

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on January 5th 2012 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 7pm

Present: Cllrs Hamilton, Syrett, Lead, Bastin, Swait and Warnes

In attendance: The clerk, three members of the public and Peter Wilson, Neighbourhood Warden

2012/1 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Wigzell and Brian Oosthuysen.

2012/2 To receive declarations of interest in items on the Agenda and to sign declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2012/3 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity

These were received. One member of the public expressed his concern over a recent bike theft in Frogmarsh. At this point, Peter Wilson, Neighbourhood Warden, introduced himself and briefly outlined his role in the community. He is employed by Stroud District Council and works closely with the police and he will act as an intermediary, liaising with the relevant statutory agencies. He went on to talk about a spate of recent bike thefts in the area and that these have appeared to be mainly opportunist thefts rather than those from locked premises. Cllr Hamilton mentioned that Mr Wilson might look at the Woodchester Emergency Plan available on the website. Peter Wilson left some contact cards with the clerk to place in all notice boards.

2012/4 To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting November 3rd 2011

These were confirmed.

2012/5 To confirm the Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting December 14th 2011

These were confirmed.

2012/6 Matters arising from the Minutes of November 3rd 2011

Mr Soutar, Headteacher of Woodchester Endowed School had spoken with the clerk about the possibility of hosting a luncheon club for local elderly residents. This was following a piece in the Woodchester Word. The school does not have its own catering facilities, but hot meals are bought into the school. Mr Soutar felt that this could take place for those interested on a monthly basis. If this is to go ahead, it will require a coordinator. Cllr Syrett will speak to both the school governors and a church contact. The clerk will write to the WI and Friendly Circle to ask if there is any interest in coordinating a luncheon club in the village.

2012/7 To receive the clerk's report

This was received. A cheque for £175 has now been received from the insurers following the vandalism to the bus shelter at the bottom of Selsley Hill.

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The clerk had received a letter confirming that Amberley Post Office will be closing temporarily on 23rd January 2012. Clerk to pass this information to the postmaster of North Woodchester Post Office.

Following the request to Highways concerning the sedge in South Woodchester High Street, the clerk has received confirmation that this has been actioned and will be carried out shortly.

2012/8 To note the latest financial statements

These were noted.

2012/9 To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex

These were approved.

2012/10 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex

A summary was provided by Cllr Lead.

2012/11 To note correspondence received

This was noted.

2012/12 To review membership of sub-committees following the appointment of Cllr Warnes

Cllr. Hamilton in welcoming Cllr. Warnes and the clerk to Woodchester Parish Council outlined the three main committees for the benefit of the clerk. It was agreed that Cllr Warnes would join the Planning Committee. Cllr Wigzell had sent an email to councillors expressing her preference to step down from the Planning Committee following her increased commitments as Stroud District Councillor. This was agreed. Cllr Bastin will also cease to be on the Planning Committee. Following these decisions, the Planning Committee now includes Cllr Lead as Chair and Cllrs Hamilton, Warnes, Syrett and Swait. The membership of the Finance and Personnel Committees would stay as previously agreed.

2012/13 To agree a training schedule for the clerk

It was agreed that the clerk should attend 'The Knowledge' course in March run by the GAPTC. The clerk is also due to attend a Social Media course.

2012/14 To receive an update on Events

A summary was provided by Cllr Swait. An orchard wassail will take place on Sunday 15th January. Clerk to advertise on the website. Other events this year will be a 'Big Lunch' in June for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Produce Show in September and carol singing in December.

Cllr Warnes talked about funds remaining from the Woodchester Millennium Committee. In their constitution, remaining funds should be passed to Woodchester Parish Council to be used for a similar purpose. Cllr Warnes will arrange for the balance to be transferred to the Parish Council, who will then write a cheque for the same amount for the Events Committee.

2012/15 To agree a date for the Litter Pick

This was agreed as Sunday 15th April 2012 at 2pm. The clerk will advertise this on notice boards and the website. She will also contact both schools to ask that the date be included in a newsletter.

2012/16 To discuss and agree a response to the application for the proposed diversion of footpath MW018

This was discussed and the change was opposed. Cllr Warnes drew the council's attention to the Highways Act of 1980 which states that when there are plans to divert a footpath, 'the proposed alternative route should not be substantially less convenient to the public as a result of the diversion'. A number of councillors had walked the proposed route and found it to be longer, with a steeper section which made it more strenuous. It was also more difficult to access. It is not such a visual route as the existing path and it

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was felt that the stretch of the proposed path adjacent to woodland would be damp underfoot. The clerk will write a letter to the Environment Directorate at Gloucestershire County Council opposing the change. Cllr Lead is to represent the parish council in a meeting with the Environment Directorate, The Ramblers Association and the owners of the land to discuss this proposal.

- 2012/17 To receive an update from the Snow Warden including grit bins**
This was received. Cllr Swait explained that the grit bins were replenished in October and very little has been used since then. Spare stocks of salt are held with Peter Brown. At present we are awaiting new snow ploughs and Cllr Swait will ask SDC for an update. Cllr Swait will also enquire about replacing bins which have disappeared from the parish. The bin at the bottom of Bear Hill and one from Frogmarsh Lane have been removed.
- 2012/18 To approve the precept for 2102-13**
This was approved. The tax base in Woodchester has fallen slightly due to an increase of people living on their own. This means that if the precept is held, each household's contribution would increase by ten pence. This shortfall could be met by parish council funds as was advised by the finance committee. Guidance from GAPTC is that funds should be maintained where possible for events such as elections. It was agreed to hold the precept at £11,150 resulting in a slight increase for households of 10 pence to £20.82.
- 2012/19 To agree a response to SDC's Dog Control consultation**
This was agreed and the consultation was accepted.
- 2012/20 To note the Chair's response to the Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service's draft Integrated Risk Management Plan**
This was noted. Cllr Hamilton outlined the plan which included allowing specialist equipment to be held more centrally, training firefighters to deal with first aid should they arrive at the scene before the paramedics and altering the number of retained firefighters in accordance to the number of 999 calls received. Cllr Hamilton responded in a positive way to the changes proposed and the majority of councillors were in agreement. Cllr Hamilton also pointed out that individual feedback is also welcomed by Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service. Cllr Syrett indicated he would respond individually.
- 2012/21 To note changes to the editorship of the Woodchester Word**
These were noted. Rod Harris has taken over the editorship. Cllr Lead will be responsible for advertising. Iain Dunbar, Cllr Lead and Rod Harris are meeting on 17th January to discuss the plans in more detail.
- 2012/22 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting**
These were received. In reference to the sedge in South Woodchester, one member of the public suggested that households should be more responsible for maintaining the area in front of their own property.

The meeting closed at 8.30

Chair.....

Date.....

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