarified that a Working Group is not part of the Parish Council, but they might report back to the Parish Council who would take the views of the group into account.
- 2016/49 To note the latest financial statements.**
These were noted.
- 2016/50 To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.**
These were approved.
Local Council Tax Support funding from Stroud District Council (SDC) which has gradually been reduced over the past three years in line with Government funding will cease in 2016/17. This may mean that next year the precept for Woodchester may need to be raised.
- 2016/51 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.**
These were noted.
- 2016/52 To note the appointment of Grant Thornton as external auditor.**
This was noted.
- 2016/53 To review the asset register.**
In light of recent arson attacks and some research into the cost of replacing a bus shelter with a wooden structure, councillors resolved to increase the individual value of each bus shelter from £2,684 to £4,500. This figure was amended on the asset register and signed by Cllr. Hamilton.
- 2016/54 To authorise the clerk to renew the council's insurance policy.**
It was resolved that the clerk renew the insurance policy following the amendment agreed in item 2016/53.
- 2016/55 To review Standing Orders.**
Standing Orders were reviewed and councillors resolved to make no changes.
- 2016/56 To review Financial Regulations.**
Financial Regulations were reviewed and councillors resolved to make no changes.
- 2016/57 To agree the lease for the mountain bike trails from Gloucestershire County Council, the lease to then be signed by Chair, clerk and witness.**
Councillors resolved to defer the signing of the lease from Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) until the lease on the land owned by the Hills is received.
It is likely that the latter lease will run for 10 years, rather than the agreed 25 years with GCC. The lease from Mr. and Mrs. Hill could potentially not be renewed after an initial 10 years. Therefore councillors agreed it is important to re-visit the proposed layout of the trails to ensure that they could still be useable should this lease be terminated. The clerk will contact Back on Track to look into this.

Cllr. McNealey arrived at 6.35pm.

- 2016/58 To discuss and agree a course of action following the destruction of a bus shelter at Frogmarsh.**

Initials.....

The clerk had been in contact with SDC Planning Department who confirmed that a bus shelter is within Permitted Development for Parish Councils and therefore planning permission to re-build the shelter at a different angle would not be required. Gloucestershire Highways confirmed that as long as the shelter does not obstruct the highway or impact on sight lines, the Parish Council could choose to alter the angle of any new structure.

There is an excess on the insurance policy of £100 and premiums are not affected unless claims of over £10,000 are made.

Councillors agreed that replacing the bus shelter for another wooden one may not be the preferred option. Cllr. Lead agreed to source a quote for options to replace like for like and for a concrete block structure.

2016/59 To receive feedback from a meeting of residents who are looking again into the possibility of finding suitable land in the village for a play area.

A group of residents met on the 20th April to consider sites in the village suitable for a play area. Six sites were selected, some of which have been considered in the past. These sites were ranked in order of suitability and the group felt it was worth re-visiting these sites as opinion and circumstances may have changed in the three years since requests were previously made for land.

The first priority is the land at the bottom of Southbank, owned by SDC. SDC have confirmed that there is a tenancy agreement on this land which expires in 2018.

The group are also planning to distribute a questionnaire throughout the village to gauge the need for a play area and to find out more about the sort of things residents would like to see.

Cllr. McAsey offered to make enquiries at SDC and also offered to enter into discussion about issues with access to make use of part of SWALT land for a play area.

2016/60 To discuss and agree a response to a GRCC road safety survey.

Councillors resolved that the clerk complete this on behalf of the Parish Council, but that a copy be sent out for agreement by Cllr. Hamilton.

2016/61 To discuss 'Whistle for the Somme' on 1st July, a commemoration for those who died at the Battle of the Somme and agree any action.

This commemoration has been organised by the Cheltenham and Gloucester branch of the Western Front Association to remember those men who lost their lives in the Battle of the Somme. Woodchester lost two men on the 3rd July, 1916. A whistle will be blown at the War Memorial at 7.30am on the 1st July.

The clerk will find out if the next edition of the Woodchester Word will be out in time to advertise; otherwise posters will be placed on noticeboards.

2016/62 To agree a loan agreement for the Parish Council projector.

This was agreed by councillors.

2016/63 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.

There were no comments from members of the public.

The meeting closed at 7.02pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

Initials.....

Initials.....