

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 20 November 2023 held in Westbury Parish Hall

PRESENT: Councillors - P Ensor
D Hill
R Hewlett
D Landon
A Hyett
S Phelps – Chairman
P Radley
B Stephens
M Townsend
F Wallbank

Members of the Public: 1

1 APOLOGIES and Emergency Procedure: CC Robinson.

2 MINUTES OF MEETING: Minutes of the meeting held Monday 16 October 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None

4 Jeff Wheeler (JW) PROW Officer – Discuss EWS81 This path has been blocked for a number of years now. The definitive map and os map shows this path goes as far as the Cottage. JW has spoken to the individuals concerned and they said the same as JW. Although residents in the Parish say it went beyond the cottage he needs concrete proof. Councillor Ensor said she remembers quite clearly walking the path in the 1950s.

JW's problem is that he currently has 540 outstanding issues that he needs to spend time on and feels that there are two other ways to get down to Walmore Common. Westbury has 63 miles of footpaths. JW encourages everyone to report problems with paths online. **It was agreed that Councillor Landon would visit the archives and see if she can find any historic maps showing the path.**

5 PUBLIC COMMENT: The recent closure for two days of Rodley Road, between the Parish Hall and Strand Lane, has been of disputed value. Gigaclear had dug a trench (for the third time) and even the men on site did not see why it was being done. This also raised the issue of why the 6" pipes under the road, which are there to drain the water towards the river, have not been replaced by 10" pipes which would be more effective and help to prevent the road flooding. The Parish Council has been asking Highways to do this for some time but the Chairman agreed to contact them again.

6 PLANNING MATTERS:

6.1) Applications:

P1223/23/FUL The Barn, Adsett Lane, Adsett: Erection of a 2-bedroom holiday let (revision to approved scheme for conversion of barn) with extension to provide bat night roost (as previously approved) together with associated works

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

Whilst the Parish Council notes that what has been carried out is a revision to the approved scheme it supports this application.

P1369/23/PIP 1 Wintles Hill Cottage, Wintles Hill, WOS: PIP for a residential development of one detached dwelling with electric vehicle charging facilities

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council object to this application for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed site is outside the settlement boundary
- 2 This is not an infill but a new build on a greenfield site
- 3 The road conditions are not suitable for traffic entering and exiting the proposed dwelling

6.2) Decisions: P1203/23/PQ3PA Cothill Farm, Lower Ley Lane, Minsterworth: Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to 1 dwelling and for building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion - **Refused**

Appeals: None Appeal Decisions: None

6.3) Site Inspection: None

7 FINANCIAL

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

7.2) Accounts for payment and receipts:

	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	Clerk's Salary November Less Tax	856.05 <u>25.40</u> 830.65		Paid
2	Inland Revenue: * Tax FJW NIC PC Refund due to Clerk	25.40 <u>13.53</u> 38.93		Paid
3	James Walkey Cox - October	389.68		Paid
4	AM Groundcare – 2 cuts for November Cutting Grass at new Burial Ground	1201.76 <u>180.00</u> 1381.76		Paid
5	WOS Parish Hall – Room hire for December '22 – November '23 inc	210.43		Paid
6	Play Inspection Company carrying out urgent ROSPA inspection	250.00 <u>50.00</u> 300.00		Paid
7	Cost of the wreath	20.00		Paid
8	PWLB Loan repayment	554.15		Paid
9	M S Watkins – fees in connection with the late Donovan Bragg, Marie Holford & Vivienne Bennett		1105.00	
	Totals:	£3725.60	£1105.00	

7.3 Clerk's Salary: The Chairman had circulated an email to the Councillors prior to the meeting about this matter. NALC had finally released the agreed pay increase effective from 1 April 2023. It was also agreed to increase the spinal point that the Clerk was on effective from 1 December.

7.4 Grass Cutting Contract 2024-2026 (inc): It was agreed that the Chairman and Councillor Landon would review the specification for the Closed Church. The Clerk had added the extra grass to be cut in the Burial Ground. Clerk to ask three companies to tender.

7.5 Budget for 2024/25: The Clerk took the Councillors through the first draft. The Chairman said that an allocation for the provision of gates on the new Burial Ground would need to be incorporated into the budget.

8 MATTERS ARISING:

8.1 Highways Matters:

Cowleys Elm Farm: There is a very large pothole. **It was agreed that Council Hewlett would take photos and sent to the Clerk to report to Glos Highways.**

Ampney Lane: The work done by Severn Trent in Ampney Lane went over the time predicted went over the time predicted and the site was left in a mess, so Mike Townsend has emailed the Managing Director.

Drains Rodley: The drains beyond Blue Boys in Rodley are to be tackled next year.

8.2 Burial Ground: Proposed extension: The Clerk said she had not heard anything further from Langley Wellington regarding the lease. **Clerk to chase.** Also as the school were using the new area of land **it was agreed that the Clerk would send an invoice for the £4,000 rent.**

Following last month's meeting when a Member of the Public raised the issue of burial plot "decoration and surrounds". This is a difficult one, complicated by the existence of precedence and the sensitivity of dealing firmly with the recently bereaved. The purpose of the regulation is predominantly to facilitate ease of maintenance for the grass cutting contractor, secondly to introduce an element of "consistency and formality" for the appearance of the churchyard.

The Clerk suggested that the PC allows some modest decoration and surrounds on the clear understanding that the individuals take over the responsibility for the maintenance of the plot. In the event that the plot becomes overgrown and unkempt then the decorations and surrounds will be removed, and the plot returned to grass.

This would enable individuals to express their grief at a difficult time but would remove the maintenance burden from the PC. We may well find that after time the graves are regularly returned to grass, this can be done in conjunction with the families and friends and avoid the difficult situation we are currently experiencing. **It was agreed that the Clerk would send letters to those grave holders who are contravening the Burial Ground regulations.**

8.3 Play Area: The ROSPA report had been forwarded to the Councillors for their information. **It was agreed that the balance beam should be removed and Councillor Townsend offered to look into possible grants available for replacing the wetpour surface.**

8.4 Footpaths: This item was discussed earlier in the meeting – see above.

8.5 Climate Change: Councillor Landon gave a short update. GRCC are looking at carrying a HNS for Westbury and a representative is coming along to our January meeting to highlight the need for an new HNS survey for Westbury to find out about community development and grants for local organisations.

8.6 Westbury Drs Surgery: Councillors Landon reported that she would be attending the Newnham Parish Council Parish Council Meeting on Monday, 27 November and would be asking for a donation from NPC towards the cost of installing the electricity supply to the Drs Surgery.

9 CORRESPONDENCE: Any Other Correspondence:

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust: Poulton Wood GWT Site: Update regarding the Parish Council taking over the Wood. It would appear as time has gone on the administration and logistics involved in GWT withdrawing from the various sites has become excessively burdensome so it has been decided that GWT will retain the management of Poulton Wood.

10 MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION:

The Chairman reported as follows following his attendance at a Blaisdon Parish Council meeting as District Council:

- BPC want the support of Westbury-on-Severn Parish Council regarding the footpaths in Ley Park Wood.
- Longhope – FODDC have granted permission for 12 affordable homes with the storm and sewage water going into the Brook with a proposal for a further 45. The developer is proposing underground tanks/holding ponds are proposed allowing the water to be released at a slower rate in time of heavy rain. The problem with this is that once constructed there is no ongoing management. **It was agreed**

that the Clerk writes to FODDC planning department and request that WoSPC are consulted on all proposed new developments.

- Glos Highways are doing a safety survey of the bridge in Blaisdon due to scouring taking place. They have placed a quantity of rock in the Brook however these could be dislodged in a flood and cause more problems

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 18 December 2023 at 7pm

Meeting closed 9.16 pm