

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th September 2023

Present:

Dean Cowley	Parish Council Chair
Clare Bamforth	Vice Chair
David Butler	Councillor
Nick Jones	Councillor
Shelley Whitehead	Councillor
Steve Rawlings	Councillor
Julian Beames	Clerk

1. Apologies for absence from:

Cindy Creasy Councillor

2. Agreement of Minutes

The Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on the 10th of July 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by Clare Bamforth – Vice Chair.

3. 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 recorded.

4. Report from Wiltshire Councillor

Jerry Kunkler was unable to attend the meeting but had passed on the message that the Area Board meeting would take place in Bedwyn on Monday 19th September where the local Police Inspector would be present, following the recent serious incident in Pewsey.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Local Plan Update – Following the publication of the Draft Local Plan by Wiltshire Council this is now in consultation. The Chair reported that after reviewing the plan there was not much change which affected our village. As we are designated as a small village there is no expectation of housing development with just in-fill seen as meeting village needs. There has been a change to the wording around in-fill which previously indicated this could be for 1 or 2 houses and this has now changed to indicate this could be up to 10 houses on larger in-fill sites.

The Chair suggested (and it was agreed) that himself, the Vice Chair and Councillor Creasy would formulate the Councils response to the Consultation in co-ordination with the Wiltshire Area Localism and Planning Alliance (WALPA).

The Chair also mentioned now that the Draft Local Plan had been published, it did again raise the question of whether the Village Neighbourhood Plan needed to be updated. The consensus was that this was best left until after the Local Plan was finally agreed as updating the NP would bring with it an expectation of determining the village's housing need and the identification of potential development sites to meet the need.

Parish Steward Scheme – The Parish Steward visited recently and carried out several tasks that had been requested including tidying up the car park bays. There

is now better communication, and the scheme seems to be working better. The Clerk asked Councillors if there were any tasks that they could suggest adding to the work list. The clearing of the 30mph signs was mentioned (this will be requested) although this may be difficult as they are positioned in a dangerous area with limited visibility for working in the road. The overhanging branches over the parking bays were also mentioned and the Chair stated that he would contact Ms Davies to request they be trimmed or seek permission for the Steward to cut the vegetation back.

Action: The Chair to Contact Ms Davies

Road Resurfacing – The surface dressing of the village road has been carried out successfully and the subsequent sealing of the chippings is planned for this week. This will complete all the works for now.

Drainage – Recent minor flooding near the car park bays has highlighted that yet again the main drain is becoming blocked. The Clerk contacted the local drainage engineer and they have started an investigation which should hopefully lead to a solution soon.

6. Planning

Application Decisions - Several application decisions have been determined (Forge Cottage and 12 Wootton Rivers, both approved), but some remain outstanding including Manor Farm and the application to build an additional cattle building on Forest Road. With regards to the cattle building application, the Highways Team at Wiltshire Council have stated in their response that they are not inclined to approve the application currently, due to concerns over damage to the highway and safety concerns due to material being deposited on the road. (Subsequent to the meeting it is now known that the applicants have submitted additional proposals to the Council to try to address these concerns).

New Applications

PL2023/07331 – Tregarthen, Wootton Rivers, Copper Beech Tree in front garden – Fell. - The Chair asked councillors for their views on this application and there was a unanimous feeling amongst Councillors that they did not want to see the tree felled. It was acknowledged that the tree is causing issues since the telephone wires are now running through the branches and that despite repeated previous reductions in size the tree continues to grow into the wires. Despite this, The Council will in their response to the consultation request that the applicants find an alternative to felling the tree by either moving the wires or reducing the tree more substantially rather than felling it.

Action: Clerk to respond on behalf of the Council

7. Finance Report

Bank balances: are currently as follows:

Treasurers Account £1,900.15

Business Account – £8,310.58

Following the application to HMRC the VAT refund for financial year 2022/23 has now been received and £550.40 has been credited to the account.

Payments

The following payment needed to be approved.

1. Information Commissioners Office – Direct Debit £35.00

The following payments needed to be authorised.

1. Church Donation £100.00
2. Internal Audit Fee £33.00

These were unanimously agreed.

Action: The Clerk to initiate the payments

8. Report on Police matters

There have been no further incidents to report in the village since the recent break-ins at Brimslade.

9. Correspondence received – None.

10. Matters Raised by the Public – None

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is planned to take place on Monday 13th November 2023 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall

Signed as a true record.....Date

Dean Cowley – Chair