

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on 12th November, 2015 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 7pm

Present: Cllrs. Hamilton, Lead, Baldauf, Swait, Warnes, Baynham-Honri

In attendance: District Councillor Rhiannon Wigzell, the clerk and four members of the public

2015/122 To receive apologies for absence.

An apology was received from Cllr. McNealey.

2015/123 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

2015/124 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

Cllr. Wigzell talked about an audit being undertaken by Stroud District Council (SDC) looking at closed churchyards. Cllr. Wigzell asked whether the Parish Council would wish to take back responsibility for our churchyard should this suggestion be put forward by SDC. Councillors could see the value in being able to decide how and when it should be maintained but were concerned at the additional resources required. Unless SDC were to agree to reimburse the costs to the Parish Council, resuming responsibility for the churchyard's maintenance would not be our preferred option.

Cllr. Wigzell talked about Gloucestershire's bid for devolution. Currently it appears that the same structure of District, Town and Parish Councils is proposed, but there may be an adjustment to the responsibilities of the different groups. Cllr. Wigzell will send a website link to the clerk which explains the changes and an agenda item for the Parish Council meeting in January will consider the proposals in more detail.

The 30mph sign has still not been replaced at Frogmarsh. The clerk will go back to Amey. A resident was concerned about the development taking place in Southbank. With no work currently taking place on the site, the hedge on the adjacent path has become overgrown and the grass now encroaches onto the pavement. The clerk will contact SDC. A question was raised about a sign put in place on the cycle path by Gloucestershire Highways. This was covered later in the agenda.

2015/125 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 3rd September, 2015.

These were confirmed and signed as an accurate record by Cllr. Hamilton.

2015/126 To receive the clerk's report.

This was received.

The litter bins outside Tower House and Southbank have now been replaced.

Posters have been received advertising SDC's garden waste collection service. The clerk will put leaflets in the Post Office and details in the next edition of the Woodchester Word.

The clerk mentioned the noticeboards at the Post Office in North Woodchester and the High Street in South Woodchester, which are both in need of re-varnishing. Councillors felt this would be better considered in the spring.

2015/127 To note the latest financial statements and approve cheques as per annex.

Initials.....

These were noted and cheques approved and signed.

The second precept payment of £5469 had been received from SDC.

2015/128 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from Stroud District Council.

No further information had been received on The Convent regarding plans for a driveway off the A46. Cllr. Wigzell will ask the Planning Department if there have been further developments.

Concerns were raised that applications at Woodchester Mill will cause parking issues on Selsley Road and potential danger as lorries and children could be sharing the same space. Land for parking is allegedly not owned by the applicant, but the Parish Council have been told that this is not a planning consideration. Cllr. Wigzell met with Cllr. Moore (Chair of the Development Control Committee) to highlight the issues with parked cars. It is unclear whether this application will go to the Development Control Committee. The Parish Council are grateful to Cllr. Wigzell for her input and pressure for a clear decision will need to continue.

Cllr. Lead arrived at 7.30pm.

2015/129 To receive an update on Stroud District Council's Local Plan.

The Local Plan was passed by the inspector on the 2nd November and is due to be ratified by Stroud District Council in the coming weeks. Modifications were made in order to make the plan capable of adoption. The main changes which could affect Woodchester are the overall housing requirement has been increased from 9,500 to 11,400 dwellings (2006-2031) and the capacity for the Stroud Valleys has been increased from 300 to 450 dwellings.

2015/130 To discuss and agree whether to provide a portable toilet in the layby on the A46 following discussions with Zurich Insurance.

A proposal was discussed for the Parish Council to provide a portable toilet adjacent to the layby off the A46, with the maintenance being paid for by the owner of the snack van. The clerk confirmed that the toilet could be covered by Parish Council insurance. The clerk will investigate whether this could be done as a donation or whether it would need to be a weekly/monthly payment to the Parish Council to reimburse the cost of servicing. A letter will be sent to the owners of the snack van asking them to agree the terms set out.

2015/131 To discuss and agree a response to a letter from Mike Hammond, Communities and Facilities Manager at SDC asking what Parish Councils would like to see from Neighbourhood Wardens in the future.

Councillors were in agreement that our Neighbourhood Warden provides a valuable service as the 'eyes and ears' of the community. Cllr. Hamilton re-drafted the Emergency Plan to incorporate the role of Neighbourhood Warden. This will be agreed at the meeting in January and an updated copy sent to SDC for their records.

2015/132 To discuss and agree projects for possible funding through s.106/CIL payments.

Following an email from Randwick Parish Council who missed out on a contribution of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for their community as they did not submit a request for a proportion of that fee until after an application was granted permission.

It was agreed by councillors that the clerk would contact John Longmuir to ask for clarity in applying for CIL funds. The clerk will also ask more specifically about the Piano Works applications and whether a formal request should be made.

The bike tracks were considered as one project which would benefit from additional funding.

2015/133 To discuss and agree a response to questions from the GRCC concerning social and rural isolation.

Initials.....

A discussion took place centred on the effects of cuts in the local bus services from Stroud which now stop at 7pm. This prevents residents from Woodchester working late shifts in the town or using the town's recreational facilities in the evenings if they are reliant on public transport.

Cllr. Hamilton will write a response on behalf of the Parish Council.

2015/134 To receive an update on progress with the bike track.

A draft lease has been received from Gloucestershire County Council which will need to be considered and agreed by the Parish Council.

There will also need to be an exception notice at the site and the clerk will approach the insurance company for advice on what this should include.

2015/135 To receive an update on footpaths and rights of way.

It was understood that Gloucestershire Highways intended to carry out work on the cycle path at Frogmarsh on the 19th November, but the exact purpose of the work remained unclear.

The cross bar on the stile at the bottom of Park Field has been removed. The clerk will contact the landowners.

The gate post on the track from Bospin Lane has been repaired.

2015/136 To receive an update from the Events Committee.

Carols and a nativity will take place on the 21st December which will culminate in mulled wine and mince pies on the Green (or in the church if wet). The Silver Band from Nailsworth have been booked.

2015/137 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.

As a result of conversations with residents, Cllr. Wigzell suggested that s.106 funds might be used for replacing stiles in the village with kissing gates to enable the elderly to walk the length of the village, and towards the church kitchen. This is in need of modernisation and is used a great deal by both members of the church and during 'Lunch with Friends', which is open to all villagers.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

Initials.....