**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHITMINSTER ON WEDNESDAY 2nd FEBRUARY, 2019.**

**Public Forum**

The Chairman welcomed the Parish Councillors as well as the member of the public in attendance at the meeting.

There was one member of the public present who was given an opportunity to speak but wished to raise no issues.

**00/02**

**Present**

There were 7 Councillors present including Cllrs Jones (Chairman), Hay (Vice-Chairman), Braidford, Douglas, Mrs Gilmore, Paynter and Peters.

There was 1 member of the public in attendance throughout the meeting.

**01/02**

**Apologies**

None.

**02/02**

**Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made in respect of the items notified on the agenda.

**03/02**

**Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of 2nd January, 2019, were approved subject to the following amendments:

* 05/01 – Other Matters – Fourteenth line – spelling correction of ‘appropriate’.
* 09/01 – Accounts – Donations – Firs line – ‘bene’ changed to ‘been’.
* 11/01 – Chairman’s Items etc – First line – ‘not’ changed to ‘no’.

**04/02**

**Matters Arising**

Welding Work (Playing Field) – Cllr Braidford confirmed that he had inspected the various areas on site and would take matters forward with the assistance of colleagues. He would start by having another go at the bolts on the areas requiring attention but had been unable to get them to move using the security fixing set that he had taken to site.

Notice Boards – Cllr Hay again confirmed that he would be take a look at the work required as the weather improves with the onset of Spring and source all materials that he might find to be necessary.

Foliage Overgrowing Pavement – Paynes Meadow – Cllr Mrs Gilmore had not been able to approach the remaining householder in Paynes Meadow as she had been particularly busy of late. However, she would endeavour to do so as soon as possible and meanwhile it was noted that the other troublesome hedge had been cut back.

Leading on from this item, other overgrown hedges were discussed including that forming the boundary between School Lane and No 1 Upton’s Garden. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the householder. Concern was raised relating to leaning dead elms in the hedge at Packthorne Corner and a letter was to be sent to Mr Merrett, thought to be the farmer of the land.

This item further continued into new Highway & Byway matters to discuss problem hedges bordering Little Holbury and Hyde Lane; on School Lane close to the nursery site and the A38 over-spilling from 10a & 12 The Close. These matters, along with a hole with barriers around in Hyde Lane, were to be brought up with Highways by Cllr Jones during a tour of the village he hoped to arrange with the Highways Area Supervisor. This was based on the presumption that such a meeting and tour of the village could still be organised.

**05/02**

**Police & Community Safety Issues**

Emergency Plan

There was nothing further to report for the time being.

Neighbourhood Warden

There was no report or correspondence received. It was noted that other larger parishes pay lower contributions towards the scheme and it was agreed that the Parish’s contribution would be reviewed when any future request for payment is received.

Other Matters

PCSO Trebble had been informed of Council’s meeting dates for the coming year.

Cllr Peters highlighted to Council a recent report concerning ‘Nottingham Knockers’ going door to door seeking to sell cleaning items at inflated prices.

An agenda had been circulated for the Stroud District Road Safety Group Committee meeting that had taken place on 16th January. Council had responded to a request for agenda items by advising that Cllr Jones would raise relevant matters at the meeting, as he would be attending, as well as pointing out that Council had concerns relating to road safety that did not necessarily relate to speeding. Cllr Jones updated the meeting by confirming that he did attend but the main interest of the group seems to be to focus on speed.

**06/02**

**Planning**

Decisions to Note

S.18/2491/HHOLD 12 Kidnams Walk, Whitminster, Glos.

Single storey rear extension. First floor side extension above garage.

REFUSED.

Applications to Consider

S.19/0093/TPO 5 Uptons Garden, Whitminster, Glos.

Norway Maple by the shed – fell by sections to near ground level and treat stump to discourage re-growth. Italian Cypress by the house – reduce its height by approximately 2.0m and shape the top a little.

Cllr Douglas declared that the applicant was known to him and therefore he did not participate in the discussion.

Council was mindful of the fact that the trees present within the development pre-existed the houses and were protected to maintain the former parkland setting. Therefore, it was against the removal of any trees within the site unless there is a valid arboricultural reason to do so. Council resolved to object to the application in regard to the tree removal but would defer to the specialist knowledge of the District Council’s Tree Officer in the event that a revised application might be submitted for shaping of the Cypress only.

Stroud District Local Plan Review

It was reaffirmed that Whitminster could consider a small increase in numbers over a period of time but following the development of sites already consented and after an opportunity has been given for such new development to consolidate into the village. It was felt that possibly up to 30 additional houses could be accommodated in dispersed locations that the Parish Council would wish to consider at a future date. The alternative proposal, drafted by the SDC Conservative Group and others, had been circulated. This set out an approach for dispersal as opposed to the concentrated grouping of development, in essentially new settlements, as favoured by Council Officers. The argument being that this would encourage cohesion and avoid a catastrophic impact on infrastructure. Cllr Peters queried this, and the associated dispersal figures, as 40 units had been proposed for Whitminster comparted with the 30 units discussed at the last meeting. However, it was pointed out to him that the figures attached to the draft alternative proposals only set out how dispersal might be achieved and were not formal housing numbers proposed or adopted by the District Council. Cllr Jones went on to report on the conference that had been arranged by the District Council to consider housing and planning options.

Other Planning Matters

It was understood that works to start the landscaping of the Parklands Farm development would soon get underway with planting taking place to the boundary with those houses facing onto School Lane.

It was noted that the revised application for a single bungalow on the site of the garages off The Close would be considered at the forthcoming meeting of the Development Control Committee.

Prior to the meeting an informal meeting had taken place with Jonathan Orton and Alexander Cave of Origin 3 Planning. Whilst the nature of their instruction was yet to be determined they had been asked by the owner of the land between Parklands and the Playing Field to consider the development potential of the site and they brought with them indicative layout plans showing how the site might be developed. They acknowledged that taking forward any scheme would be difficult and would most likely require the support of the Council, especially if it were to be considered as an exception site. Suggestions included some form of sheltered or elderly persons residences through to a potential self-build type scheme, social housing or more affordable (smaller) private sector housing. It was suggested that a sizeable area could be used for allotments, public open space or other community use. Concerns were raised as to what control might exist to how the site is developed and used if consent is granted and ownership passes to another party who seeks to apply a more intensive or alternative use and also what guarantees might be available to ensure that promised community benefits or land transfers are applied. Therefore Council was cautious as to how it might consider giving support and it was agreed that a letter setting out further considerations would be drafted for review.

**07/02**

**Highways & Byways**

Footpaths Map

Nothing further to report by Cllr Paynter for the time being.

Other Matters

Cllr Peters had put together a helpful note confirming the footpath numbers and locations where there remained issues outstanding and these are detailed as follows:

* No. 26 – Blocked off near Whitminster Court.
* No. 16 – Stile not completely rebuilt at Grove Lane end – steps missing.
* No. 20 – Wooden kissing gates broken at both Kidnams Walk and Hyde Lane ends.
* No. 2 – Blocked off with vegetation adjacent to Gloucester-Sharpness canal.

It was agreed that all for matters would be reported to the County Council Public Right of Way Department once more, with updates as appropriate.

It was noted that the condition of School Lane continues to deteriorate. Although unlikely that any major work will be undertaken by the County Council Highways Department ahead of the development of Parklands Farm, a number of sizeable potholes were developing and it was agreed Mr Tiffney, of County Council Highways, should be asked what plans exist for work to the carriageway.

Cllr Douglas informed Council that a tree had been vandalised to the rear of numbers 3/5 The Close. This was thought to possibly have been done by the owner of a neighbouring property objecting to the growth of the tree. The matter was to be reported to SDC and an update was also to be sought concerning other trees on amenity land.

**08/02**

**Skate Ramp**

Cllrs Hay & Paynter confirmed they hoped to make progress with further repairs to the ramp in the very near future but all agreed the lifespan of the equipment remained limited. It was therefore agreed that further consideration should be given to moving the replacement forward, possibly funded through a Public Works Loan Board Loan. This could be repaid from the funds currently being set aside to build on Council’s reserve being accumulated for the project and would determine the cost rather than Council chasing an increasing price as funds build over the years. It was also suggested that alternative suppliers and materials should be considered and effort be made to be sure a skate ramp remains what is desired as opposed to a scooter park or other similar equipment. The matter was to be considered further at the next meeting. Meanwhile the existing quotes were being collated.

On the matter of external gym equipment, Cllr Jones reported that the application submitted to National Lottery Awards for All had been turned down. The letter of rejection would be circulated.

**09/01**

**Accounts**

Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were approved for payment:

T W Hawkins & Sons (S.G.M.S.) Grass cutting £962.88

Other Financial Matters

None.

**10/02**

**Correspondence**

The following items of correspondence were received:

ThE News from Stroud District Council – circulated by email.

The Trow magazine.

Details of the Standish Spring Tractor Run taking place on 13th April to support the Alzheimer’s Society.

Stroud District Youth Voice Newsletter.

Invitation to a Parish & Town Councils meeting with SDC.

Information on the Canal Project Community Consultation events being held in the West of the District.

Invitation to attend Brexit Planning breakfasts being hosted by the District Council.

**11/02**

**Chairman’s Items, District Councillor’s Report & County Councillor’s Report**

The Chairman, under his items, drew Council’s attention to the Canal Consultation exercise and reported that works to the trees on the A38 roundabout could soon be underway as a precursor to future works. He went on to cover the arrival of the new SDC Chief Executive, Kathy O’Leary and other appointments at the Council. The District Council meeting of 24th January had also covered the budget with the District Council’s share of the Council Tax increasing by 2.9%. Further increases on the part of the County Council and Police were yet to be known. Arising from a disruptive protest by the pressure group Extinction Rebellion the District Council had considered a motion and agreed to allocate £60,000 towards the aim of making Stroud District carbon free. The retendering of insurance cover had resulted in a reduced premium payable by the Council. Other matters determined included Council House rents and Service Charges; increased costs for refuse and recycling collection; the removal of parking charges from car parks in Stonehouse & Painswick and increasing the Council’s investment in commercial property by £2m. Cllrs Jones’ notes were provided for circulation.

District & County Councillor Stephen Davies had also submitted a report as he was unable to attend the meeting. This covered the issues that Cllr Jones had reported on in regard to the District Council. In respect of the County Council his report detailed a total budget of £428m with an additional £5.6m to be spent on Adult Social Care, and extra £11m on Children’s Services and new capital investment for schools of £179m. This was all made possible by £160m of savings made in recent years and a maximum 2.9% increase in Council Tax in line with the increase applied by the District Council. On other matters Cllr Davies reported that the Council’s Children Services department had received another visit from Ofsted and although issues remained improvements had been noted. A copy of Cllr Davies’ report was to be circulated.

**12/02**

**Other Business**

Schoolfield Close Ditch – Nothing further to report.

Parking in The Close – A response had been received from Bridget Graves, Neighbourhood Coach at Bromford Housing Association, concerning this matter. She stated that she had received no complaints from local residents. She went on to say that she had visited the site and did not observe any parking restrictions that were being contravened and that the only vehicles being worked on in the vicinity were not parked on land owned by the Association and the individual concerned did not appear to be a tenant. She concluded by stating that she was content that there were no breaches of any tenancy agreements taking place but, nevertheless, she would be willing to meet with Council in the future if necessary.

Javelin Park Community Liaison Group Update – Cllr Mrs Gilmore reported to Council that she had attended the UBB Javelin Park Community Liaison Group meeting of 15th January. She advised that air quality monitoring work had commenced and commissioning of the site would soon be starting. Minutes of the meeting and an update dated 29th January (Bulletin No. 20) were made available for circulation.

Parish Records – Cllr Peters informed the meeting that he would be happy to lodge further Minutes and other records with the County Archives office if asked to do so and suggested that those up to 2013 could be passed over. It was noted that some effort would need to be applied to work through the records stored in the roof space of the Village Hall on a convenient future date.

**13/02**

**Future Agenda Items**

To set the Agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting. Under this item a date for the meeting was also considered and set as Wednesday 1st May to immediately proceed the Parish Council meeting of that date.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

**CHAIRMAN** – Wednesday 6th March, 2019.