

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on 8th January, 2015 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 7pm

Present: Cllrs. Hamilton, Lead, Baldauf, Bastin, Warnes, Swait. Cllrs. Baynham-Honri and McNealey joined councillors following item 2015/4.

In attendance: The clerk and three members of the public.

2015/1 To receive apologies for absence.

An apology was received from Cllr. Rhiannon Wigzell.

2015/2 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

2015/3 To note the resignation of Councillor George Bastin.

This was noted. Cllr. Bastin had been an active councillor for approximately 25 years and chairman for four years. He was very involved in the original and revised Parish Plans and has been a valuable chair of the Finance Committee. Cllr. Hamilton expressed sadness at Cllr. Bastin's resignation, but wished him well in his future role as Master of a Livery Company in London.

Councillor Bastin sat for the remainder of the meeting with the members of the public.

2015/4 To resolve to co-opt Katharine McNealey and Paul Baynham-Honri onto the Parish Council and for new councillors to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms.

The Personnel Committee met with the two prospective councillors in November who have both the experience and relevant skills to be Parish Councillors. The committee recommended that they be co-opted onto the Parish Council and it was resolved by councillors they be formally appointed to fill the vacant posts.

Cllrs. McNealey and Baynham-Honri joined other councillors and were part of discussion for remaining agenda items.

2015/5 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

Following damage caused by a vehicle at Frogmarsh, a 30mph sign was removed and the hole filled. The question was raised as to whether the sign would be replaced. A sign on the junction between Convent Lane and Frogmarsh Lane has almost rusted through. The resident suggested that this will need replacing in the near future. The clerk will contact Amey regarding these two issues.

A resident raised concerns about drivers exiting the Frogmarsh Mill site without due care. Bottle Green have been very supportive in the past, making their regular drivers aware of the issue. It was suggested that if the issue continues the Police should be informed. The clerk will also request that Bottle Green put up a sign at the exit warning of pedestrians.

2015/7 To receive the clerk's report.

This was received.

Following a report of sewage in the stream behind Little Britain Farm, the clerk contacted the Environmental Health Department at Stroud District Council (SDC) who visited the site and passed the matter to Severn Trent Water.

Initials.....

The clerk had received several comments relating to the amount of dog mess on pavements in the village. This is an on-going problem and residents need to report offenders to the dog warden at SDC along with a photograph if possible.

An issue had been raised of horses being ridden along the cycle path. The clerk will determine whether or not this is permissible.

Cllr. Hamilton outlined the Parish Polls consultation which has a deadline for comments of the 29th January. More details were given at the end of the meeting.

2015/8 To note the latest financial statements.

These were noted. Updated statements are posted on the website at the beginning of each month.

2015/9 To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.

Expenditure was approved. Cheques were signed at the end of the meeting.

2015/10 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.

These were noted. A decision had not yet been made on The Convent application to convert to a hotel and build an access road from the A46. The process had been delayed partly due to SDC receiving insufficient details relating to aspects of the application. The protection of several trees in the grounds has led to more information being required relating to the route of the driveway. There has been no record of any adverse comments from Gloucestershire Highways.

2015/11 To discuss and agree membership of committees following changes to the Parish Council.

Following the resignation of Cllrs. Dunbar and Bastin, it was necessary to decide on the membership of committees to include Cllrs. Baynham-Honri and McNealey. Councillors agreed the following:

Planning Committee – Cllrs. Lead, Hamilton, Swait and Baynham-Honri

Finance Committee – Cllrs. Swait, Hamilton, Warnes and Baynham-Honri. Cllr. Swait was elected as chair of that committee

Personnel Committee – Cllrs. Hamilton, Lead and Baldauf

Footpath Committee – Cllrs. Warnes, Swait and McNealey

Snow Warden – Cllrs. Swait and McNealey (in the absence of Cllr. Swait)

Village Hall Representative – Cllr. Swait

Highways Representative – Cllr. Warnes

Website Working Party – Cllrs. Warnes, Baynham-Honri and Baldauf

2015/12 To approve a quote for village maintenance 2014/15.

This was approved.

2015/13 To resolve whether to agree a quote for providing seats in the remaining bus shelters.

Councillors resolved to provide seats in the remaining bus shelters. The clerk will meet with Ian Smith to look at where they should be best sited in each case to allow residents to see a bus approaching.

2015/14 To discuss a request for funding from the Post Office Volunteers for an air conditioning/heating unit and resolve whether to offer some funding and if so, at what level.

It was mentioned that the agenda item should have read 'Village Shop volunteers' rather than 'Post Office Volunteers'.

Originally the request had been for a fridge, but funds for this were provided by a local company.

Following discussion, it was resolved not to offer funding as this stage.

Initials.....

- 2015/15 To note and agree the recommendations of the Finance Committee for the budget and precept requirement for 2015/16.**
As the Parish Council hold significant reserves, the Finance Committee recommended to keep the precept at £10,557 with any shortfall for specific items coming from reserves. It was resolved to accept these recommendations. The clerk will send the request to SDC.
- 2015/16 To receive a financial report on the Woodchester Word for 2014 and predicted budget for 2015.**
The income for the Woodchester Word in 2014 was £1640 from advertising. The printing costs were £1647.20, leaving a balance of -£7.20. It is not yet clear what the predicted budget is for 2015.
The aim for the Woodchester Word has been that it should be self-sufficient. For 2013 and 2014 this has been the case. In order to continue to achieve this goal the income from advertising must be reviewed on a regular basis and it must balance the printing costs. Subject to the editor's agreement, councillors agreed that ideally the Woodchester Word would become independent of the Parish Council with a page in each edition to be retained for Parish Council news. Cllr. Lead will discuss the issue with the Word's editor so that a final agreement can be put to the Parish Council at its March meeting.
- 2015/17 To discuss and agree whether or not to go ahead with an Affordable Housing Survey provisionally agreed in November in the light of information regarding costs and concerns regarding un-wanted development.**
Following discussion, councillors resolved to go ahead with the survey. The clerk will contact Karen Phimister and discuss the next steps.
- 2015/18 To agree a date for the Litter Pick.**
The Litter Pick will take place on the 29th March.
- 2015/19 To receive an update from the Rights of Way Committee.**
Cllr. Warnes summarised issues relating to three footpaths in the village.
MWO1 – Leading diagonally across Priory land and into woodland – Cllr. Warnes and the clerk met with Jaci Harris (Public Rights of Way Officer) and Mrs. Hill as one section of the footpath is very muddy for much of the year. It was agreed that Amey would provide a handrail. The Cotswold Wardens are also in discussion about an alternative solution.
MWO10 – From Lagger Lane down to the stream and up to St. Mary's Church – The Cotswold Wardens hope to install steps just below Lagger Lane which will make it much easier to walk this steep section of footpath.
MWO4 – Castle Cottage to Water Lane – Issues have been raised with cyclists and horse-riders using the path. Jaci Harris is aware of the situation.
- 2015/20 To receive an update on the bike trails.**
The lease agreement has not yet been received by Antonia Shield, but the title search is being undertaken. Antonia had asked whether an environmental search is required (at a cost of £600). Cllr. Lead proposed that in this case we need to instruct the solicitor to undertake no searches other than the title search. Councillors resolved to accept Cllr. Lead's proposal and the clerk will inform Antonia Shield of their decision.
The clerk has applied to Biffa for funding.
- 2015/21 To discuss and agree a lease agreement drawn up by Gloucestershire County Council for the land adjacent to the cycle path.**
This had not yet been received and therefore could not be discussed.
- 2015/22 To receive an update from the Snow Warden.**
All grit bins are full and the snow plough operator is prepared should we have snow.
- 2015/23 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.**

Initials.....

The clerk will look into replacing the Perspex in the notice board on Convent Lane which has become difficult to see through.

Cllr. Hamilton went through the four questions relating to the Parish Poll consultation which aims to limit the number of polls being called 'unnecessarily', modernise the polling process and govern more closely the issues on which it can be held. Councillors agreed with the statements in all four questions. The clerk will respond.

The bells of St. Mary's Church will be rung to mark the 100th anniversary of the deaths of all servicemen who died as a result of World War I and whose names appear on the War Memorial. The bells have already been rung for the first of these, George Archer Shee who was reported as 'wounded and missing' on 31st October, 1914. The clerk will provide more details on notice boards and the website.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

Initials.....