

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th June 2020

(Remote Meeting held on-line using Zoom platform)

Present:	Cindy Creasy	Parish Council Chair
	Clare Bamforth	Councillor
	Dean Cowley	Councillor
	Nick Jones	Councillor
	Steve Rawlings	Councillor
	Anne Swift	Councillor
	Neil Worthington	Clerk

Cindy Creasy welcomed councillors and members of the public to this meeting of the Parish Council as authorised by the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 issued during the current Coronavirus pandemic.

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. None were declared.

2. Agreement of minutes

The Draft Minutes of the meeting dated 13 Jan 2020 were agreed as a true record subject to the following amendments:

1. Item 6 Budget & Precept. The draft minute reads 'a draft budget for 2019/20 had been issued'. This should read 2020/21.
2. The final paragraph of item 6 refers to the ring-fenced Recreation Ground funds and some anticipated minor expenditure. A further statement should be added to confirm, as agreed earlier in the minutes, that tree surgery work had been authorised which would virtually deplete the ring-fenced funds.

The Draft Minutes of the meeting dated 14th April 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Road maintenance – it was confirmed that the discretionary gulley service had cleared the blocked gullies over the winter. However, following further flooding of the road outside the Church in April, the gulley clearance team had to attend to clean out

all the surface water gullies and drains over a 4 day period. The PC have requested that the drains need to be regularly maintained to prevent future flooding but Wiltshire Highways refuse to commit to this as this not a high speed road and no properties are affected. The advice we have been given is to wait until flooding occurs and then request the discretionary drainage team to attend. This was considered to be unsatisfactory but there seems little alternative.

4. Village Hall Car Park

Linda Hopkins, Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee, raised the issue of the village hall car park and the impact that the construction and occupation of the Church Farm development may have on it. The issues were

1. to prevent heavy lorries damaging the car park surfacing
2. to prevent contractor's vehicles using it and preventing its use by hirers
3. to prevent occupiers of the houses using the car park for long term parking
4. to prevent damage to the grass bank

These issues were discussed and the following actions were suggested;

1. The PC should write to the developers/owners advising them that the surface of the car park is not suitable for heavy vehicles to turn or park on and that Church Farm is large enough for all contractor's vehicles to park on site.
2. A sign should be erected near the entrance of the car park banning construction traffic from using it
3. It was agreed that it would be best to prevent long term parking via information in the welcome pack and to reserve the option of installing posts and a non-locking chain if that did not work. It was noted that residents can use the car park at present on a casual basis as a village amenity and also for overflow pub parking and this shouldn't be discouraged. Steve Rawlings undertook to find out approximate costs for this posts and chain.
4. The use of stakes and warning tape should be used to protect the bank and verge from both construction traffic and private vehicles passing the site.

5. Planning

The following applications had been received since the last meeting and had been determined by the clerk acting as the delegated officer

1. 20/02976/FUL East Wick Farm - wildlife pond - Support
2. 20/02848/FUL Church Farm - attenuation pond - No Objection subject to technical matters being approved by specialists

Application 20/03804/FUL – Wootton House Garage/Cartshed

Previous applications for this new building had previously been approved by the Parish Council and Wiltshire Planners. This application was for an altered design. The roof materials were now proposed to be clay tiles which were preferred by the Conservation Officer. This necessitated an increase in ridge height. The store dimensions had been altered which decreased the apparent scale of the building. The extent of the demolition of the existing building and making good of the boundary wall was now included in the application. There were no adverse

comments from Councillors and a motion to Support the application was proposed by Steve Rawlings, seconded by Anne Swift and carried unanimously.

Charlie Woodhead advised the meeting that the large leylandii tree next to the road was being felled this week, approval having been included as part of the existing planning permission for Wootton House. A native tree would be planted to replace it.

6. Finances

6.1 The current financial position was reported as follows:

Bank account:	Current Account	£4,094.51	
	Deposit Account	£4,572.08	
	Total	£8,666.59	
Income received since last meeting:	Precept		£3,188.06
	VAT refund for 2019/20		£427.44

6.2 The following payments which had been made by BACS since the previous meeting were authorised;

- £108.00 to Village Hall for hire of hall for meetings
- £105.84 for subscription to Wiltshire Association of Local Councils
- £28.78 for Zoom subscription (2 months paid by Clerk)
- £427.44 to Arthur J Gallagher for Parish Council insurance

It was agreed to continue paying the Zoom monthly fee to access the enhanced service.

It was agreed to enter into a new 3 year agreement with our insurers as the existing one expired this year. This was proposed by Dean Cowley, seconded by Clare Bamforth and carried unanimously,

6.3 The following payments were authorised to be paid by BACS

- Turner Land Care - £144.00 to clear tree blocking road
- Rob Mitchenall - £20.00 ex-gratia payment for carrying out the internal audit.

It was noted that the defibrillator battery and pads need replacement before the end of July so these will be purchased soon.

6.4 Budget review – it was reported that the current expenditure is £119 more than allowed for in the budget due to the unexpected tree removal and Zoom subscription payments but that there is a contingency sum of £100 in hand.

It was agreed that in future any fallen trees blocking roads should be reported to Wiltshire Council whose responsibility it is to keep the highways clear as WRPC have no budget for this work.

Audit

6.5 The Audit forms had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk/RFO confirmed that the PC met the conditions of the Certificate of Exemption (page 3) as the income and expenditure for the year 2019/20 were below £25,000 and none of the other circumstances applied. It was therefore proposed by Cindy Creasy that the form should be signed by the Chair and Clerk and submitted to the External Auditor. This motion was seconded by Dean Cowley and carried unanimously.

6.6 The Internal Audit form (page 4) had been completed and signed by Rob Mitchenall. He had raised no matters of concern but had noted 2 items in the draft minutes for the meeting held on 13th January 2020 which required amendment and recommended 2 items to consider adding to the Risk Register. The Chair thanked Rob for carrying this out the internal audit diligently as usual.

6.7 Section 1 the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 (page 5) was read out and a motion to approve and sign it was proposed by Steve Rawlings, seconded by Anne Swift and carried unanimously.

6.8 Section 2 the Accounting Statement 2019/20 (page 6) had been circulated in advance and a motion to approve and sign it was proposed by Anne Swift, seconded by Dean Cowley and carried unanimously.

6.9 The Certificate of Exemption form would be submitted to the external auditor and Sections 1 and 2 and the Internal Audit published on the PC website as required by the auditors. Also required to be published were various other documents including the Bank Reconciliation and the Explanation of Variances.

6.10 Rob Mitchenall had suggested two items which could be considered and added to the Risk Assessment:

- as the BEAM donation is a substantial part of the Parish Council's income there should be an assessment of what steps could be taken if it was reduced/withdrawn.
- Due to the present Covid-19 situation there should be a section of the Risk Assessment covering the situation if the Parish Council cannot meet, or is inquorate, and what procedures would need to be established to maintain its functions, e.g. approval of expenditure

These items were discussed and it was agreed to update the Risk Register.

Action: Clerk

7. Other Urgent matters

Mike James raised the issue of security for the gates to the Recreation Ground to prevent unauthorised access. It was agreed, after discussion, that installing a chain and combination lock would be the best option for security but also to allow access for maintenance. Similar measures would probably be required to the hinge side to prevent the gate being lifted off. Tony McGarry undertook to research prices etc.

Tony McGarry reported that the play equipment was still closed off although people were now using the Recreation ground for picnics, team games etc. It was agreed that it was not the Parish Council's job to police whether users were complying with current guidelines on social distancing etc.

It was agreed that a decision whether to hold the August fun run would be made at the end of July.

It was agreed that Cindy Creasy would make contact with the Church Farm owner in July for an update on the person with permission to camp there.

Cindy Creasy agreed to write to Charlie and Emma Woodhead to formally thank them for planting the new tree at the triangle and Dean Cowley agreed to ensure that the watering was maintained. *Action: Cindy Creasy/Dean Cowley*

8. Dates of the next meeting – No further meeting was planned and would only be held when necessary to discharge the Council's statutory duties or where needed to address other urgent or important items which had arisen.