

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13 December 2021 held in Westbury Parish Hall

PRESENT: Councillors - P Ensor
J Henry
A Hyett
D Landon – Vice
S Phelps – Chairman
P Radley
M Townsend
P Woodman
CC B Robinson (partial attendance)
F Wallbank

Members of the Public: 2 (1 partial attendance)

1 APOLOGIES and Emergency Procedure: None

2 MINUTES OF MEETING: Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 15 November 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None

County Councillor Robinson reported:

- The date for the meeting with Police and Crime Commissioner is Tuesday 18 January to be held at Hartpury Village Hall 4-7pm for the seven Parish Councils in his Mitcheldean ward. Topics to be covered are Rural Crime, speeding, anti-social behaviour. The purpose of this meeting is to give Parish Councils their opportunity to discuss their concerns with Chris Nelson
- Some progress has been made with the Parish Councils Highway concerns – he is putting some of his Highways Local money towards some of the repairs

Councillor Radley asked if he could put pressure on Gloucestershire Highways to get the hedge trimmed at The Dinney as it had been over 2 years since he had reported these problems

4 PUBLIC COMMENT: received re planning application at Pound Farm

5 PLANNING MATTERS:

a) Applications:

P1647/21/FUL Land Adjacent to Pound Farm Westbury-on-Severn: Erection of commercial building comprising 619 sqm of floorspace for use class B8 and E(a), external hardstanding for an agricultural machinery display/sales area including turning/manoeuvring for large vehicles, associated staff and customer parking and associated landscaping. New vehicular access proposed from the A48

Comments to Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council **supports** this application

P1921/21/FUL Bagley Farm, Ley Lane, Minsterworth: Erection of agricultural building for housing cattle

Comments to Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council **supports** this application

P1802/21/FUL Adsett Farm, Adsett Lane, Adsett: Change of use of barn to retail and auction house inc associated storage & parking (retrospective)

Comments to Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council notes this application and leaves the final decision to the Forest of Dean District Council

P1919/21/FUL Yew Tree Cottage, Flaxley: Removal of existing outbuilding and its replacement with an outbuilding to be used as ancillary accommodation

Comments to Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has no objections to this application

P0136/21/DISCON Charlottes Farm, Chapel Lane, Churcham: Discharge of condition 5 (biodiversity enhancement) re P1009/18/FUL

Comments to Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council notes this application

b) Decisions:

Appeals: None

Appeal Decisions: None

c) Site Inspection: None

d) Proposed development Plans: The Chairman gave an update on the District Council's forward development plans:

- Progress seems to have stalled with these and as developers have been seen to be doing a lot of surveying in the Churcham area, the risk of a large development there does not appear to have gone away.
- However, there are now twenty-six parish councils in the district who are opposed to the plan, and other counties who have opted for dispersed development rather than new 'towns' have been successful.
- Herefordshire, for example, has now got a seven-year supply of dispersed land sites in place and Monmouthshire has had its housing requirement reduced by the Welsh government. However, it appears that the Forest of Dean District Council is unwilling to go back to the government about this and there are fears that the east side of the Forest is going to be developed as an extension of Gloucester.

e) Enforcement: Nothing to report.

6 FINANCIAL

a) Internal Audit Councillors agreed the payments and the Chairman signed financial sheets

b) Accounts for payment and receipts:

	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	Clerk's Salary – December Less Tax	770.12 <u>17.60</u> 752.52		Paid
2	Inland Revenue Tax FJW NIC PC	17.60 <u>4.57</u> 22.17		Paid
3	James Walkey Cox – December	378.33		Paid
4	AM Groundcare - November	1090.00		Paid
5	Clerk Expenses: Telephone, broadband Expenses Jan-Dec 21 set amount @ £5 per month 1/2 cost of Office 365 Home renewal One year's room rental 1.05.21-31.4.22 Quarter telephone rental 1/2 of cost to travel to Shirley Fowler to deliver books for auditing 20 miles round trip x 2 = 40 miles @ 45p per mile	60.00 39.99 300.00 56.97 <u>9.00</u> 465.96		Paid
	Totals:	£2708.92	£0.00	

c) Proposed budget 2022/23: The Clerk had circulated a second draft budget prior to the meeting and

took the Councillors through it in detail. Several tweaks were made, and the Clerk would prepare a third draft and present it at the January meeting.

7 MATTERS ARISING:

a) Highways Matters:

Speeding Traffic Broadoak: Concerns have been raised about speeding traffic at Broadoak, which endangers pedestrians crossing the road. A vehicle activated speed sign is, at various times, placed on this stretch of the road to discourage speeding but must be moved regularly throughout the parish. However, it does measure how often the speed limit is broken so when this information has been obtained, it can be passed to the police who may then consider it necessary to take further action.

State of the parish's roads is also a cause for concern. Hunt Hill is particularly bad, and Councillor Robinson has agreed that some of his local fund can be put towards this. The road between Stantway and Gatwick House is also in a very bad state and has been awaiting resurfacing for a long time. This had been delayed while awaiting the completion of work by the Severn Trent on the pumping station, but as this has now been completed, there should be no reason for further delay. There are also deep potholes on Rodley Road near Beechwood House.

Litter Picking: A young volunteer has offered to carry out some litter picking in Northwood Green. The Chairman said he would check with the Street Warden about the safety issues.

b) Burial Ground: Proposed extension: Following the last meeting the companies who had quoted for the required works to extend the Burial Ground were contacted and as anticipated due to the ever increasing costs of materials, there had been a significant increase in the original quotation. These new quotes will be held until May, by which time works must have commenced.

The total cost is now likely to be around £84,000 (the VAT will be reclaimable) which will add around £8 per annum to the precept for an average household in the parish. Over the ten years of the loan repayment, the total cost per household will be around £80 and while we recognise that this is an extra cost that we could all do without, it is unavoidable if Westbury residents are to continue to have the option of being buried in their own parish.

The Chairman reported:

- Two emails from parishioners had been received expressing concern about the percentage the precept would be increased to and indicated that the precept should be no more than 4-5% in line with the current rate of inflation.
- The Chairman consulted with the Chief Finance Officer of the FODDC and the Monitoring Officer who confirmed that the Parish Council, unlike the County Council, District Council and Police Commission, do not have to stick to the current rate of inflation and there is no ceiling on how much the PC raises their precept. In fact, in the past several Parishes have raised their precepts by 40%
- Yew Tree Brake which is the closest Burial Ground to Westbury is no longer open for burials and this is an increasing problem throughout the Country that Burial Grounds are quickly becoming full.
- Western Power has already re-laid their cable as per the original agreed contract.
- The Environment Agency put out a consultation with Burial Authorities about increasing the size of Burial Plots – if these is allowed it would mean that Burial Grounds would lose one burial place out of 5. The Clerk had sent a response to the consultation stating that Burial spaces are quickly running out and why does the EA want to make a situation even more difficult.

Closed Churchyard: A large bow broke off the big tree near the kissing gate by the A48. Work is required to remove the 2 or 3 branches. It was agreed to employ a local tree surgeon to deal with this.

c) Play Area: Councillor Townsend reported that he had been in touch with Wicksteed about the scramble net and they have quoted approx. £600 to replace this which seems very expensive as only part of the net is a problem. It was agreed that he would make further enquiries about repairing the net. Awaiting parts for wobble board.

Councillor Landon said one of the posts had been knocked over so would report this to the Parish Hall Committee.

d) Footpaths: Councillor Townsend reported:

- He was working on the 2026 Footpath Consultation document.
- The Parish Council are supportive of Chris Robinson's email asking for the PC's support for the riverside path between Newnham and the White Hart at Broadoak to become a public footpath. The Parish Council are fully supportive of this. **Clerk to email Chris Robinson.**

Councillor Radley asked is there had been any further developments with Footpath EWS81 still being blocked. There is no update and Councillors are getting frustrated this this path has been unwalkable since at least 2016. **Clerk to invite Jeff Wheeler to the January PC Meeting.**

e) Climate Change: Councillor Landon said there was an online meeting the next day which unfortunately she could not attend.

The Chairman reported that the Floodsaxs he had collected from the FODDC are not intended for use by residents who have experienced regular flooding issues. In the event of these Floodsaxs being used, the Parish Council have to purchase replacements.

f) Woodland Management: Councillor Ensor would like to see the Woodland signage maintained. Clerk had no further update from Dr Parry.

8 CORRESPONDENCE:

Any Other Correspondence:

GAPTC: The legislation has not changed regarding holding face-to-face meetings, so it is unlawful to hold meetings remotely. NALC continues to lobby for a change to the legislation to allow remote meetings again and met with officials this week to push for an immediate response given the increased risks and tightening of restrictions. NALC are urging Councils and Councillors to write to their MP and ministers in support of remote council meetings. Councillors were keen to return to remote meetings however felt it was pointless lobbying Mark Harper MP he does not even advocate face coverings.

9 MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION:

Covid Help Line: Councillor Landon said this help line may have to be reactivated soon to help residents.

20mph speed campaign: Whilst the Parish Council felt that a 20mph speed limit would be unrealistic through Westbury as it is a major trunk road, they feel that the surrounding "C" roads should be a max of 40mph not the currently 60mph.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 17 January 2022 commencing at 7pm.

Meeting closed 9.20pm