

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE WHITMINSTER VILLAGE HALL, WHITMINSTER AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 6th NOVEMBER, 2013.

00/11

Present

Cllrs Jones (Chairman), Mrs Gilmore (Vice-Chair), Mrs Coleman, Douglas, Hughes and Paynter. The Clerk was also present and there were 4 members of the public in attendance.

01/11

Apologies

An apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Hay and County Councillor Blackburn.

02/11

Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Jones and Douglas declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 4 (ii) concerning the Village Hall & Playing Field. Cllr Jones also declared a personal but non-pecuniary interest in regard to a planning application, at Orchard View, School Lane, to be considered under Item 6. (a) because the applicant, a former Councillor, remained a personal friend.

03/11

Minutes

The Minutes of the October meeting of the Parish Council were signed as a true record subject to three amendments, 2 within 10/10 and one within 05/10.

04/11

Matters Arising

First World War Centenary

The clerk reported that he had obtained information, only detailed on-line, regarding the availability of Heritage Lottery Fund grants to help communities mark the centenary of the First World War, as had been highlighted by Neil Carmichael MP at a previous meeting. Meanwhile it had been confirmed that the Village War Memorial (situated on District Council land) which remains the responsibility of the District Council could be improved and refurbished by the Parish Council. However, the requirements of the grant scheme make it clear that any project must provide a 'learning opportunity'. Accordingly, Cllr Jones agreed to make contact with the village school to see if there could be the possibility of involving the children of the school. In addition, further information was received from the War Memorials Trust and quote for work to the path and paving around the memorial had been obtained by Cllr Jones from Greenfields in the sum of £2,625.00 plus VAT together with an extra £343.75 for kerb edging.

Village Hall & Playing Field

The Clerk reported that he had been in touch with Barbara Pond of GRCC to discuss details relating to the specialist solicitor she had recommended to Mrs Jones in connection with issues concerning the playing field and Fields in Trust along with the relationship between the Management Committee and Parish Council. Unfortunately it seemed that Ms Pond was not quite as confident about the relevance of the solicitor she had in mind as might originally have been the case as she also suggested Burges Salmon in Bristol and others. She did provide the contact number for Jonathan Dawson who the Clerk had tried to contact but it was noted that he was away until 11th November. On the subject of the health and safety issues regarding cricket balls leaving the Playing Field and entering neighbouring gardens the Clerk was advised that that file could be closed as far as the Parish Council is concerned.

Skate Ramp

The Chairman reported that the skate ramp had, very sadly, been attacked by arsonists and damage had been caused despite the efforts of neighbours in the new Schoolfield Close, staff at the school and a swift response from the fire brigade. Security fencing panels had been erected to secure the site for safety reasons and details of the initial planned repair and now further works needed would be discussed later in the meeting.

County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Tony Blackburn sent a written report informing Council that there had been little activity of note at Shire Hall as there had been no meeting since September. Changes were afoot in relation to the provision of Rights of Way services within the County. Whilst the main contact staff would most likely remain unchanged physical work to footpaths would be carried out by volunteers. The proposed speed limit variations on the A38 and an investigation in to what could be considered to improve the functioning of the A38/Grove Lane/School Lane junction were both progressing although there was no immediate news. A traffic survey would soon be taking place on the A38 but for unconnected reasons. However, Cllr Blackburn did confirm that a share of his highways local budget was committed to Whitminster and Hyde Lane in particular. He went on to advise that the Environment Agency's Severn Estuary revised strategy was late but should be published shortly and concluded by congratulating the Parish on the Village Design Statement which he thought was excellent having attended the recent consultation.

05/11

Police & Community Safety Matters

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Warden's reports had been circulated around Council by email. Crime figures had been supplied by PC Madia Shute to Cllr Jones. These included incidents of criminal damage and theft at Holbury Crescent. Enquiries were ongoing in relation to the damage to the skate ramp. She also advised that there had been various rural thefts of diesel and riding tack. A report was given on the recent Panel meeting where it was agreed that parking issues would be monitored and a warning was given about the theft of plant and machinery elsewhere in the district. Under this heading it was noted that the requested work to the conifers to the rear of Henry Withers Place had been undertaken by the relevant housing association and it was also agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to Paul Helbrow at SDC in respect of the work to the bush shelters carried out by the Neighbourhood Wardens. Cllr Mrs Coleman commented that further works could have been undertaken in the area and Cllr Jones informed the meeting that the Warden would return to cut the grass.

06/11

Planning

Decisions to Note

S.13/1526/HHOLD

2 Moss Views, Hyde Lane, Whitminster, Glos.

Erection of garden shed.

Permission granted.

S.13/1508/FUL

Whitminster Inn, Whitminster, Glos.

Construction of an ancillary outbuilding, provision of 16 log cabins for tourist accommodation and retention of marquee.

Permission granted subject to a substantial list of conditions.

Applications to Consider

S.13/2401/LBC &

The Old Forge, Bristol Road, Whitminster, Glos.

S.13/2400/ADV

Application for various illuminated and non-illuminated signs.

As the associated documents relating to this application had not been uploaded onto the SDC planning website Council could not comment and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the planning officer requesting further information and an extension of time.

S.13/2296/FUL

Orchard View, School Lane, Whitminster, Glos.

Demolition of single garage and erection of a single new dwelling, vehicular access and associated works.

Council objected to this application as it was felt it contravened highways safety by creating a new access in a position where concerns already exists and due to a belief that there would be insufficient car parking provision within the boundary of the proposed new property.

S.13/2255/HHOLD

1 Moss Views, Hyde Lane, Whitminster, Glos.

Single storey garage extension with greenhouse and shed.

Council objected to this application due to the proximity of the proposed garage structure to the boundary fence and neighbouring property. Council felt that the submitted plans were not clear and questioned the justification given for the garage, being to provide additional car parking as this could be done by additional hard-standing without any impact on the curtilage of the nearby listed building. Council reaffirmed the point that the original consent for the now existing dwellings, situated outside of the settlement boundary, was negotiated to result in the then proposed garages being removed to reduce the density and impact of development on the site and nothing had since changed.

Notice of an appeal by written representations had been received concerning the erection of a new dwelling at 1 Police Houses, School Lane, Whitminster. Council had no further comments that it wished to make. Notice of another appeal concerning the proposed Energy from Waste facility at Javelin Park was also received. The Inquiry was to run from 19th November, 2013. Council had no further comments to make and no representative intended to attend and speak.

Village Design Statement

It was reported that the project was progressing well following the recent consultation.

Other Planning Matters

Cllr Jones reported that the Parish Planning Protocol was being considered by the District Council. He also informed the Council that the District Council had lost the Judicial Review concerning a development site in Box Road and would need to identify a land supply for 6 years plus 20% in order to prevent further speculative applications succeeding in a similar way.

07/11

Highways & Byways

It was noted that a start had been made with marking out and filling in potholes for the work to Hyde Lane commissioned by County Councillor Tony Blackburn. It was understood a good report on the condition of the footpaths within the parish had been given following a walk arranged by the WI. However, it was noted that some footpaths crossing fields required attention and it was agreed that Cllr Paynter would approach the PROW Officer to request that a letter be sent to landowners in the area reminding them of their obligation to reinstate. The Clerk and Cllr Paynter were to liaise between meetings on the subject of work to stiles as discussed in correspondence with Mrs Teesdale. Cllr Jones advised that a winter supply of salt would soon be delivered to the Village Hall car park for general use and he would decant it into the existing bag on arrival. Cllr Mrs Coleman reported that no progress had been made concerning the proposed dropped kerb that had been requested for the A38 pavement, although it was understood that this had been arranged by Cllr

Blackburn and Mr Portlock at the highways depot had it in hand. It was suggested that Cllr Mrs Coleman may like to follow this up with Cllr Blackburn. Cllr Mrs Gilmore agreed to take responsibility for the litter picking at the playing field for the coming month. Cllr Paynter commented on an issue with a van parking close to the School Lane/Hyde Lane roundabout. Parking on the pavement had to some extent been addressed following the intervention of the police but it remained an issue. It was suggested that this should be reported to the police as and when necessary.

08/10

Accounts

Accounts for Payment

Grant Thornton LLP	£150.00	Audit fee.
D Lord	£331.30	Clerk's expenses including internal audit fee.
Greenfields Garden Services	£1,392.00	Skate ramp repairs.
Cllr J Jones	£166.19	Chairman's expenses – materials for bus shelter.

General Overview

The clerk advised that he had not yet received a bank statement for the previous period. It was noted that consideration would need to be given to setting the precept for 2014/2015 in due course but it was possible that this could wait until the New Year.

Audit

The Clerk advised that the annual audit had been satisfactorily completed and read out the notice of audit to be duly displayed.

Skate Ramp

A quotation had been obtained from Greenfields for the repair of the arson damage. In addition security fencing had been hired and the school's fire extinguishers re-filled. The cost of repair and fencing was being met by the Management Committee's insurers but it was agreed that the parish Council would meet the cost of any excess and also the cost of the fire extinguishers once it was clear as to who should be reimbursed and how.

Correspondence had been received from Sue Ryder, the Stroud Valleys Project and Friends of Whitminster School seeking donations and it was agreed that these would be considered at a future meeting and in the usual way.

09/11

Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were received:

Website statistics for the month of October.

The Trow magazine.

Information and leaflets from Neil Carmichael MP concerning the Stroud Festival of Engineering 2013.

CPRE Gloucestershire Views magazine.

Clerks & Councils Direct magazine.

Young Gloucestershire Annual Review.

Housing and support for older people in Stroud District – invitation to seminar and questionnaire.

Email from District Councillor Haydn Jones providing information on Ash Dieback and also highlighting simple new powers that have been created by central government to empower local

people, an example being the ability to protect community assets as applied in Arlingham to save the Red Lion pub. Details are available via the www.gov.uk website.

Notice of the next SDC Parish and Town Councils meeting – 7th January, 7pm at the Council Chamber.

Information on the public launch of NHS 111.

Update on matters followed up after the last meeting of Severn Voice from Lyne Ireland. It was noted that the next meeting will be on 24th March and hosted by Whitminster Parish Council.

10/11

Chairman's Items & District Councillor's Report

The Chairman gave an overview of a members briefing on community safety matters before running through various issues concerning the District Council. It was noted that Stroud had joined other authorities in paying a minimum wage of £7.45 per hour. Meanwhile a working group was to be convened to assess if the new committee structure was working and a vote had been taken to give £12,500 towards the cost of badger vaccinations despite opposition that any ad hoc grants to be given by the Council should be open to all. He also went on to say that a budget had been agreed for the coming year in order to complete the upgrading of WC and changing facilities at Stratford Park leisure centre.

11/11

Other Business

It was noted that the December meeting may need to be relocated into the Playing Field Pavilion subject to confirmation. It was also highlighted that the January 2014 meeting would not take place following the usual meeting pattern as that could be on New Year's Day. Consideration would be given as to whether a meeting is necessary and if so an appropriate date in due course.

12/11

Future Agenda Items

None.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:45pm.

CHAIRMAN – Wednesday 4th December, 2013.