

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 18 March 2024 held in Westbury Parish Hall

PRESENT: Councillors - P Ensor
R Hewlett
D Hill
A Hyett
D Landon
S Phelps – Chairman
P Radley
B Stephens
M Townsend
F Wallbank – Clerk
CC Robinson (partial attendance)
Dan & Poppy – Severn Trent Water (partial attendance)

Members of the Public: 1 (partial attendance)

1 APOLOGIES and Emergency Procedure: None

2 MINUTES OF MEETING: Minutes of the meeting held Monday 19 February 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None

Dan and Poppy – Severn Trent Water:

The Chair welcomed Dan and Poppy and thanked them for coming along to tonight's meeting. Dan updated the Councillors as follows:

Stantway Lane Pumping Station: A scheme was in place to upgrade the pumps at this site however due to lack of reported incidents after 2019 the allocated monies were diverted to another project. The required works will now not be done before 2026. He encouraged all incidences of overflow to be reported via the Call Centre and then send photo with times and dates to him so that all incidences going forward can be logged.

The Chair read out a letter from Mark Harper MP challenging that there had been a lack of reporting.

Ampney Lane, Northwood Green: Again, all incidences should be reported so they can be added to the Hydraulic Flood Risks Register. It would appear that open water course leaks take priority.

Burial Ground: At times of heavy rain there is an overspill from the sewer into the Burial Ground and the School playing field. Dan was aware that this was due to root ingress that was rectified however the Chair said that an incident was reported in Winter 2022/2023.

The Chair asked Dan why STW do not object to applications for new houses when there are already problems with water etc and when are they going to change their stance? Dan said that STW are currently looking changing how they view and respond to application for development.

County Councillor Report :

The County Council has now approved its **£616 million budget for 2024/25**. This budget represents an increase of around £50 million compared with last year. Some headlines:

- Over £200 million into Adult Social Care.
- Over £180 million into Children's Services to continue to improve and modernise the service; to improve our SEND offer; and to further support our fostering and adoption services.
- £24 million capital investment for schools, including the installation of solar panels on every LA

maintained school in the County; a new special school in Gloucester which will serve the entire county; and a new much needed primary school in Bishops Cleeve.

- Continuing our ongoing investment of £100 million to improve the County's roads. It's worth pointing out that over the last year we've fully resurfaced 212 roads and fixed 50,000 potholes, and we'll certainly be continuing in that vein.
- Over £2 million to tackle road safety.
- £8.25 million to buy ten new fire engines and a new aerial ladder platform.
- £2.2 million to increase the frequency and the operating hours of buses and to extend our bookable bus service, *The Robin*, to three new areas of the County (Tewkesbury, Berkeley Vale and South Cotswolds) and also to increase its coverage in the Forest where *The Robin* has already been a great success.

Unlike many councils who have struggled to balance their books we haven't had to make any drastic cuts and in a large part this is down to our *Energy from Waste* facility at Javelin Park (M5 J12) which as well as stopping the County's rubbish going to landfill has also generated £15 million from the sale of the electricity that it's produced and that's something we're very proud of indeed.

So, notwithstanding all that extra investment, the council is still expected to have one of the lowest council tax levels of any county council. There'll be a council tax increase of 2.99% and an additional 2% through Adult Social Care Precept. Based on a band D property this equates to a £6.34 monthly increase. **And, of course, the council continues to challenge itself to work more effectively and as a result we've identified £23 million worth of efficiencies that we can make over the coming year.**

A word about secondary school admissions. As some of you might remember, last year we had an unusually large year group that moved from primary school to secondary school last September and it certainly caused a few headaches for us. Next September things will return pretty much to normal (though there are still a few issues around Cheltenham and Gloucester) and I'm pleased to say that we've offered over 6,500 (6539) secondary school places, so that's 233 fewer than last year. 86% have received their first preference school and 97% one of their preferences. However, that still leaves 196 children who are not going to get one of their preferences. Though unfortunately 42% of applicants stated only one preference and that's always a mistake. We've always advised parents to make full use of the opportunity to state five preferences.

More than two years on from the start of the conflict in Ukraine I thought you might like to know the stats regarding Ukrainian refugees in Gloucestershire. As of 1st March, 1,666 had arrived in the county and were part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme but over 1,000 of those have now left the scheme for various reasons, for example 32% of those have found private accommodation and 30% have returned to Ukraine. We've currently got 361 Ukrainian children in the County's schools 17EY - 160PRI - 184SEC. So, I think we can be justly proud of the welcome our county has given to people from Ukraine.

Build Back Better Councillor Scheme – was £40,000 now £50,000. So far, I've supported 16 bids and £37,000 has been either approved or is going through the system. £13,000 remains available.

£3,000 BBB Youth Fund. Only £1,000 has so far been taken up. £2,000 remains and I understand there's a looming deadline on applications to this fund so please move quickly. I'll consider anything youth related however remotely!

The Chair asked if he could chase Glos Highways as he was still awaiting a date for a tour of the Parish and asked if he put pressure on Neil Corbett - GCC re the Burial Ground.

4 PUBLIC COMMENT:

Comments received from resident on Jordan Hill about the fact the third vehicle has hit their garage. She is campaigning for the speed of the road should be reduced from 50 mph to 30mph and there is no clear sight line.

The Chairman responded that he had written to Network Rail who consider that removing the clearance of the vegetation was not necessary. Written to Glos Highways about the new signs for the bridge however they are gathering dust in Cannop. He has contacted the local newspapers and taking up the matter with

Mark Harper MP.

5 PLANNING MATTERS:

5.1 Applications:

P0067/24/FUL Ardens Farm, The Village, WOS: Conversion of x 2 agricultural barns into x2 holiday lets with associated parking, landscaping & works.

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

P1511/23/FUL Greenacre, The Quay, Broadoak: Conversion of existing agricultural/storage building into a holiday let/annexe.

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

P0247/24/FUL South View, NWG: Variation of condition 2 (approves plan) to remove dormer window relating to P0474/23/FUL

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

P0302/24/AG Application for determination as to whether prior approval is required for further details. New Agricultural Building at Upper Ley Farm, Upper Ley. Prior notification for the erection of fodder store

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

P0203/24/LD1 Ishkara, Dragon Fires, Grange Court Road, Adsett: Application under Section 191 to establish whether the use & occupancy of a bungalow as a permanent residence, originally granted permission as a holiday let, is lawful.

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

P0209/24/FUL Court Farm, The Village, WOS: Erection of extension to existing agricultural building.

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

P0201/24/OUT Land adjacent to The Tynings, Walmore Hill, Minsterworth: Outline application for the erection of one dwelling (all matters reserved)

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council objects to this application for the following reason:

- The proposal seeks new housing development outside of a defined settlement boundary, which is thereby considered to be in open countryside.

It was agreed to have a site meeting on Saturday, 23 March to look at the following applications:

P0280/24/FUL Court Farm, The Village, WOS: Conversion & alterations to redundant agricultural barns to create 6 residential dwellings. Alterations & demolition of adjacent agricultural buildings to create associated amenity area, garaging & parking space.

P0072/24/FUL The Willows, Riverside Lane, Broadoak: Conversion of existing rear single storey extension, conversion of the existing garage to an annexe ancillary to main dwelling. Construction of a new car port. Removal of the existing roof & box dormers (front & rear) to be replaced with a new gable roof with associated front & rear box dormers, pitched roof lights & new chimney.

5.2 Decisions

P1696/23/FUL 6 The Crescent, NWG: Variation of condition 2 (approved plan) relating to P0225/21/FUL to enable external rendering to be added to two storey & single storey extensions, addition of ground floor window to side elevation & alterations to first floor window to front elevation -**Granted**.

P1773/22/FUL Gravel Farm, Cleeve, WOS: Proposed ground mounted photovoltaic panels and associated works – **Application withdrawn**.

Appeals: 1 Wintles Hill Cottage, Wintles Hill, WOS: PIP proposal for a residential development of 1 detached self-build dwelling house with electric vehicle charging facilities: This appeal will be determined on the basis of written presentations. The Parish Council’s representations made to the FODDC on the original application will be considered by the Planning Inspectorate. **The Councillors agreed that no further comments were required.**

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 March Less Tax	988.65 <u>67.40</u> 921.25		Paid
2	Inland Revenue TAX FJW NIC	67.40 <u>31.83</u> 99.23		Paid
3	James Walkey Cox –February	389.68		Paid
4	WoS PCC Field rental for Northwood Green	10.00		Paid
5	Chairman’s allowance	25.00		Paid
6	FODDC renewal of garden waste licence for Burial Ground	55.00		
7	Donation towards cost of defibrillator for Elton	50.00		Paid
8	F J Cambridge – Memorial for the late Brian Mitchell		100.00	
9	Philip Blatchley – Burial fees for the late Phoebe Barr		300.00	
	Totals:	£1550.16	£400.00	

6.3 Internal Auditor: It was agreed to continue using the services of Shirley Fowler.

7 MATTERS ARISING:

7.1 Highways Matters:

Gutters through the Village are all blocked: This will be raised when a site visit is carried out.

Bottom of Hunthill is in a very bad state of disrepair.

Water is remaining outside The Glen and Poulton Court

Outside Cowley Elm the Road surface is starting to break up again

7.2 Burial Ground: Proposed extension: The Clerk reported she had been informed by the solicitor that GCC are now stating that the Secretary for State for Education has to approve the change of use.

They have said that any property used for school playing fields within the last 10 years is now subject to the requirement to make an application for change of use, even in circumstances such as this. **It was agreed that the PC should contact Neil Corbett at GCC and copy in CC Robinson stating the PC acted good faith all the way through the process, complying fully with the requirements of FoDDC and Sport**

England, at no time were we advised of the need to apply to the Department of Education, even though GCC were fully aware of our intentions.

7.3 Play Area: Councillor Townsend said he had carried out the 3 monthly inspection - a motorbike had made deep tracks on the grass. Councillor Landon said that the motorbike had also driven across the playing field. **It was agreed that the Chair would ask the PCSO to keep an eye on the area.**

7.4 Footpaths: Jeff Wheeler had sent round an update on jobs that had been completed in the Parish. Councillor Townsend had received a complaint that the bridlepath at Ampney Lane was blocked.

7.5 Climate Change: Nothing to report.

7.6 Dr's Surgery: Councillor Landon reported following the Parish Council meeting the Hall is now without a Chair. The duties have been divided up, however as it is a Charity they can only operate for a month without a Chair. The Parish Hall Committee are going to have the Drs building revalued. Rent received from the Drs Surgery has been £6,000 with no increase for 9 years. They are proposing a 15-year lease with a 5-year rent review.

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

8 CORRESPONDENCE:

8.1 FODDC Proposed Development at Glynchbrook: The email regarding the proposed 3,000 development of houses to be sited next to junction 2 of the M50 had been circulated with the agenda. Contents noted.

Any Other Correspondence:

GAPTC: Land Registry wants ALL land in England registered by 2030. Does the PC own or occupy any unregistered land? **Put on the agenda for next month.**

9 MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION:

Telephone Kiosk The Village: Councillor Townsend reported that he had cleared out the kiosk and taken the good books to the Forest Hospice. The kiosk windows need resealing. **It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Glevum Windows whether they would be willing to carry out the work.**

Build Back Better Fund: Councillor Townsend would look into if there would be any money for the NWG proposed play area.

Annual Parish Meeting: Councillor Landon said she had participated in an online meeting about creating a more interesting APM. The Chair said that parishioners showed little interest in the Parish Council and their meetings.

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

Meeting closed 9.05pm