

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 18 December 2023 held in Westbury Parish Hall

PRESENT: Councillors - P Ensor
R Hewlett
D Landon - Vice
A Hyett
S Phelps – Chairman (partial attendance)
P Radley
B Stephens
M Townsend
F Wallbank

Members of the Public: 0

1 APOLOGIES and Emergency Procedure: CC Robinson and Councillor Hill. The Chairman would be late.

2 MINUTES OF MEETING: Minutes of the meeting held Monday 12 November 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None

4 PUBLIC COMMENT: None

5 PLANNING MATTERS:

5.1) Applications:

P1546/23/FUL Beechwood House, Rodley Road, Rodley: Erection of a detached two bay, oak framed garage on new concrete pad and dwarf wall

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council **supports** this application.

5.2) Decisions: None

Appeals: None Appeal

Decisions: None

5.3) Site Inspection: None

6 FINANCIAL

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

6.2) Accounts for payment and receipts:

	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	Clerk's Salary December Back Pay from 1.4.23-30.11.23 Less Tax Less NIC	988.65 540.80 175.60 <u>57.77</u> 1296.08		Paid
2	Inland Revenue: Tax FJW NIC PC NIC FJW Refund due to Clerk	175.60 106.46 <u>57.77</u> 339.83		Paid
3	James Walkey Cox - November	389.68		Paid
4	AM Groundcare – 2 cuts for November	1201.76		Paid
5	Clerk expenses: Tel/broadband expenses ½ cost of office 365 home renewal Working from home allowance 1.5.23-31.4.24 ¼ telephone rental ½ cost to travel to Shirley Fowler to audit accounts Postage to return Community Speedwatch Camera	60.00 39.99 300.00 56.97 9.00 <u>5.39</u> 471.35		Paid
6	Community Heartbeat: Paediatric pads for defibrillator	95.00 <u>VAT 19.00</u> 114.00		Paid
7	PWLB repayment due 8.1.24 extension to BG	1659.42		Paid
	Totals:	£5472.12	£0.00	

6.4 Grass Cutting Contract 2024-2026 (inc): Councillor Landon took the Councillors through the revised contract for the Closed Churchyard and the Councillors were in agreement with the proposal. The Churchyard is looking slightly better. **It was agreed that the Clerk would go out to Tender for the Closed Churchyard and the other areas.**

The Chairman entered

6.5 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.

7 MATTERS ARISING:

7.1 Highways Matters:

Cowleys Elm Farm: Glos Highways have attended to the major defective road surface however they not sure how long the repair will last. Councillor Hewlett said that a different team put the signs up blocking the road in both directions which was not necessary. There needs to be some joined up thinking when putting these Road Closed signs up.

Litterbin: A resident had asked that more litter bins be installed along the A48. After some discussion, it was felt that the current number of bins is sufficient and that it was better if people took their litter home for disposal.

Ampney Lane: The work done by Severn Trent in Ampney Lane went over the time predicted and the

site was left in a mess, so Councillor Townsend has emailed the Managing Director.

Stantway Lane: The condition of the road surface is in a terrible condition and also the natural passing place that is always muddy, needs to be made into a proper passing place when the lane is eventually resurfaced. The situation is made worse by sewage overflowing from the pumping station. This has been going on for years and the PC seems to be caught in a vicious circle where Highways do not resurface the road because of the flooding and sewage leaks, but Severn Trent are saying that the much-needed flood alleviation scheme has had to be “delayed due to current affordability challenges and regulatory requirements.” Clearly more public pressure is needed on both Highways and Severn Trent for the problems to be rectified. **Clerk to report via fix my street and send photographs.**

A48 Gratings: These are completed silted up. Glos Highways have been asked to clear these, but nothing has been done.

Ditches along Rodley Road, near the Parish Hall, are not draining properly. The Chairman has been in touch with the Internal Drainage Board, but they say this is not their responsibility, so he has reported the problem to Highways as they need to liaise with the adjoining landowner. The 6” pipe under the road gets blocked.

7.2 Burial Ground: Proposed extension: The Clerk reported as follows:

- The solicitors managed to contact the Council by telephone and have established that the Solicitor dealing with the matter has retired and therefore this transaction has been passed to a colleague. I have resent copies of our recent emails and await hearing further from them once they have familiarised themselves with the transaction.
- They have since chased the Council and spoken to the Solicitor now dealing with the matter. She has advised that she is currently in the process of familiarising herself with the transaction and will need to speak with the surveyor before responding to us.
- Sent an invoice to the school for rent due:

Playing field and use of car park at Westbury-on-School for Period 1 April to 31 August (5 months)	291.67
New playing field at Westbury-on-Severn School and the Use of the Car Park	4000.00

The school has informed the Parish Council that as they have not received or signed a new lease, yet they have been advised by Gloucestershire County Council to presently pay only £291.67 for the car park rent.

The Councillors felt that as the school were using the new playing field, they should be paying the rent. **It was agreed that the Clerk email Hayley Fernside, Neil Corbett and copy in CC Robinson and the School.**

7.3 Play Area: Councillor Townsend had been looking at obtaining quotes for replacing the wetpour surfacing in the Play Area and had met Will from Greenfields on site. He explained that the costly part of replacing the wetpour is the removal of the old wetpour. They have a product that can be placed on top of the wetpour and said that several sites had done this (Glos City Council/Longleavens), and it would be worth the Parish Council having a look at these sites. This would be at a cost of £16,000.

Councillor Townsend had received quotes from RTC Safety Services for replacing the wetpour at £22,000 and Abacus Playgrounds at £34,000

It was agreed that the Councillors would meet on Thursday, 28 December 10am at the Play Area.

7.4 Footpaths: Some Councillors were disappointed with Geoff Wheeler’s attitude to ESW 81 being blocked however some other Councillors agreed with Geoff Wheeler’s thought process of the amount of time and effort it would take to try and get the footpath unblocked and realistically how many people would walk it is it really worth it.

Some waymarker posts have been removed in Ley Park.

7.5 Climate Change: Councillor Landon gave a short update. The Parish Hall Committee were looking into the possibility of installing solar panels on the Hall roof as currently the hall was unsustainable as it was.

The Chairman reported that some members of the Council were looking at a biosphere for the Forest.

This is an area that has a long-term vision, and community support, for development and prosperity in tune with its environment, or in the lingo 'sustainable development'. It acknowledges that safeguarding and improving the environment is central to the way of life for local residents, business and visitors, now and for future generations. The Leader of the Cabinet has decided to withdraw the policy.

7.6 Westbury Drs Surgery: Councillor Landon reported that she had attended the November Newnham Parish Council (NPC) Parish Council Meeting however the matter of a donation from NPC towards the cost of installing the electricity supply to the Drs Surgery was not on the agenda despite having been asked beforehand. Councillor Hewlett said he would speak with someone experienced about installing electricity supplies about the situation at the Dr Surgery.

8 CORRESPONDENCE: None

9 MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION:

Telephone kiosk in the Village: This is now a book exchange and is in need to some attention. Councillor Townsend said he would have a look and see what could be done.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 15 January 2024 at 7pm

Meeting closed 9.12pm