

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 15 January 2024 held in Westbury Parish Hall

PRESENT: Councillors - P Ensor
R Hewlett
D Hill
S Phelps – Chairman
B Stephens
M Townsend
County Councillor P Robinson (partial attendance)
F Wallbank - Clerk

Members of the Public: 13 (some partial attendance)

1 APOLOGIES and Emergency Procedure: Councillors Hyett, Landon & Radley.

2 MINUTES OF MEETING: Minutes of the meeting held Monday 18 December 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman after one slight amendment.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None

4 PUBLIC COMMENT: Comments received from the Members of Public:

- WOS school is 75% full – a small amount of affordable housing would be a benefit to Westbury however not a huge development.
- Increased traffic along the A48 causing safety issues around Jordans Hill. The footway under the bridge is less than .5 of a metre wide
The Chairman responded stating that the railway bridge is the property of Network Rail and to replace the bridge would be very expensive indeed. The PC has had talks with Glos Highways about extending the 30mph zone currently through the Village on either side.
- Layby outside Westbury Court Gardens seems to be for advertising cars for sale and various other things – **The Chairman responded that the Parish Council had been onto the PCSO and Glos Highways and there was one vehicle that was uninsured with no MOT, and it was removed. The Parish Council does monitor the situation.**
- Traffic speeds through the Village
The Chairman responded that the PC has recently acquired a Community Speedwatch Camera which records number plates and the police will send letters to regular speeding offenders. However sadly it is defective and has been returned for repair. The speed detection camera van is often parked outside the Water Gardens catching offenders.
- Social Housing is often not well looked after. Brand new houses are built and very quickly they look scruffy.
The Chairman said the next time Two Rivers came to speak with the FODDC he would raise this issue.

County Councillor Robinson reported as follows:

- GCC Department of Transport has invested £4.5M in buses. After consultation 21 new routes are proposed. The proposal is to increase the use of the bus service with improved services in the evenings and weekends to encourage people to travel by bus.

- Glos Highways has received a further £88M to be spent over a 10-year period. Over 20,000 potholes have been repaired this financial year – with the new spray injection patching machine over 100 potholes can be repaired in a day. The best way to report potholes is on [FixMyStreet](#)
- GCC’s budget goes to cabinet on the 31 January. It is very clear without Javelin Park Incinerator plant where 90% of residential household waste gets diverted to. This generates a revenue of £19M that can be spent on important Adult Social Care however this revenue will only be £10M next year.

Councillor Townsend said Westgate Street towards the Cathedral was in a shocking state of disrepair.

A Parishioner asked if Operatives would be allowed to use their judgement and repair adjoining potholes that had not been sprayed with white paint for fixing? CC Robinson said that potholes had to meet certain criteria before they will be dealt with.

A Parishioner raised the condition of the road at Stantway Lane. The Chairman said Glos Highways is reluctant to resurface the road as they are waiting for STW to attend the serious issues with the Pumping Station pumping raw sewage out onto the road. The Mop had spoken to STW that day and informed the parishioner that it would be at least 12 months before they would even think about doing any work.

5 PLANNING MATTERS:

5.1) Applications:

P1672/23/FUL La Masia, Stantway Lane, WOS: Installation of solar photovoltaic panels on roof
 Comments to the Forest of District Council:

The Parish Council has no objections to this application.

5.2) Decisions:

P1145/23/LD1 Camp Pitch, Upper Rodley Road, Rodley: Application under Section 191 to establish whether the building formerly used as stables & self-contained flat (1970s-1980s), currently used as animal pens (cattle) & self-contained flat since 1994 is lawful - Granted.

Appeals: None

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 January Less Tax	988.65 <u>67.40</u> 921.25		
2	Inland Revenue TAX FJW NIC	67.40 <u>31.83</u> 99.23		
3	James Walkey Cox – December	389.68		
4	Systemforce IT – Renewal of website contract	30.00 <u>VAT 6.00</u> 36.00		
5	Robert King Contracting: Clearance of vegetation around the bus shelters as per quotation Minor roof repairs to 2 bus shelters	580.00 80.00 <u>VAT 132.00</u> 792.00		
6	Dennis Beale quarter yearly rental for carpark		75.00	
7	National Grid – Wayleave		49.37	
	Totals:	£2238.16	£124.37	

6.4 Grass Cutting Contract 2024-2026 (inc): The Clerk confirmed that she had gone out to tender with 4 companies however only two Tenders had been received. **Councillors agreed to award both the Tender for the verges and other areas and the Tender for the Closed Churchyard to AM Groundcare for a contract of 3 years. Clerk to email AM Groundcare and the contractor who was unsuccessful.**

6.5 Budget for 2024/25: The Clerk took the Councillors through an updated draft, and it was agreed that the possible donation to the Parish Hall for the electricity provision would be £1,000 and the provision for Wetpour would be renamed as further play area provision. **It was agreed that the precept for 2024/25 would be £36,000. Clerk to notify FODDC.**

7 MATTERS ARISING:

7.1 Highways Matters:

Councillor Hewlett has cleared the pipe under the road outside the Village Hall – the end of the pipe was blocked however it would be a good idea to put pressure on the IDB to clear the ditch.

7.2 Burial Ground: Proposed extension: The Clerk reported that she had sent Hayley Fearnside and Neil Corbett an email stating that after 5 months of the solicitors trying to get some progress with the draft lease no progress has been made. The Clerk had sent an email stating that the school have been advised not to pay the rental of £4000 until such time as they are in receipt of a draft or signed contract. **Councillor Robinson said he would chase this up.**

The Clerk had sent Richard Williams the plan that the Chairman had drawn however he would like a site meeting. **The Chairman to meet with Richard Williams.**

7.3 Play Area: Councillors had a working party at the end of December, and it was agreed that the majority of the wetpour surface was fine but some areas need repair patching. Leaves to be cleared, surfaced jet washed - **Councillor Hill agreed to assist with and repairs of defective areas to be undertaken.**

7.4 Footpaths: Councillor Townsend reported as follows:

- Received an email regarding Ley Park stating there were trees down blocking the footpath however these have been cleared.

- Had attended a meeting in Maismore regarding a group of local ramblers who have got together with a view to maintaining and enhancing three local long-distance footpaths: The Three Choirs Way, the Wysis Way and the Gloucestershire Way.

Councillor Landon has been unable to get to the Record Office yet.

The Chairman said he had read that numerous Authorities were neglecting footpaths and some were in an appalling condition.

7.5 Climate Change: In the absence of Councillor Landon the clerk reported as follows:

Still working on ways to reduce the Parish Hall's utility bills and carbon footprint. Not much to report from the Forest Climate Network or Climate Adaptation Project that can't wait till next month.

7.6 Westbury Drs Surgery: In the absence of Councillor Landon the clerk reported as follows:

Councillor Hewlett and Councillor Landon met on site with Mike Edginton to discuss the best way to provide the surgery with the separate electricity supply they need. At the last Hall meeting, Mike reported that the total cost would be somewhere in the region of £10,000 and it was suggested that we try to split this equally 3 ways between the Parish Hall, Newnham Parish Council and Westbury Parish Council. To date Councillor Landon has I heard nothing from Newnham Parish Council about our request

. It was agreed that a provision of £1000 would be made in next year's precept for possible financial help with this matter.

7.7 Severn Trent Issues in the Parish: Stantway, NWG and Burial Ground:

At Northwood Green there are two sites where raw sewage is frequently seen to be erupting from manhole covers, consequently leading to raw sewage finding its way into natural watercourses and thereby polluting them.

In Stantway area yet again raw sewage is erupting from manhole covers into the road and then continuing to flow into natural watercourses causing further pollution.

At this particular site there have been plans and even notices for proposed works to take place to remedy the problem, however, to date, nothing happens.

Lower side of Westbury Village, where raw sewage has been witnessed erupting from manhole covers in close proximity to the Primary School Playing Field and also the Parish Burial Ground. The overflow from here then makes its way into the Westbury Brook and thence to the River Severn.

The Chairman send an email to STW stating that these issues are totally unacceptable to the residents of Westbury Parish and that they need to consider arranging for a representative to come forward and attend a Parish Council meeting, in the presence of residents to explain how these gross failures of service are to be rectified in the immediate future. **It was agreed that the Clerk would action this.**

Presentation from GRCC re Housing Needs Survey by Barbara Pond and Carra Loukes:

Carra Loukes introduced herself: As Affordable Housing Manager, her role at GRCC is to work with key partners and stakeholders to deliver affordable housing. She does this by working in a progressive and collaborative manner with Parish Councils and their wider communities to provide them with opportunities for sustainable benefit and growth that they may/may not choose to take up. GRCC's enabling function between stakeholders is advantageous to communities like yours; GRCC advocates for positive community engagement, community voice, and meaningful consultation and communication to achieve the right spaces in the right places.

Part of her role will be liaising with Councils regarding the release of the HNS as well as the eventual report findings.

The last HNS survey was conducted over 13 years ago. GRCC has been asked to complete another HNS by Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership (GRHP). GRHP, that includes Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC), has selected Westbury on Severn Parish as part of its cyclical review of housing need across Gloucestershire. The HNS will be conducted by GRCC as we are a member and the facilitator of the GRHP.

The HNS aims to accurately record the housing need of the parish as well as the subsequent potential exploration of any land suggested for future development (of primarily affordable homes) by residents. Please note that such land, should any be forthcoming from residents, will be treated as commercially

sensitive unless otherwise directed by the Council and will not be in the public arena. The Parish Council's local knowledge will be integral to achieving the best outcomes from the HNS. The HNS is not a mandate for residential development in Westbury on Severn; rather, it is a useful evidence base to make sure that local need is recorded.

The HNS can also help to identify interest in community led housing (CLH) and we can support communities in their formation of CLH groups and possible delivery of schemes should this be of interest to the village and residents.

Cara took questions from the Members of the Public present and confirmed that the survey would be sent to households in the Parish early next month.

The Chairman thanked Cara and Barbara for attending the meeting.

8 CORRESPONDENCE: None

9 MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION:

Biodiversity Plan the Clerk reported that Councillor Landon has had a good look at some of the information about it and think that WoSPC is fairly on the ball with it in that we are caring for the closed churchyard according to the advice from Caring for God's Acre, we have bird boxes etc and we have Climate Change on our agenda each month. She has précised the policy and the **clerk to circulate to the Councillors at the next meeting.**

Telephone Kiosk the Village: Councillor Townsend has looked at the kiosk and found that is not being well used and had to take a number of the books away as they were very damp. **It was agreed to put this on the agenda for next month.**

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 19 February 2024 at 7pm

Meeting closed 9.15pm