

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE WHITMINSTER VILLAGE HALL, WHITMINSTER AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 5th FEBRUARY, 2014.

00/02

Present

Cllrs Jones (Chairman), Douglas, Hughes and Paynter. The Clerk was also present together with 2 members of the public in attendance. Ms Anne Jones of the County Council Highways Department was also present for part of the meeting.

01/02

Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs Gilmore, Mrs Coleman and Hay.

02/02

Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Jones and Douglas declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 4 (ii) concerning the Village Hall & Playing Field.

03/02

Minutes

The Minutes of the December 2013 meeting of the Parish Council were signed as a true record subject to 3 amendments, one within 04/12 and two within Minute 11/12.

04/02

Highways & Byways

Presentation by Ms Anne Jones on Scheme of Works Proposed for A38

Ms Jones, on behalf of Mr Tiffney, presented a set of drawings highlighting the proposed changes to the A38 carriageway to be undertaken in conjunction with resurfacing works planned during the year. This would include changes to speed limits on certain stretches, village gateways and various other safety measures. Various proposals were challenged such as why current speed limits could not be extended to beyond Attwoolls, for example, but Ms Jones explained that the proposals need to comply with certain highway guidelines and the County Council wishes to apply the measures in a way which is most likely to lead to them being obeyed. She did agree to see if changes could be included such as applying a 'no stopping' restriction to the A38 bus stops. In addition the 'no right turn' order applying to the A38/Grove Lane junction would be emphasised through new road markings, although there would be no physical changes. There would also be an opportunity for a village emblem to be incorporated within a village gateway and Cllr Jones agreed to forward a photograph of the village sign, located in the Village Hall car park, to see if this could be used. A consultation event to allow the wider public to view and comment on the proposals would be taking place on 25th February.

Other Highway Matters

On the subject of the possible installation of dog gates on certain footpaths within the village, it was agreed that this would be considered at the April meeting together with the response to a request that had been made of Mrs Teesdale. Cllr Douglas commented that there had been scrap cars parked on the road at the corner of The Close with School Lane. Cllr Jones advised that the police had been made aware but he would urge anyone to report such matters direct using the non-emergency 101 telephone number. Cllr Paynter raised an issue regarding an overgrown hedge situated close to the Hyde Lane/Little Holbury junction and it was also noted that a hedge located opposite Whitminster Court on Grove Lane was growing into the road. Cllr Jones agreed to look at both of these issues

when next touring the village with Mr Portlock of the County Council Highways Department. Cllr Jones went on to report on various issues concerning trees in The Close/Vaisey Field and the flooding that had been experienced in the District as a whole. A particular issue to the rear of Mr and Mrs Lyes property just off the A38 had been resolved when the nearby ditch was recently dug out. This has negated the need to put the matter on the agenda for the meeting as had been previously requested. The Clerk reported that he had recently donated the Parish supply of sandbags to Frampton-on-Severn when flooding was recently experienced and he agreed to request a re-supply from the District Council. Finally under this Agenda Item Cllr Jones reported that he had a further meeting at Schoolfield Close and the majority of the issues arising from the development had been resolved. The street lights were working and the ditch had been cleared although there did appear to be a blockage where it passes under the road which he was investigating.

05/02

Matters Arising

First World War Centenary

Cllr Jones advised that he had liaised with the Village school to ascertain if there could be any educational input on the part of the school to combine with a project to commemorate WW1 and possibly access grant aid to improve the area surrounding the war memorial. Advised that it was hoped something could be included within the syllabus of the new term after Easter. Cllr Jones agreed to pursue the matter and it would be kept on the Agenda for future meetings. The subject had not been discussed at the last Village Hall and Playing Field Management Committee meeting.

Village Hall & Playing Field

The Clerk reported that he had been in touch with Jonathan Dawson (specialist solicitor) and he had not heard back from him on the issue of Fields In Trust and the operation of any proposed lease or licence between the Parish Council and Management Committee. Mrs Jones was invited to comment and stated that her understanding was that this was not in fact something that Mr Dawson was likely to be able to help with. Meanwhile a letter had been received from Mr Mundy, of Messrs Roger James Clements and Partners asking for an update on how the Council would wish to proceed and offering to write a summary note if it would help with finalising appropriate instructions. It was agreed by all that it would be advantageous if the status quo could be maintained if at all possible. It was noted that Council may need to be party of a licence agreement being entered into between the Management Committee and the Diocese to enable the widening of the playing field access road.

Skate Ramp

The Chairman reported that the perpetrators of the skate ramp arson attack had been identified and were subject to 5 year behaviour orders, a fire awareness course and would be litter picking at the playing field for the coming 6 months. Unfortunately it looked unlikely that any financial recompense would be forthcoming but the Management Committee would be liaising with the insurers as to whether they wished to pursue the matter.

County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Tony Blackburn had submitted a written report highlighting issues such as the impending boundary review for District Council Wards. He commented that it would make sense to reduce the overall number of Councillors and move towards 'all out elections' to reduce costs. He apologised for not attending the meeting but was attending the Frampton PC meeting for February instead. Other issues he touched on were the road works carried out using his budget and highways in general, he wanted to make it clear that whilst his budget had been used that did not mean he wouldn't fight to get any other necessary work carried out from the general highways fund. He was disappointed at the lack of progress in moulding the Severn Estuary Strategy into a sensible plan but was pleased to report that the County Council had agreed a budget that would not lead to any increase in Council Tax but would increase funding for the elderly, children and infrastructure,

being mainly highways. It was agreed that at the next meeting Cllr Blackburn attends he would be asked if he could apply any pressure for measures to be put in place to reduce the frequency by which Grove Lane is used as a cut-through.

06/02

Police & Community Safety Matters

An acknowledgement letter was received from Mr Sullivan, Head of Community Safety Service at SDC, in response to the thanks Council had given to the Neighbourhood Warden for their work in the Parish to the bus shelters. A request was made by Cllr Jones for Council to contribute towards the cost of a installing a generator change over switch at the Village Hall. This would enable the hall to function without power in its role as an emergency rest centre and would be an asset to the village. Some funding was forthcoming from the District Council and it was agreed that the Parish Council would contribute up to £300 plus VAT. The Clerk reported on an email exchange with Mr Mckie passing comments following a recent burglary in Kidnams Walk and also the Grove Lane/A38 junction. A response had been given by Cllr Jones highlighting the campaigning Council had carried out regarding the junction and drawing his attention to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village. Finally, Crime Figure for the previous month were circulated detailing one crime being a burglary in Kidnams Walk.

07/02

Planning

Decisions to Note

S.13/2296/FUL Orchard View, School Lane, Whitminster, Gos.
Demolition of garage and erection of single dwelling.

Permission granted.

S.13/2442/DISCON Ivydene, School Lane, Whitminster, Gos.
Discharge of condition.

Permission granted.

S.13/2400/ADV & S.13/2401/LBC The Old Forge, Bristol Rd., Whitminster, Gos.
External signs.

Permission granted. The Clerk confirmed that he had written expressing concern at the way in which the work had progressed to a Listed Building ahead of consent being granted but no response had been received.

APP/C1625/A/13/2205015 1 Police Houses, School Lane, Whitminster, Gos.
Appeal in relation to the grant of consent to construct a new dwelling.

Appeal allowed – permission granted.

Applications to Consider

S.14/0086/FUL Orchard View, School Lane, Whitminster, Gos.
Demolition of garage and erection of single dwelling with new vehicular access.

Council resolved to object to this application on the grounds of highways safety and there being insufficient car parking provision for a house of the size proposed.

S.13/2805/HHOLD The Old Post Office, Hyde Lane, Whitminster, Gos.
Single storey extension to rear and internal alterations.

Council resolved the proposed extension was appropriate in scale and design and would not impinge on any neighbouring properties and for that reason supported the application.

S.14/0007/FUL Church Cottage, Whitminster Lane, Whitminster, Gos.
Erection of new two storey dwelling to replace existing dwelling.

Council considered the application and reached the view that the proposed dwelling was appropriate in size and design. Accordingly the application was supported.

A request had been received by the District Council to identify the type and range of environmental receptors that may be affected by a development of 30 dwellings at Parklands Farm, School Lane. This was to respond to a request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion. Council discussed the matter and considered bats, drainage and access to be three immediate issues of concern. A request had also been received from Mr Hannaby, of Hannaby Planning Solutions, to attend a meeting of the Parish Council to discuss proposals for the site. It was agreed that this would take place at the March meeting with the meeting convening at 7pm to facilitate this.

Village Design Statement

It was reported that the VDS had been presented to Conrad Moor at SDC for review.

Pre-Application Community Involvement Protocol

This document was considered by Council and it was proposed by Cllr Jones that it should be adopted, seconded by Cllr Douglas and all were in favour. There were no Parish specific addendums to be applied.

Other Planning Matters

Cllr Jones informed Council of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy.

An email was received from SDC providing an update on the Local Plan and various documents submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration.

Cllr Jones circulated notes from the recent Parish and Town Council's Forum specifically relating to planning.

A letter was received from Cllr Wheeler of SDC urging Council to write to the Secretary of State requesting that he amend the NPPF. Council resolved that this was a political ploy and determined not to support it.

Details were received of the SDC Community Planning Grant Scheme 2014-2015.

08/02

Accounts

Accounts for Payment

GRCC	£63.39	Reimbursement of costs incurred in supporting Village Design Statement Consultations.
D Lord	£294.02	Various Clerk's expenses relating to items paid for on Council's behalf between meetings.

A cheque was also approved to be paid to the Whitminster Village Hall & playing Field Management Committee for hall hire use for Severn Voice etc. The amount to be confirmed.

The following cheques had been drawn between meetings:

T W Hawkins & Sons	£501.09	Grass Cutting
Ermin Plant	£135.84	Security Fencing Hire

To Set Precept for 2014/2015 Financial Year

The Clerk reported on expenditure to date and set out the estimated year end position whilst confirming a balance of £7,368.90 at the bank as at 24th December, 2013. After consideration as to the reserve Council felt it necessary to maintain, possible projects during the coming year and the amount of LCTS Support Grant from Central Government being passed over by the District Council (£599.00) it was agreed to increase the precept slightly to £12,500 for the coming year with £11,901 being requested for the Council Tax payers within the Parish. This would bring about an increase of a few pence in respect of an average Band D household.

Charitable Donations

After careful consideration Council resolved to make the following donations:

£200.00	SPAN Magazine
£50.00	Cotswold Care Hospice

£50.00

Air Ambulance

Council also agreed that it would give further consideration to support a project at the Village School if this could be linked in with commemorating the start of World War One.

General Overview

A financial position as at the date of the meeting was reported above. The Clerk did set out quotations that had been received in respect of Grass Cutting in the Parish and it was resolved that SGMS remained the most competitive. It was resolved that Mr Selkirk would be appointed as Internal Auditor for the coming year. It was noted that subject to the completion of the Village Design Statement a claim for the drawdown of grant aid should be submitted to the District Council before the end of the financial year.

09/02

Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were received:

Website statistics for previous months.

Letter from Persimmon advising that in their opinion the condition of the play equipment on their play sites was not hazardous and as a result repairs would be carried out during the quarterly inspection to save attendance costs

Advance notice of the next meeting of Severn Voice, to be held in Whitminster on 24th March at 7.30pm. In addition a request was made for agenda items and the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Council Ward Boundary Review were both put forward to Cllr Jones who would be chairing the meeting.

Information and leaflets from Neil Carmichael MP.

Summary of responses to the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation.

Town and Parish Council Forum Agenda.

Dog Control Orders update.

Supply of Electoral Register information.

Tennyson Insurance – marketing email.

Flyer concerning a GCC sponsored meeting discussing alcohol and drug abuse.

The News from SDC.

Invitation to join the Marah Trust's Cardboard City in Stroud.

The Trow Magazine.

Clerks & Councils Direct Magazine.

Stroud District Council Jobs & Growth Plan.

10/02

Chairman's Items & District Councillor's Report

The Chairman gave an overview of matters recently concerning the District Council and in particular focused on the recent meeting of Severn Voice at which the forthcoming District Council Boundary Review was explained.

11/02

Other Business

None as the Elections & Boundary Review was generally considered under Item 10/02 above. However, it was agreed the Council would respond to the consultation favouring 'all out elections'.

12/02

Future Agenda Items

None.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:58pm.

CHAIRMAN – Wednesday 5th March, 2014.