

# Woodchester Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2017 in the Village Hall, North Woodchester at 7pm

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

In attendance: County Councillor Dorcas Binns, Nailsworth Town Councillor Steve Robinson, the clerk and two members of the public

**2017/29 To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Lead and McNealey and Neighbourhood Warden Dominic Everiss.

**2017/30 To resolve to co-opt Charles Grundy onto the Parish Council.**

Following the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February, Mr. Grundy had met with Councillors and provided a CV.

Councillors unanimously agreed to co-opt Mr. Grundy onto the Parish Council; an Acceptance of Office form was subsequently signed by Cllr. Grundy.

Cllr. Hamilton described the various committees of the Parish Council for the benefit of Cllr. Grundy who agreed to consider membership of one or more of those committees.

The clerk will email a brief description of key roles for each committee.

**2017/31 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.**

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

**2017/32 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.**

A member of the public asked for an update on the situation with The Convent following an article relating to the owner's financial situation in the Stroud News and Journal. A response to the question was given as part of the clerk's report.

**2017/33 To confirm the minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2017.**

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

**2017/34 To receive the clerk's report.**

This was received.

A report in the Stroud News and Journal claimed the owners of the Convent have both been declared personally bankrupt. Despite this The Convent continues to operate as a hotel and music venue. The Enforcement Notice relating to the construction of a driveway from the A46 expired in February. The clerk will contact Stroud District Council (SDC) Enforcement Team for an update on whether legal action will now be taken.

A complaint had been received by a member of the public concerning lambing possibly taking place in the newly-erected barn in the field above Southbank despite this not being permitted as part of planning permission. The clerk contacted Thomas Langlands, Land Manager for Woodchester House to highlight the issue raised. The resident concerned is also believed to have contacted Stroud District Council.

**2017/35 To note the latest financial statements.**

There were noted.

Payments had been made both for kissing gates and the replacement bus shelter. These payments will be recouped through s.106 funding and an insurance claim respectively.

**2017/36 To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.**

Expenditure was approved and cheques signed following the meeting.

**2017/37 To note an internal financial check carried out by a member of the Finance Committee.**

This had not taken place due to Councillor illness. The check will be rescheduled and a report deferred to the Parish Council meeting in May.

**2017/38 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.**

These were noted.

A revised application for Rooksmoor Mills had been submitted to SDC. Cllr. Hamilton gave a brief history of planning applications relating to the site for the benefit of Cllr. Grundy.

It was suggested that despite being a substantial application, the Chair of the Development Control Committee (DCC) be approached to ask that it be considered for this forum rather than by the Case Officer acting alone.

The clerk will request the application be considered by the DCC. The clerk will contact John Longmuir, Case Officer to ask about provision of affordable housing and the potential for Community Infrastructure Levy/s.106 funding.

A public meeting of the Planning Committee will be arranged to discuss a response to the application.

**2017/39 To appoint an internal auditor.**

Councillors agreed to appoint Iain Selkirk as internal auditor.

**2017/40 To approve final arrangements and expenditure for the litter pick on 19<sup>th</sup> March.**

This will take place at 2pm from the layby on the A46. Posters have been placed around the village. The clerk will contact SDC to arrange collection of the refuse sacks.

Refreshments have been organised.

**2017/41 To agree the format for the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 11th May and to discuss and agree key issues to include in the Parish Council report.**

Cllr. Hamilton explained that the Annual Parish Meeting is a legal requirement and provides an opportunity for the community to put forward improvements they would like to see in the village. Local organisations, schools etc. provide a report on their main activities over the past year.

Key issues were discussed for the Parish Council report.

Councillors agreed that a competition to design a logo for the Bike Trails would be judged as part of the meeting.

**2017/42 To sign contracts from BT for the adoption of telephone boxes in Selsley Road and the High Street.**

These were signed and will be returned to BT.

Potential uses for the boxes were also discussed. A book exchange, information point, 'wi-fi hot spot', and others were put forward as well as a defibrillator. Councillors agreed the North Woodchester box would be better suited to a defibrillator, being closer to a large number of residents and community buildings.

Councillors felt it might be possible for each box to accommodate more than one use but this would require further consultation with interested users.

Cllr. Grundy will put forward a brief proposal for a 'wi-fi hot spot' and 'ebay site' where products could be brought to sell on ebay with the proceeds to the village.

The clerk will contact Nigel Brooke-Smith to confirm Councillor's agreement for a defibrillator to be provided as the charity involved will provide and install the device.

**2017/43 To discuss response from landowner concerning possible purchase of land at Frogmarsh for community use and agree any further course of action.**

Councillors visited the site and as a result a brief proposal was sent to the land owner to request purchase of the land for community use.

The owner has responded and asked what the Parish Council might be willing to pay for the land.

Councillors agreed they would like a firm price for the land from the landowner. The clerk will respond and request a figure is proposed.

*Cllr. Steve Robinson left the meeting.*

**2017/44 To review and agree amendments to the Emergency Plan.**

The Emergency Plan is reviewed each year. Following the resignation of Malcolm Swait a vacancy exists for Deputy Coordinator. Cllr. Grundy agreed to the role. Cllr. Lead will be approached to ask if he would be prepared to share that role. The team members will remain as they are.

The clerk will amend the policy once the Deputy post is confirmed.

**2017/45 To receive an update on progress with the Mountain Bike Trails and discuss any further course of action.**

Trailcraft had begun work on the Bike Trails which was expected to be complete within three weeks.

The clerk summarised the minutes of a recent meeting of the Bike Trail working party (attached).

Cllr. Binns was thanked very much for her support in raising the funding required for the project. As well as the initial £16,000 from an Active Together grant, a recent Children and Young Person's grant of £3,000 had also been awarded from Gloucestershire County Council.

A shortfall of £2,000 remains. Councillors agreed this sum be transferred from Parish Council reserves to the current account to pay solicitor's fees.

It was suggested that once the Trails are in place, local companies be contacted for sponsorship to replace the shortfall and provide funds for long-term maintenance of the track.

*Cllr. Binns left the meeting.*

**2017/46 To receive an update from the Rights of Way Committee.**

The Cotswold Volunteer Wardens were thanked for installing a kissing gate on Convent Lane. Unfortunately there will be a delay on the second kissing gate at Villa Field due to an accident by an employee of Amey. All work which requires digging below the land surface has been ceased by Amey and all volunteers.

Work to construct a boardwalk on the boggy section of footpath behind the Old Priory will also be put on hold until the situation is resolved.

Woodchester House have put up electric fencing on the land crossed by the footpath between Church Road and Lagger Lane. Unlike last year when a concern was raised by a parent, a gap between the stiles and the electric fence has been created.

Use of a motorbike in Boundary Court was reported. The clerk will contact the National Trust.

**2017/47 To receive an update from the Events Committee.**

In the absence of a member of the Events Committee, there was little to report. The Produce Show will take place on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. Plans for an Open Gardens event are underway, but it was not known when this might take place.

**2017/48 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.**

There were no comments from members of the public.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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

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## **Minutes from Mountain Bike Trail Working Party Meeting, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2017**

Present: Cllr. McNealey, Cllr. Baldauf, the clerk

### **2017/01 To discuss and agree the purpose and lifespan of the group.**

It was agreed the working party would

- oversee the work by contractors
- Organise publicity and a launch event
- Ensure that adequate insurance, signage relating to safety and a post-installation inspection are in place
- Ensure that the Ambulance and Fire Service are aware of the facility and a plan in put in place for adequate access.

A management team would then be formed consisting of local residents and at least one member of the Parish Council. This group would then be responsible for:

- Organising weekly safety checks which may be done electronically
- Clearing litter and leaves
- Topping up any gaps in the surface material
- Organising 3-monthly inspection checks
- Carrying out maintenance
- Possibly organising events

### **2017/02 To discuss requirements for signage and agree a course of action.**

Councillors agreed on the name, 'Woodchester Bike Trails'

It was proposed that Cllr. Baldauf and the clerk approach the two primary schools to talk to the children about the tracks and introduce a competition to design a logo for the trails.

It was proposed that artwork could be displayed and judged at the Annual Parish Meeting and Black 8 Bikes be approached to donate a prize. Cllr. McNealey agreed to approach John Pettitt.

It was agreed that a temporary sign be in place as Trailcraft complete their work. This will then be replaced at a later date with a more permanent sign with the winning logo.

In the meantime the clerk will design a temporary sign for Councillor's agreement to include all necessary safety information. The waymarkers will also be required as the trails are available for use. The clerk will ask Trailcraft how many are required.

Councillors agreed on wooden markers with carved painted arrows. The clerk will investigate manufacture of these.

### **2017/03 To discuss and agree how trails will be publicised.**

Councillors agreed publicity would be in the Woodchester Word, notice boards and Facebook and the village website.

Cllr. Baldauf and the clerk would speak to the children in both schools.

Organisations who have provided grants would be written to and thanked, given an update and be informed there would be a launch event in the coming months to which they would be invited.

**2017/04 To discuss an opening event and agree a course of action.**

Councillors agreed this would be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

**2017/05 To discuss reducing the shortfall in funding and agree course of action.**

Following a grant of £3,000 from Gloucestershire County Council through their Children's Grant Scheme, the shortfall is likely to be around £2,000.

Long-term fundraising will be required. This may be organised by the management team. It was agreed the Parish Council should consider earmarking money for maintenance.