

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th January 2018

Present:	Cindy Creasy	Chair
	David Butler	Vice-Chair
	Dean Cowley	Councillor
	Nick Jones	Councillor
	Glenn Leech	Councillor
	Steve Rawlings	Councillor
	Anne Swift	Councillor
	Neil Worthington	Clerk

Apologies:	Jerry Kunkler	Wiltshire Councillor
	PCSO Paul Whiteside	Wiltshire Police

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 13th November 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising :-

- Cutting back trees above car park bays – As no proposals had yet been received a reminder had been sent. Mike Fowler has confirmed that he has forwarded this to Mr Tucker. If nothing is received in a couple of weeks a further reminder will be sent. *Action: Clerk*
- Sewage sludge spreading – the letter to Blanchards farm had been drafted and amended by David. It set out the specific guidelines that we would like followed including receiving prior notice of any future application.
- Church Farm planning – following receipt of the letter from Mr Findley, one of the executors of the estate, who had confirmed that the site was not being sold a further email had been sent asking for information on the likely timescale of the development and requesting to be kept informed about the design development. No reply had yet been received and an email reminder had been sent recently.
- Metrocount – A reminder had been sent to Jerry Kunkler to confirm that he had agreed to get a Metrocount vehicle speed indicator in the village. He had confirmed that he was trying to do this but we may have to make a formal application through the CATG process. The next CATG meeting was in early March.
- Parish Steward – he had visited in November and December but due to a combination of bad weather and his commitments with the road gritting operation he had been limited in what he could achieve. The next scheduled visits are due 24 Jan, 21 Feb, 21 March and 17 April. One of the major issues he was unable to deal with was keeping the grips clear but it was reported that the mechanical grip cutter had recently re-cut the ones around the village.
- Road sweeper – this had still not carried out the work as promised. The engineer responsible had been chased a number of times and Jerry Kunkler

had been asked to intervene. Update - latest information is we should have the sweeper by the end of January.

- Swimming pool discharge – the owner had been contacted and he confirmed he would speak to the pool maintenance company to ensure that the problem was not repeated.
- North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty presentation – it was agreed to see if this could be organised for the May meeting. A note would be included in the next Contact to see if there was enough demand.
Action: Clerk/Cindy Creasy
- Register of Member's Interests – notification had been received that all Councillors had completed the Register.

2. Declarations of Interest and the granting of dispensations.

Councillors were reminded of the Code for Conduct and the need to declare any interest relating to the items on the Agenda. Dean Cowley declared an interest in deciding any donation to the Church as he was Treasurer.

Dispensations to discuss and vote on the Precept were requested by Cindy Creasy, Dean Cowley, Nick Jones and Anne Swift and granted because without the dispensation the number of persons unable to participate in setting the Precept would be so great as to impede the transaction of this item of business.

David Butler, Glenn Leech and Steve Rawlings already had dispensations in place which were still current.

3. Report from Wiltshire Councillor

Jerry Kunkler was unable to attend as he was attending the Pewsey Area Board meeting.

He had been asked to facilitate the installation of the Metrocount and to assist in getting a road sweeper to go through the village. David Butler offered to arrange to take any debris arising from the road sweeper.

4. Report from Community Police Officer.

It had been hoped that PCSO Paul Whiteside who had recently joined the team covering the Pewsey villages would be able to attend but had been called away on other duties.

Wiltshire Police had issued their report for January. Current priorities continued to be Thefts from Vehicles and Dwelling and Non-dwelling burglaries and Hare Coursing. There were no reported crimes in Wootton Rivers but crimes in the surrounding area include another theft from a car at Martinsell, and non-dwelling burglaries at Clench, Milkhouse Water, Oare, Sunnyhill and Easton Royal.

The email system run by Nick Mitchell-Briggs continued to be useful in reminding villagers to keep up security and be especially vigilant online.

The possibility of asking the police to run another Crime Prevention Workshop would be considered.

5. Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Referendum was taking place on 25th January 2018 and voting cards had been issued. Posters encouraging voting had been placed around the village.

6. Planning

The following applications had been considered since the last meeting and there had been no objections to these proposals :-

- 17/10981/FUL Garage at Wootton House
- 17/11172/VAR Variation to Extension at Wootton House
- 17/10980/LBC Variation to Extension at Wootton House

The following new application for Work to Trees in the Conservation Area had been received :-

- 18/00010/LBC Tree works to Dashwood

This application was considered and it was agreed that there was no objection to the proposed works.

7. Finances

The following cheques which had been issued since the last meeting were authorised :-

- £348.50 Last Landscaping – quarterly charge for grass cutting the Recreation Ground.

The following payment had been received :-

- £732.16 from the August BH Food Festival

Ford Fuels had provided the figures to enable an invoice to be sent amounting to £709.70 which is an increase from last year's figure of £561.27 as more members had joined. This is now a significant part of the Parish Council budget (equivalent to 28% of the Precept) and it was agreed that a letter expressing the PC's appreciation should be sent. *Action: Clerk*

Precept 2018/19

Details of the current state of the Parish Council finances and a draft budget for 2018/19 had been issued prior to the meeting. It is anticipated that the balance of funds at the end of the current year (31st March 2018) will be £6,358 which is an increase of £668 from last year mainly due to the money raised by the Food Festival.

The size of this reserve was discussed and it was agreed that taking all likely scenarios into account it was larger than was necessary.

The possibility of receiving a Community Infrastructure Levy payment from the Church Farm development was discussed and Anne Swift agreed to find out the current position and likely amount of payment. *Action: Anne Swift*

Clerk's Salary

Glenn Leech had been requested to examine and report on the current level of the Clerk's salary and had prepared a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The current salary was based on payment for 1.5 hours per week and the conclusion of the report was that this should be increased to 3 hours a week in line with other parishes. Neil Worthington wanted to record that he was not asking for an increase in hours as many other members of the community also freely give up their time for the benefit of the village. However, it was considered that the PC should pay a fair rate to ensure that the budget is balanced when the role becomes vacant and there is a need to recruit on the open market. Discussion also took place regarding the time scale for the implementation of the increase. Glenn Leech proposed a motion to increase the Clerk's salary to 2 hours per week for 2018/19 with future increases to 2.5 hours for 2019/20 and to 3 hours for 20/21, but that these future increases to be subject to review during the annual budgeting process. Steve Rawlings seconded the motion which was put to a vote and was carried unanimously.

Church Donation

Dean Cowley took no part in the discussion or vote on this matter due to a conflict of interest.

A request had been received from St Andrew's Church for a donation to assist with the upkeep of the church grounds. Glenn Leech proposed a motion to contribute £100 which was seconded by Steve Rawlings. This motion was put to a vote of the eligible councillors and was carried unanimously.

Precept

The draft budget was amended to incorporate the above changes. Other changes from last year's budget included an increase for the grass cutting to the recreation ground from £1162 to £1492 pa. This large increase was due to the price not having increased for 3 years despite more cuts being carried out due to the growing season lengthening. It was noted that the grass cutting and rent for the Rec was a major expense and accounted for approximately 2/3rds of the Precept.

Nothing was included in the budget for Recreation Ground maintenance as this would be met from the contribution received from the Food Festival.

These changes result in the budget being raised to £3,772. Assuming a BEAM contribution from Ford Fuels of £700 (similar to this year) £3,072 needs to be raised. A motion was proposed by Anne Swift and seconded by Glenn Leech that the precept be raised by 10% to £2,752.12 and the shortfall of £320 taken from the reserve. This motion was put to a vote and was carried unanimously.

It was noted that the increase in the precept would mean that a Band D tax payer would pay £21.87 per year for the Parish Council – an increase of £1.99 per year.

10. Correspondence received.

None of relevance to Wootton Rivers that has not been covered elsewhere.

11. Matters raised by the public / AOB

Damage to the Triangle – David Butler had rebuilt the bank which had been damaged by the milk tanker and had spoken to the transport firm about the need to take more care when manoeuvring. The road surface there was quite damaged -this had been reported to Highways some ago who were meant to be monitoring it. It was agreed to report it again. *Action: Clerk*

Concern was expressed about the narrowing of the roads caused by verges being run over by cars and tractors which spread mud over the tarmac. The practicality of removing this was discussed – it was too big a job to do by hand and machinery would have to be used. There may also be insurance and liability implications. It was agreed that Steve would get a guide price for getting the work carried out and Neil would see if Highways would get involved. *Action: Steve Rawlings/Clerk*

The finger direction sign near East Wick farm had become rotten and had fallen. A repair was to be investigated. *Action: Clerk*

Date of the next meeting – 5th March 2018 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Date for remaining meetings in 2018 were proposed as follows :-

14th May (Annual meeting)

16th July

3rd September

12th November