

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE WHITMINSTER VILLAGE HALL, WHITMINSTER AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 4th SEPTEMBER, 2013.

00/09

Present

Cllrs Jones (Chairman), Mrs Gilmore (Vice-Chair), Mrs Coleman, Hay, Hughes and Paynter. The Clerk and 4 members of the public were also present. The Neighbourhood Warden and County Councillor Tony Blackburn were also present for part of the meeting and gave reports.

01/09

Apologies

An apology was given and accepted from Cllr Paynter who left the meeting at 8:30pm due to work commitments.

02/09

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mrs Gilmore declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 4 (iii) relating to the Village Hall & Playing Field but it was noted that whilst she is a member of the relevant Management Committee she in fact sits as a representative of the Parish Council to represent its interest and report accordingly. Cllr Jones declared an interest as the Chairman of the Whitminster Village Hall and Playing Field Management Committee.

03/09

Minutes

The Minutes of the August meeting of the Parish Council were signed as a true record subject to one amendment being the inclusion of an apology from Cllr Mrs Coleman who had given her apology for absence at the previous meeting. Minute 01/08 as annotated accordingly.

At this point in the meeting County Councillor Blackburn was invited to give his report. He informed Council that the County Council was operating as a minority administration under Conservative control and two meetings had taken place that had gone well. The budget had been agreed and the £20,000 per Councillor road expenditure allocation had been agreed. With the recovery of an extra £1m previously lost to the Icelandic banks this sum had been allocated to potholes and improving the county's roads bringing this total extra funding to £6.9m. He reported on the meeting that had taken place in July to consider the A38 (as previously outlined by Cllr Jones) and said he would follow up issues regarding Grove Lane and the A38 junction. Finally he gave details of a scheme aimed at improving rural access to learning and took some questions from the Councillors and public present.

04/09

Matters Arising

First World War Centenary

The availability of Heritage Lottery Fund grants to help communities mark the centenary of the First World War had been highlighted by Neil Carmichael MP. Whilst it had been re-affirmed that the Village War Memorial (situated on District Council land) remains the responsibility of the District Council it was agreed that there was no reason why Council could not assist in its upkeep by seeking grant aid. Therefore it was agreed that the Clerk would obtain grant application forms with a view to applying for funding to re-lay the paving slabs around the memorial to resolve the on-going weed problem. Cllr Jones agreed to obtain a quotation for the work from the contractors

soon to be working on the skate ramp and any other suitable firm. Meanwhile the Clerk was to write to the village school to see if the school would like to be involved in some form of commemoration or alternative project.

Neighbourhood Wardens – Community Work

Neighbourhood Warden Phil Drew gave a brief overview of his work and confirmed the proposed refurbishment of the A38 bus shelters had been accepted as a community project for the wardens to progress in Whitminster. He was keen to encourage wider involvement by making it a local action day and involving the press. Cllr Jones offered the facility of the village hall for WC facilities and preparing refreshments and a preparatory site inspection was to be undertaken by the wardens. The Warden went on to agree to look into re-applying and perhaps adding more anti dog fouling stencils throughout the Parish and to investigate issues relating to various Poplar trees in The Close.

Village Hall & Playing Field

There was no further report on issues relating to health and safety and the cricket ball incidents suffered by Mr & Mrs Clarke but it was confirmed that this was a matter for the Management Committee and not the Parish Council to pursue.

Prior to the start of the formal Parish Council meeting a number of members of the Parish Council and Management Committee met to discuss the on-going issues relating to the proposed granting of a long leasehold interest to formalise the Management Committee's occupation of the village facilities. Mrs Jones, Honorary Secretary of the Management Committee, and the Clerk gave an overview of how the situation had developed arising from the Management Committee being asked clarify their interest in the land for grant application purposes etc. Progress had been made in agreeing Heads of Terms for a long lease but this had become complicated by the involvement of Fields In Trust that appeared to block such a transaction. Discussion ensued in relation to the status of the Parish Council (believed to be custodian trustees but not actually documented as such) and the way in which ownership was recorded at Land Registry. In conclusion Mrs Jones advised that the issues being encountered were being identified elsewhere as time passed with the application of the Fields In Trust scheme and Barbara Pond of GRCC had recommended a solicitor developing specialist knowledge in this matter. It was agreed the Clerk would make enquiries and put other avenues on hold.

05/09

Police & Community Safety Matters

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Warden's reports had been circulated around Council by email. No report or crime figures had been received from the police. It was noted that the next Panel Meeting would take place at the Village Hall on 10th October and PCSO Lifton had emailed forms to Cllr Jones to enable him to put the issue of car parking in School Lane, particularly close to the roundabout, on the agenda. Cllr Jones asked if a Parish Councillor would be able to attend the meeting. Cllr Mrs Coleman advised that a Cluster Group meeting would also be taking place and she too would place car parking on the agenda.

06/09

Planning

Decisions to Note

S.13/1253/HHOLD 16 Paynes Meadon, Whitminster, Glos.

Single storey front and rear extensions.

Permission granted.

S.13/1350/FUL Highfield Garden Centre, Whitminster, Glos.

Installation of external lighting.

Permission granted.

Applications to Consider

S.13/1256/HHOLD

1 Police Houses, School Lane, Whitminster, Glos.

Outline application for a new detached dwelling.

Council noted that it had been invited to attend the forthcoming meeting of the Development Control Committee and it was agreed that Cllr Mrs Gilmore would attend and reaffirm Council's previous observations.

S.13/1526/HHOLD

2 Moss Views, Hyde Lane, Whitminster, Glos.

Erection of garden shed.

Council had no observations to make on this application.

S.13/1807/TPO

28 Uptons Garden, Whitminster, Glos.

Fell yew tree in rear garden.

Council objected to this application as it would cause a loss of the character or the original parkland which the TPOs were applied to protect. Council considered it would reconsider its view if the tree were to be replaced with a similar sized, suitable mature tree.

Village Design Statement

It was reported that the project was taking longer than anticipated and timescales were slipping but the draft so far would shortly be looked at by GRCC.

Draft Pre-application Involvement Protocol

Council considered the draft document but had no comments to make at this stage.

Other Planning Matters

Cllr Jones reported on his further dealings with the housing site adjacent to the playing field, Schoolfield Close and it was noted that all houses were occupied. He gave details on the site meeting he had initiated including his discussions with the oil pipeline management company. It was hoped that through the inclusion of inspection chambers, piping the length of ditch in proximity to the pipeline might still be possible.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the Local Plan was open to public consultation for 6 weeks and was available to view on the District Council website.

After a long list of planning related matters and applications considered at the last meeting the Clerk had circulated copy correspondence issued as a result. Cllr Jones picked up on the application for various works at the Whitminster Inn and had suggested that the application should be referred to the Development Control Committee. This was considered to be a good idea and he agreed to take the matter forward.

An email was received from the Hardwicke Parish Council Chairman encouraging parish councils to send in comments to the Planning Inspectorate concerning the proposed energy from waste facility at Javelin Park. Council had already submitted comments and resolved not to provide finance to the Glosvain Group but did put Cllr Paynter's name forward as a further contact.

07/09

Highways & Byways

The Chairman advised that he was dealing with updating the snow plough operator details and would liaise with Glos Highways. The Clerk reported that he had written to Mr Turberville of the housing association, once again, regarding the conifers to the rear of Henry Withers' Place and had made a complaint about the lack of action and any response. He had now received a reply from Fiona Miller apologising and stating that the work would be carried out by 20th September.

A response was received from Mrs Teesdale in reply to a request for a dog flap to be installed at on stile and raising an issue about a kissing gate being overgrown at another. Mrs Teesdale was in agreement in principle and the matter would be followed up at a subsequent meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that he had written to Cllr Blackburn asking if some of his £20,000 highway allocation could be spent in part on improvements to Hyde Lane.

Information was received from the Mid Cotswold Tracks and Trails Group.

Cllr Jones updated the meeting on the dialogue he had been having with representatives of Persimmon Homes regarding the play areas in Little Holbury and Kidnams Walk. It was noted that the pedestrian bridge leading into Little Holbury had in fact been adopted by Glos County Council and whilst work would be scheduled to it a low priority would be assigned. A commuted sum of £15,000 had been proposed for the Parish Council to take over responsibility of these areas and this was declined whilst Cllr Jones confirmed he would continue chasing Persimmon to carry out necessary maintenance works.

08/09

Accounts

Accounts for Payment

D Lord	£59.58	Clerk's expenses
T W Hawkins and Sons	£554.88	Grass cutting

General Overview

The bank balance had been confirmed at £11,498.06 prior to the presentation of the above cheques. A VAT reclaim had been submitted.

Skate Ramp

The work had been ordered for the repair of the skate ramp by Greenfields at a cost of £1,160.00 plus VAT and a start date was awaited.

LCTS – Consultation on remaining funds

It was agreed that Council would prefer the spare funding to be allocated to Option 4 being the support of a Jobs and Growth Agenda.

Requests for grant aid from CAB and the Cotswold Care Hospice would be deferred until the appropriate meeting.

An invoice had been received from SDC in the sum of £800.00 for the provision of the Warden Service. After sine discussion it was agreed that Council would be minded to continue providing the cost was no more than £300.00 pa as had been the previous maximum. Cllr Jones and the Clerk agreed to liaise over previous costs before reverting to SDC.

A letter of introduction was received from a grass cutting contractor that would be considered when seeking future tenders.

09/09

Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were received:

Website statistics for the month of August.

ThE News from SDC – circulated by email.

Details of the Post Office Community Enterprise Fund.

Gloucestershire Charter meeting agenda.

Information on Glos County Council consultations.

Information on the availability of supported accommodation for older people.

10/09

Chairman's Items & District Councillor's Report

Cllr Jones had nothing to report on that had not been covered elsewhere during the meeting and there had been no meetings of the District Council since the last Parish Council meeting.

11/09

Other Business

The Clerk advised that he had responded to an enquiry from Cllr Blackburn confirming that he had written to the Environment Agency arguing for a strategy to maintain the existing River Severn

defences as opposed to a programme of managed retreat. He also reported on correspondence with Sarah Frederick concerning dog fouling and loose dogs on the playing field.

12/09

Future Agenda Items

None.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.14pm.

CHAIRMAN – Wednesday 2nd October, 2013.