

Woodchester Parish Council

Clerk: Ann Bijkerk

6 Beech Grove, North Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5NL

Telephone: 01453 873456

E-mail: clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk

Website: www.woodchesterparish.org.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on 7th September, 2017 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 7pm

Present: Cllrs. Hamilton, Baldauf, Baynham-Honri, McNealey and Warnes

In attendance: The clerk, Rod Harris, editor of the Woodchester Word and three members of the public

2017/104 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Lead and Grundy and County Councillor Steve Robinson.

2017/105 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

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

2017/106 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

The issue of large vehicles using Frogmarsh Lane was raised and discussed later in the meeting under agenda item 2017/115.

2017/107 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 6th July, 2017.

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

2017/108 To receive the clerk's report.

This was received.

Since writing the report bins have now been installed at the Bike Trails and a combination lock fitted to the gate in Paul's Rise.

Gloucestershire Highways have received a Freedom of Information Act request regarding the resurfacing of Park Lane.

Discussion about highway maintenance in the village included a suggestion that interested residents and Councillors might lead a clear-up once or twice a year in certain areas of the village which require regular attention. It was agreed this be mentioned in the Woodchester Word.

The request for a barrier to be re-painted on Frogmarsh Lane was passed to Stroud District Council (SDC) who claim not to be responsible. It has now been passed to Gloucestershire Highways for their consideration.

A resident in the village has begun consultation with SWALT to look into the possibility of a play area on the land below The Ram Inn. This follows an attempt by residents last year to find a suitable piece of land.

In his absence, County Councillor Steve Robinson sent a report to be read during the meeting. Discussions have now begun on the future of the 'cycle path'. The plan put forward by Gloucestershire Rights of Way is for the track to be designated a cycle track or a bridleway. Currently it has no designation. Costings are being obtained for a hard surface for the track from Nailsworth to Dudbridge which would be suitable for walkers and cyclists. Parish Councils will be consulted on the proposals in due course.

Funds are still available for small highways projects and young people's activities. The clerk had been in contact with a couple of local groups to let them know that money is available.

Initials.....

- 2017/109 To note the latest financial statements.**
These were noted. The second precept payment from SDC is expected later in September.
- 2017/110 To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.**
Expenditure was approved and cheques signed following the meeting.
- 2017/111 To note an internal financial check carried out by a member of the Finance Committee on 13th July, 2017.**
Cllr. Baynham-Honri reported that the financial check showed processes were being carried out correctly. The use of accounts software was considered in order to save some time; however it was decided this was excessive for the number of transactions in question.
- 2017/112 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.**
These were noted. The clerk had not yet received a date for the Development Control Committee meeting to discuss the Rooksmoor Mills application.
The clerk will contact SDC Enforcement Team regarding a fence erected in the grounds of Hillgrove House which was refused planning permission.
- 2017/113 To discuss and agree the future of the Woodchester Word incorporating feedback from Rod Harris on the opinion of residents and an update on the current financial situation.**
The editor reported on feedback following the last edition of the Woodchester Word which had been very positive. The majority of opinion was very much in favour of retaining a printed version, rather than to move online in order to reduce costs. Donations had been received in order to assist with costs. The Village Shop kindly donated £500 and £400 was received from an anonymous donor.
After discussion, it was resolved that:
- A printed version of the Woodchester Word will continue.
 - The editor will aim to fit the content onto 12 pages, but more may need to be supplemented on occasions.
 - A small committee will be formed to ensure the burden of work does not fall entirely on the editor. It was suggested three people might take on copy, advertising and layout. Iain Dunbar offered to form part of this committee.
 - With agreement, a contribution box will be placed in the pubs and Village Shop.
 - A clear timetable will be set out at the beginning of the year of copy dates and publication dates. Similarly, local groups will be asked for dates of their events at the beginning of the year to enable their timely promotion and reporting.
 - Priority will be given to local news and local events.
 - The opinion of residents on local issues will be encouraged.
- A suggestion was also made that children and young people in the village be encouraged to report on local events and issues.
- 2017/114 To discuss and agree Parish Council content for the next edition of the Woodchester Word.**
Councillors agreed this would include feedback on the recent road safety meeting, information on grit bins and a request to residents to keep the fronts of their properties tidy.
- 2017/115 To receive an update on the issue of road safety in the village following a meeting with Local Highways Manager, Andrew Middlecote and to discuss any further course of action.**
Councillor McNealey and the clerk met with Andrew Middlecote and County Councillor Steve Robinson to discuss safety issues, particularly in Selsley Road.

Initials.....

A list of issues were considered and in many cases demonstrated as the group walked the length of the road.

Most alterations to a highway will require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), leading to a consultation on the proposed change. The cost of a TRO is £15,000.

After consideration, Mr. Middlecote suggested removing the existing '20 is plenty' signage, cleaning it and replacing it in different locations. He agreed to look into the possibility of bundling several improvements together to be considered under one TRO. This may include yellow lines at the bottom of Selsley Road.

Mr. Middlecote will discuss with colleagues re-painting of road marking which are badly worn. There may be a possibility of adding 'SLOW' markings near the top of Selsley Road before both bends. Cllr. Robinson talked about the possibility of this being part funded by Highways Local funding.

Speed cameras are available from Nailsworth Town Council to raise public awareness and to provide evidence of vehicle speeds. A contact at Nailsworth may be willing to provide training. A safe location will need to be agreed with the P.C.S.O.

Cllr. Robinson will look into the possibility of the Parish Council having use of a vehicle-activated sign.

No conclusive answer was provided concerning the re-painting of white lines on the bend below the Old Rectory and the bend at the entrance to Boundary Court. The clerk will follow this up.

Following the meeting in Selsley Road, Mr. Middlecote and Cllr. Robinson looked at the signage for lorry drivers at Frogmarsh. It was suggested by a resident that the location of one of the signs directing large vehicles back onto the A46 was misleading. A response had not yet been received from Mr. Middlecote.

Councillors resolved to take down the '20 is plenty' signage and replace it in different locations, to carry out a speed awareness campaign on Selsley Road and follow-up funding of other measures such as yellow lines and improved road markings through a combined TRO or Highways Local funding.

2017/116 To discuss Stroud District Council's proposed Heritage Strategy and agree a response.

Councillors welcomed the production of this document and felt it generally thorough in the consideration of heritage features of the Stroud District.

Several criticisms were made such as the lack of any consideration of old tracks and pathways.

Cllr. Hamilton will draft a response from the Parish Council for Councillors' comments. The clerk will submit this response before the 15th September. Cllr. Warnes will submit comments separately on behalf of the Historical Society and Cllr. McNealey on behalf of the Woodchester Mansion Trust.

2017/117 To discuss and agree whether to replace the refuse bin south of Station Road.

Councillors resolved not to replace the bin south of Station Road. Councillors will note how frequently the remaining bin to the north of Selsley Road is overflowing. If this proves to be a regular occurrence, Councillors will reconsider the decision.

2017/118 To receive an update on footpaths and rights of way.

Footpaths were reported to be in a reasonable state. The path behind the Old Priory leading through the woodland to Water Lane is much improved following work by the Cotswold Volunteer Wardens.

Following a branch falling from a tree, a landowner expressed concern over whether or not he could be considered liable should a member of the public be injured in this way.

Initials.....

The Rights of Way Officer at GCC confirmed that negligence would need to be proven before a claim would be likely to be successful.

The cycle path had recently been cut, but to a poor standard as the vegetation has not been cut back far enough to prevent it from falling onto the path in wet conditions.

2017/119 To receive a report from the Snow Warden on the situation regarding restocking of grit bins in the village.

The 23 grit bins in the village have recently been topped up by Stroud District Council. However many of them are without lids, causing rain to wash through and remove the salt. Several are in a poor state of repair.

It was resolved that the clerk would allocate numbers to each bin. Councillors agreed to check a few bins each and report on the type of bin, its condition and whether or not it has a lid. The clerk will investigate prices for salt bins for discussion at a later date.

2017/120 To receive an update on the Bike Trails.

An update was given as part of the clerk's report in item 2017/108.

2017/121 To receive an update from the Events Committee.

There are expected to be some changes in Events Committee members as several have volunteered their time for several years and feel it's time to encourage new members. An article will be included in the next edition of the Woodchester Word asking that interested residents come forward with time or ideas.

Cllr. Baldauf left the meeting at 8.50pm.

2017/122 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.

A request was made for a sign for lorry drivers making it clear that Frogmarsh Lane is not suitable for heavy vehicles. An advisory sign already exists and unfortunately there have been drivers who have ignored that advice. Councillors re-iterated the cost of any change including the re-positioning of a sign would require a TRO. The clerk will follow-up the issue with Mr. Middlecote following his visit to the site.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chair..... Date.....

Initials.....