

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 6th September, 2012 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 7pm

Present: Cllrs. Lead, Baldauf, Bastin, Dunbar and Swait.

In attendance: The clerk and Rhiannon Wigzell, District Councillor.

2012/100 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from councillors Hamilton and Warnes.

2012/101 To receive declarations of interest in items on the Agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

2012/102 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

Rhiannon Wigzell, District Council shared an invitation from Roger Sanders (Labour Councillor) to come and speak with the Parish Council about regeneration. This was noted.

In terms of planning for future housing in the district, Dennis Andrewartha (Executive Member for Planning) of SDC will shortly be asking PCs to offer to take a quota of new housing and to identify possible sites within their parish, as a move towards a more dispersed strategy.

Councillor Wigzell distributed a copy of The Playing Field. It was felt that there is clearly a need for a place in the village for young people to play. Cllr. Dunbar agreed to take on the responsibility of Councillor for Youth.

2012/103 To formally welcome new councillor Uta Baldauf.

Uta was welcomed.

2012/104 To note with regret, the recent death of webmaster John Fairley. The Parish Council wishes to acknowledge the work John put in over the years to support the website in Woodchester and in particular the surveys for the VDS and Business Directory.

John was a very supportive member of the parish and helped out at several events, sometimes at very short notice. Rhiannon Wigzell spoke of two such examples at the Flower and Produce Show a couple of years ago and at last year's carols where John was willing to play the part of the Inn Keeper. He was a hugely supportive man, giving his talents and time for the good of the community.

2012/105 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 12th July, 2012.

These were confirmed.

2012/106 Matters arising from the Parish Council Meeting of 12th July, 2012:

1. Dog fouling.

The clerk spoke about the proposed changes to SDC's Dog Control Orders, where the proposal is now to limit areas where dogs should be kept on leads to 'routes to and from schools'.

2. The Jubilee oak tree.

Initials.....

Unfortunately, despite asking several groups and landowners, the tree has now been planted in woodland near Nympsfield. It was thought that one of the trees on the Church Green was planted for a significant event. It was considered a shame that there is no plaque to notify residents. Cllr. Swait will investigate.

- 2012/107 To receive the clerk's report.**
Broadband speed – Cllrs. thought it worthwhile to add an entry in the Woodchester Word to see how much support there might be for fibre optic cables in order that a letter might then be sent to BT to push for improvement.
- 2012/108 To note the latest financial statements and approve cheques as per annex.**
These were noted and cheques approved. A question was raised about why the Woodchester Word accounts remained as part of the PC finances. The clerk explained that having contacted GAPTC, an agreement must be drawn up before any change should take place. This will be placed on the agenda for the next finance meeting.
- 2012/109 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from Stroud District Council.**
2012/110 To comment on planning application
- **S.12/1637/HHOLD – Chester Hill Stables, Convent Lane, Woodchester – Erection of detached garage with external staircase and first floor study.**
- The Parish Council considered this proposal and have no comment, except that there be a proviso preventing the new build being sold off separately from the original property.
- 2012/111 To note correspondence received.**
The clerk had received an email from a resident concerned that several deer had been killed or injured by dogs in the village in recent weeks. The clerk had contacted SDC, who gave a contact for the Wildlife Crime Officer. The Parish Council felt that there was very little they could do to help.
The clerk had received a consultation document from Gloucestershire Highways about plans to improve safety from Tiltups End to South Woodchester. The plans include more visible speed limit signs and junction markings. The Parish Council thought very little of the plans, but that the entire stretch should be lowered to 30mph and/or with the introduction of speed cameras. The clerk will respond to the consultation and will distribute a copy to councillors to approve.
- 2012/112 To note the approval of the external audit.**
This was noted.
- 2012/113 To formally adopt Stroud District Council's Code of Conduct.**
This was adopted.
- 2012/114 To agree the dates for next year's Parish Council meetings.**
It was agreed that these would take place on the first Thursday of the month, as in previous years. Providing the Village Hall is available, they will therefore be held on 3rd January, 7th March, 2nd May, 6th June, 4th July, 5th September and 7th November. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 23rd May.
- 2012/115 To comment on Gloucestershire Highways Standing Advice on Proposed or Existing Residential Development comprising 5 dwellings or less.**
This was noted with no comment.
- 2012/116 To comment on Gloucestershire County Council's Travel Plan Guide for Developers.**
This was noted. Cllr. Baldauf felt that there were many good ideas for encouraging the use of public transport, which would be of particular benefit to these members of a community without the use of a car. It was felt that these would be easier to implement in an urban area where there is much greater availability of public transport.
- 2012/117 To comment to Gloucestershire County Council's Cycling Guidelines.**

Initials.....

As a keen cyclist, Mike Hemming very kindly agreed to read through these proposals and the clerk read through his comments on the plans. One key issue which was raised was the quality of the surface of the cycle path. Without a durable surface, cyclists will be discouraged from using it. The comments also included 'the need to fund a dedicated cycling officer with enough money to effect improvement year on year'.

The Parish Council agreed that the clerk use these comments as a basis for a response to the consultation.

2012/118 To feedback on Cllr. Hamilton's meeting with the Chief Executive of SDC, Kim Bedford of GAPTC and other local parishes with the aim of strengthening relations between parishes and district level.

No comment could be made as the minutes had not been received from the GAPTC.

2012/119 To receive an update from the Website Working Group.

1. It was agreed that the main purpose of the Woodchester Parish Website should be to communicate information to the local community, and that the development of the site should focus in this area.
2. The key design issues are lack of space for news items (only latest 3 appear) and Council section does not show all content. The clerk has agreed to change the structure of the home page and add an events list on the test site for us to view before going live.
3. Various methods of communicating latest village news were discussed at the meeting. Whilst platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have their supporters, there are also many people who are not comfortable with using these, and we need something which is simple and inclusive. The Group recommends the adoption of an RSS feed on the website. (RSS is a web feed format which allows publishers to syndicate content automatically. Readers can subscribe and receive automatic updates – for example each time a news item is added to a website.) Cllr. Dunbar will investigate the implementation and any data protection issues relating to this.
4. We have a lot of archive material on the website, including old PC minutes etc. We need to agree a cut-off point for archive material so that we can reduce web spade by eliminating old reports from the website. **It was agreed by the PC that material would remain on the website for 18 months.**
5. We would like to get the Local Business Directory extended and used more by local residents. The clerk will contact business to get more included, and Cllr. Dunbar will send a piece to the Woodchester Word.
6. Cllr. Dunbar will provide a summary of website statistics so that we can monitor traffic, page hits and paths on a regular basis.
7. We should try to increase local traffic to the website by promoting the website in the Woodchester Word, and will do so once we have agreed a way forward with Facebook / RSS (see Proposals)
8. The clerk will contact local clubs and societies to get regular events information.
9. It was proposed that we add a 'Local Walks' section to the website (Cllr. Warnes to create content) using the 'Parish Mapping' facility (clerk to investigate). **The clerk has received three walks from Cllr. Warnes. Cllr. Swait asked about the possibility of using the two Woodchester walks used on the SDC website. The clerk will investigate.**

Initials.....

We currently have a contract with Epicado for 0.5Gb of web space per month, but are using 1.5 GB. Epicado have been generous in agreeing to keep the price at £15 per month until November. **The PC agreed to proceed with the new 2GB contract proposed by Epicado at £20 per month (discounted from £30 per month). The clerk will contact Epicado to confirm agreement of the new terms.**

2012/220 To receive an update from the Events Committee.

A banner has been placed outside the Endowed School to advertise the Produce Show. It has been a bad year for growers and there have been concerns that entries may be down considerably on last year. The Historical Society will be holding an exhibition in the church.

The next event is the Carols and Nativity.

The events committee would welcome new members with enthusiasm and ideas. Cllr.

Baldauf suggested an event using local bands.

2012/221 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.

Rhiannon Wigzell had been asked whether there were any plans for another 'Open Gardens'.

It was suggested that if the Business Directory on the website became more popular, that businesses might be prepared to pay a small fee to be included.

It was mentioned that the crossing at Rooksmoor responds immediately as the button is pressed and that maybe there is a fault as there have been occasions when cars have not stopped as the change has been so rapid. The clerk will contact Gloucestershire Highways.

With regard to SDC's Dog Control Orders, Neighbourhood Wardens and P.C.S.O. have been considered to help enforce the changes.

It was agreed that any information from the District Councillor relating to Woodchester be emailed to the clerk rather than reporting news during a meeting as is the practice elsewhere.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Chair.....

Date.....

Initials.....