

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th July 2021

Present:	Dean Cowley	Parish Council Chair
	Clare Bamforth	Vice Chair
	David Butler	Councillor
	Cindy Creasy	Councillor
	Neil Worthington	Clerk
	Jerry Kunkler	Wiltshire Councillor

Apologies received from Steve Rawlings and Nick Jones

1. 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.

2. Agreement of Minutes

The Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on the 17th May 2021 were agreed as a true record and signed by Dean Cowley.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Steve Rawlings had supplied the plywood for the repairs to the notice board. Neil Worthington reported that the deterioration of the boards had increased further and additional materials would be needed to carry out a long-term repair. £100 had been included in the budget for this work and additional expenditure was agreed up to this amount. More permanent boards were still required for the village address boards.

Blanchard Farms had replied to the request for further information on the excavation works which had been carried out at their barn north of the village. They had explained that it was in preparation for the construction of another barn, also to be used for the storage of straw. Wiltshire planners had confirmed that as the barns were not being used for livestock no planning permission was required and the work could be carried out under Permitted Development Rights. They had also confirmed that if the barns were used for livestock then planning permission would be required, as they were within 400m of a dwelling.

4. Report from Wiltshire Councillor

Jerry Kunkler had chased up the Highways Engineer about the 2 outstanding issues ie the gully emptying and the proposed work to the existing drain inlets. The engineer had replied blaming recent bad weather had caused the gully teams to be diverted.

Following the May election the process of setting up various bodies was continuing including the Environmental Select Committee and Scrutiny Committee which Jerry was serving on. Cindy Creasy raised the question of when the proposal to charge Parish Councils for election costs would be examined and whether there would be a consultation. JK confirmed that this would be looked at by the Scrutiny Committee.

CATG meetings had recommenced and recent funding included a grant towards safe pedestrian access around the enlarged service station at Burbage. New funding was now also available through the Area Boards. David Butler raised the issue of appointments at Marlborough KAMP but this was outside the council remit.

5. Police matters

Neil Worthington had checked the police website and there were no records of any crimes in Wootton Rivers in April and May, the latest dates available.

6. Planning

Application PL/2021/05132 – New garage and studio at Goblins Hold

A site visit had taken place and the proposals were considered appropriate in scale and appearance and were shielded from neighbouring properties. It was noted that a tree was required to be felled which was not on the application but that the property was well stocked with trees and was acceptable.

A motion to Support the application was therefore proposed by Cindy Creasy, seconded by Dean Cowley and supported unanimously.

Application PL/2021/06400 – Work to trees to lane behind Bay Tree Cottage

A site visit had taken place.. No trees were being felled and the pruning work was required to maintain vehicle access. A motion of No Objection was proposed by Dean Cowley, seconded by Cindy Creasy and supported unanimously.

It was noted that some of the trees were on land not belonging to the applicant and it was recommended that the tree owners should be informed before any work takes place.

8. Finance

The current financial position was reported as follows:-

Balance at Bank

Deposit Account	4,573.01
Current Account	<u>5,021.56</u>
Total funds in bank	<u>£9,594.57</u>

The amount set aside for maintenance work and replacement equipment for the Recreation Ground within this figure is £1040

Income/Payments

The VAT claim for 2020/21 had been submitted amounting to £279.15 and this had been refunded.

The following payment(s) had been made since the last PC meeting and were duly approved.

- St John's College, Cambridge – Recreation Ground rent £175.00

(It was noted that the rental amount had remained at this level since 2011 although the agreement allowed for a review every 5 years).

The following payments were authorised to be paid via BACS

- Idverde Ltd – Recreation Ground grass cutting Apr – June 21 £276.38

(It was noted that the amount being invoiced was the same as last year and no notice of any increase had been received).

- Wessex Print Ltd – Contact printing and Fun Run/Fete flyer £31.50

(It was confirmed that PC would pay for the Fun Run flyer as it had been agreed that the Recreation Ground would receive 50% of the proceeds from the event).

Budget

Neil Worthington reported that current expenditure was generally within budget except for the allowance for the cost of the Village Hall rental for PC meetings had increased due to the additional cleaning costs - however these additional costs could be met out of the contingency.

9. Recreation Ground

Tony McGarry reported that he had approached a couple of residents about taking over the role of co-ordinator and that they were giving consideration to taking over the role.

Clare Bamforth advised that the new Village Hall committee were considering whether they might be able to take on the Recreation Ground under their wing as the VH and the Rec are two of the key local assets and require a similar structure of a co-ordinating group of people to oversee the facilities but to be able to call on a wider group of villagers when necessary. This proposal was generally favourably received and Clare undertook to take it back to the next VH committee meeting.

Neil Worthington confirmed he was inspecting the equipment regularly as required by our insurers and had identified a few timbers which needed to be replaced. Active Toy Co Ltd the original supplier was no longer trading and an alternative supplier needed to be found.

A large branch had fallen onto the climbing wall/net – one quote had been obtained to remove it (£240 + VAT). David Butler agreed to have a look and thought it should be possible for him to carry out the work.

10. Clerk

Following Neil Worthington's notice that he wanted to stand down from the position of Clerk after 15 years in post it was agreed to start the process of appointing a new clerk. It was agreed that ideally the new clerk should live in the parish although this was not a legal requirement.

It was agreed that Cindy and Neil would work together to update the clerk's job description and would then advertise the position via the notice boards / email etc with the intention of a new clerk being in post in November. NW confirmed he was starting to prepare the process for a smooth handover.

11. Cutting Road Verges

Clarification of Wiltshire Councils policy had been requested following concerns that the new policy of only cutting verges once a year was creating dangerous conditions for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

Wiltshire had confirmed their policy was to cut the verges only once a year in September to allow plants to set seed to encourage bio-diversity except for road

junctions etc where more frequent cutting was necessary to maintain visibility for safety. Generally, the PC supported the principle of this policy but considered that it should not overrule the safety considerations. Wiltshire Council had requested that any areas that required cutting for safety reasons should be notified to them and a plan was marked up and was to be sent to them.

It was agreed that the PC view was that it would be preferable for a margin along all narrow country roads to be cut in May/June and allow the wider verge behind to grow. This would improve visibility and allow vehicles to pass without being forced to drive into the long vegetation which hides the edges of the roads (often potholed) especially after heavy rain has caused them to droop.

Action: Clerk

It was agreed to raise the issue at the next PCAP meeting.

Action: Cindy Creasy

12. Special Interest Groups

Dean Cowley suggested that a number of special interest groups could be started to encourage more people to get involved with the village community. He suggested that groups could be encouraged to investigate and record village history and the local wildlife and flora and there may be proposals for other interests.

Although any groups would be independent, they could be supported and small scale funding may be available.

Date of the next meeting - 6th September 2021 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall