

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 27th March 2017

Present: David Wardlaw Parish Council Chairman
David Butler Councillor
Michael Farr Councillor
Glenn Leech Councillor
Steve Rawlings Councillor
Neil Worthington Clerk

Tony McGarry NDP Leader
PCSO Jonathon Mills Wiltshire Police

Apologies:

Clare Bamforth Parish Council Vice-Chair
Paul Neale Councillor
Jerry Kunkler Wiltshire Councillor

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th January 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising :-

- SSE had carried out the trimming of the branches close to their cables above the car park bays and the landowner's agent was now to be contacted to carry out the more major tree work required. *Action: David Wardlaw*
- Jerry Kunkler would raise the request for a road sweeper and concerns about the Parish Steward (shared by Pewsey and Milton Lilbourne) with Richard Dobson the Highways contact for Pewsey Area. The next Steward's visit was due on 12th April – any requests for works to be carried out to be forwarded to Neil Worthington.
- David Wardlaw had advised the Royal Oak about an acceptable sign at the triangle and was awaiting a response.

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. None were declared.

3. Report from Wiltshire Councillor

None available as Jerry Kunkler was on holiday.

4. Report from Community Police Officer.

PCSO Jonathon Mills reported there had been no crimes in Wootton Rivers in the last period. The main crimes in the surrounding area were thefts of tools from outbuildings and hare coursing.

5. Council Elections

County and Parish elections would be held on 4th May and it had been confirmed that there would be no cost to the Parish Council.

Existing Councillors cease office on 8th May. New Councillors take over on the same day for a 4 year period.

Nominations for the Parish Council (including existing Councillors wanting to continue) need to be hand delivered to one of four Council offices by 4pm on 4th April.

If there are more candidates than seats the poll will take place. If there are fewer candidates than seats those nominated are declared elected unopposed and as long as there are enough candidates to form a quorum (3 seats) the remaining places can then be filled by co-opting additional members.

The first meeting of the new Parish Council will take place on 22nd May 2017.

David Wardlaw stated he and a number of other Councillors would be standing down and he hoped there would be sufficient candidates to require an election, as one had not been held in Wootton Rivers for a number of years.

6. Planning Matters.

Church Farm 16/11051/FUL

An extension of the consultation period had been granted by the planners following the submission of revised plans by Fowler Architects. The revised scheme omitted one house at the rear of the site and altering the orientation of the large house so that its footprint was within the Conservation Area.

The views of the Conservation Officer had now been published on the planning website and the Architect explained that the existing barns may be curtilage listed and therefore require Listed Building Consent as well as planning permission. The Conservation Officer's view of the scheme was essentially negative and considered that the development did not respect the historic farmyard setting.

Mike Fowler again stressed that the scheme needed the large house in order to be commercially viable.

David Wardlaw advised that ordinarily the Parish Council would not see the Conservation Officer's report before reaching its decision and that the Parish Council's view would be based on a variety of factors. These included the net benefit to the village and the risk that the site may becoming derelict. It should not just repeat what other consultees had stated. Wiltshire Planners would then take the views of all consultees into account before reaching their decision.

Tony McGarry noted the concerns of the NDP steering group regarding the issues of allowing a 2nd line of properties to be built and allowing gardens to extend into the open countryside.

After hearing the Parish Councillor's views of the revised plans a proposal was put forward to support the application. This was proposed by Michael Farr and seconded by Steve Rawlings and was passed unanimously. David Wardlaw would draft out the response to include the PC's comments on various of the details for agreement of the Parish Councillors prior to submitting to Wiltshire Planners.

Young House 17/01543//FUL

There were no objections to the proposed new outbuilding

Manor Farm 17/02765/TCA

There no objections to fell 2no Leylandii trees

Chapel Cottage 17/02993/TCA

There were no objections to crown reduce 2no apple trees

Paddock, Forest road 17/02561/VAR

There were no objections to the removal of condition 3 on the previous application.

7. Neighbourhood Development Plan

Tony McGarry reported that Wiltshire's public consultation period ended on 5th March and the Plan would now go to an Examiner appointed by Wiltshire Council in agreement with the Parish Council. Various questions were raised about the process. Post meeting note: If the Examiner considers the plan conforms with higher level plans and has addressed any representations which were made a Community Referendum will be held, organised by Wiltshire Council. The examiner may also recommend changes to the plan before the referendum is held. Only if he found that the NDP is not aligned with higher level plans, legal requirements or national policy would a referendum not be held. Where more than 50% of those who vote in the referendum are in favour Wiltshire Council would then have a duty to make the plan.

8. Letter of Support for the Church Faculty in Relation to Memorial Tablets

The PCC had written to the Parish Council asking for a letter of support to their request for a faculty (a permissive right) regarding memorial tablets in the Churchyard. The PCC are requesting that the tablets are allowed to be same size as present to enable two names to be on one tablet and to allow for a flower vase insert. The Parish Council unanimously agreed that a letter of support should be sent. *Action: Clerk*

9. Action on Reduction of Traffic Speed in the Village

Following on from the discussion at the last meeting about the desirability of a 20mph speed limit in the village there was further discussion. Although some councillors felt that there was not an issue with speeding some felt that the village would benefit from reducing the speed limit to 20mph. To achieve this would require a commitment from a champion to drive the process through and a financial contribution. It was noted that if the Church Farm application is passed by Wiltshire there would be a substantial payment to the PC through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

10. Finances

The Parish Council financial year ends on 30th March 2017 and the Annual Audit forms had been received from Grant Thornton. They should be returned by 15th May but an extension had been requested and granted to 29th May so that the Return can be approved by the Parish Council at the first meeting of the new Parish Council on the 22nd May.

Rob Mitchenall had agreed to carry out the Internal Audit again and this was welcomed and approved by the Parish Council.

The following cheque which had been issued since the last meeting was authorised:-

- Wessex Print Centre – NDP printing - £318.15

The following cheques were authorised and signed :-

- Wootton Rivers Village Hall – NDP expenses - £376.00
- AJ McGarry – NDP expenses - £126.84
- Groundwork UK – return of unspent NDP Grant - £64.37
- N Worthington – purchase of rubbish sacks for Annual Clean up and stationery - £33.46
- Code Water Solutions – Website Hosting 2017/18 - £40.00

The following payments had been received: -

- Ford Fuel Oils – BEAM refund - £561.27
- HMRC – VAT refund - £772.43

11. Social Media / Email Communications

The use of Social Media and/or emails was discussed as a means of engaging with the village as the Wootton Rivers website was only set up to comply with the Transparency Code and be a depository of documents. Some of the issues discussed were :-

- Concerns were expressed about how email communications would be managed to avoid a dialogue about issues – it should be a one way information service.
- There are 2 Wootton Rivers Facebook pages in existence although seemingly little used.
- Whatever system was introduced it should avoid setting up a two-tier system of communications and not exclude those who do not wish to use electronic communications. The existing method of communications via notice boards and Contact would still need to be maintained and may need to be expanded to cater for those who people who also want more information but not electronically.
- Parishioners should have to specifically ask to be added to a new list and the PC could not just take over the current Nick Mitchell-Briggs list. Any email system would have to use a Blind cc list. Invitations to join the list could be added to the 'welcome to the village letter'.
- The Council has obligations under the Data Protection Act and would have to be registered with the Information Commissioner.
- A policy governing email/social media would have to be set up to ensure that its use is consistent and impartial.

No decisions were made and the matter would be left to the new Parish Council to carry forward the implementation of any scheme.

12. Matters raised by the Public/ AOB

Pam Connolly had raised the state of the road up to Cuckoos Knob which she had logged on Wiltshire Council's road maintenance app a number of times. It was suggested that David Butler might be able to look at cleaning some of the roadside mud and debris and he agreed to see what could be done to improve the situation.

Tony McGarry advised that the Recreation Ground was very soft and required rolling. Advice was to be sought about the best method of dealing with this. He was also planning a working party in the Spring to cut back undergrowth, hedges etc.

13. Correspondence Received

None relevant to Wootton Rivers.

14. Finally

As this was the last meeting of the current Parish Council and David Wardlaw had decided not to stand for re-election he was thanked for his long service and for stepping into the role of Chairman for the last two years which were probably the busiest for the Parish for some considerable time. The other Councillors who were also standing down were also thanked for their hard work and contribution to the village.

15. Date of the next meeting which will be the Annual Parish Meeting and the First Meeting of the New Parish Council - 22th May 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Parish Council Documents are available on the Parish Council Website - woottonriverspc.co.uk