

# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT WHITMINSTER VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2021.**

## **Public Forum**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting being the first to be held in the bar area meeting room of the Village Hall since the onset of the pandemic. There were two members of the public present as well as District & County Councillor Stephen Davies. Mr Peters raised the matter of parish communications, as he had done at the previous meeting. He asked if the minutes could be published on the website in PDF format to make it easy for the public to download, print and circulate copies. It was also agreed that abbreviated notes, rather akin to the SPAN notes previously published, would be circulated as necessary and put on the website at an earlier opportunity than the approved minutes. However, it was noted that it was not known who did not have access to the website so it would be difficult to target any additional measures to promote awareness. Mr Peters went on to say that he felt the village, in general, looked a mess because of overgrown hedges and weeds growing in the pavement outside of property frontages. He made a plea for residents to cut back hedges now that the nesting season is over and also to take care of the areas outside their properties by cutting back vegetation and weeding. It was noted that this was a request made by the Parish Council on several occasions in the past to no avail and notable overgrown hedges, causing an obstruction, were reported to the County Council Highways Department.

**00/08**

## **Present**

There were 7 Parish Councillors present for the meeting including Councillors Jones (Chairman), Hay (Vice-Chairman), Braidford, Douglas, Mrs Gilmore, Paynter and Mrs Younger. Two members of the public were in attendance.

**01/08**

## **Apologies**

None.

**02/08**

## **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made in regard to known agenda items.

**03/08**

## **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, were signed as a true record subject to the three minor typographic amendments.

**04/08**

**Matters Arising**

Cllr Douglas observed that many potholes he had commented on previously, as well as areas of defective kerb, had been marked around with white paint to indicate remedial work was planned. Cllr Paynter had also noticed this had been done recently and hoped work would proceed before the paint

wore off. He also raised, with County Councillor Davies, a question as to the criteria applied to determine why some other potholes, in close proximity to those marked and clearly likely to develop shortly, were left unattended as this seemed uneconomic. Cllr Davies advised that he agreed and with a change of maintenance contractor the approach and criteria was under review.

Cllr Jones thanked Cllrs Hay and Paynter for their efforts in removing the obstructive and potentially hazardous apple tree limb in Little Holbury and Persimmon Homes were still being pursued in regard to repairs to the gate.

County & District Councillor Davies agreed to take up the matters of complaints Council had raised concerning consultation matters regarding planning applications.

**05/08**

**Police & Community Safety Issues**

There were no reports received from the Police or the Neighbourhood Warden. However, it was noted that Katie Markwick had moved on from her role as Neighbourhood Warden for the area and was being replaced by Simon Jarvis.

It was noted that there had been an increase in fly tipping locally but items left during a recent incident had been removed.

Details were circulated concerning an event being organised by the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner with Councillors able to book tickets directly if they wished to attend.

Under this item Mrs Honor Jones informed Council that the loose panels behind the basketball hoop, situated on the hard surfaced play area at the Playing Field, were to be repaired thus removing any potential noise nuisance. Mr Perry Beard had volunteered to arrange this through the welding contractor he uses on his farm when he next has need to attend. The work will be done in situ.

Cllr Hay advised that both edge protection rails at Lockham Bridge had been removed and Cllr Paynter confirmed that this was a matter already on the list of issues he was pursuing with the County Council Public Rights of Way Officer.

Cllr Braidford informed Council that he had recently seen an electric scooter being used on the skate ramp and there was a growing presence of scooters in the village and surrounding area with them often being used illegally. Being a problem only likely to increase in the future it was agreed that Councillor Jones would liaise with the local PCSO and Neighbourhood Warden as to how this may be best addressed.

**06/08**

**Planning**

**Decisions to Note**

It was understood that consent had been granted for the paused boundary treatment works at 2 Vaisey Field but formal notification was yet to be received.

#### Applications to Consider

S.21/1788/FUL Highfield Garden World, Bristol Road, Whitminster, Glos.  
Installation of steel water storage tank, pump house and gravel maintenance track.  
Council had no comments of note in regard to this application and resolved to support the application to facilitate the continued success of a local business and employer.

#### Local Plan & Other Planning Matters

There had been no response in regard to the various planning enforcement matters that had been recently referred to the District Council but it was noted that the relevant enforcement officer had retired.

A further submission had been made, as part of the consultation process, addressing the proposal that the land identified off of School Lane, adjacent to Schoolfield Close, should increase in the number allocated to 40 units. Council remained of the opinion that on the periphery of the village a lower

density of 30 should be appropriate. Cllr Jones advised that he felt the representation submitted was very good and comprehensive covering all of the points Council had discussed.

Cllr Douglas commented on the posts that had been recently installed at the entrance to the garages between The Close and Paynes Meadow. Cllr Jones informed the meeting that he understood these had been installed to secure the property and identify the boundary ahead of it being offered for sale by auction, which was expected to proceed shortly.

**07/08**

#### **Highways & Byways**

##### Footpaths

Cllr Paynter had previously informed the meeting that he had met with the Public Rights of Way Officer and he was awaiting a further update from her. Cllr Davies advised that he would be happy to press for any action needed if his intervention was considered necessary. Cllr Braidford highlighted the developing hazard caused by tree roots in The Lagger and Cllr Paynter agreed to pass the concern on and press for action as appropriate. Other matters discussed included the reglazing of the A38 North bound bus shelter which Cllr Paynter said he hoped to address as soon as possible and the state of the A38 South bound lay-by to be added to the list of matter to be raised with Yakub Mulla.

##### School Lane

A site meeting was to be requested with Yakub Mulla to discuss the following:

Packthorne Corner drain cover.

Hyde Lane road surface.

The Close verge/kerb issues.

School Lane traffic calming measures

Little Holbury area surrounding the play area.

Various hedges around the village

**08/08**

**Skate Ramp**

Following the July meeting notification had been given, through a printed delivered leaflet, the Parish Council website and Facebook, of Council's intention to replace the skateboard ramp and to facilitate this through seeking a Public Works Loan Board Fund Loan of in the order of £20,000 repayable over 5 years. Comments had been sought and an invitation issued for those with a view to attend the Parish Council meeting. Two regular attendees were present and both support the move. A number of written submissions had been received by email and these were overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal. However, one respondent did question the likely demand for the facility and questioned whether other alternative facilities should be provided through such expenditure. However, it was apparent that the respondent was not aware of the strength of public opinion in favour shown when removal was previously suggested nor of some of the amenities already existing within the village. After consideration Council resolved to proceed with seeking funding in order for the project to proceed. This would involve the submission of an application for loan funding as well as submitting applications for grant aid from the Javelin Park Community Fund, the County Council Build Back Better Fund and any other avenues that come to light.

**09/07**

**Accounts**

Accounts for Payment

The following account was approved for payment and a cheque circulated for signature:

Cllr John Jones – reimbursement of £56.40 for printing materials regarding village notice circulated relating to the Skate Ramp.

Other Financial Matters

The last reported balance at the bank was confirmed as £29,482.98

Paperwork was awaited to enable the Council to move its account to a new on-line based business banking service. Cllrs Braidford and Hay confirmed that they already used the services of the provider and hence would be the initial signatories as identity checks would be more straightforward.

Completion of audit papers was anticipated and would be progressed between meetings if necessary.

**10/08**

**Correspondence**

The following items of correspondence were received:

CPRE Magazine – Rural Voice.

CPRE local information magazine.

Invitation to join an on-line forum concerning cycling within the District.

An email was received from Mr Bailey concerning proposed rerouting of an existing bus service that might provide improved access into Stroud for villagers. It was noted

that an existing service does currently run and details were to be obtained and circulated.

**11/08**

**Chairman's Items & District Councillor's Report**

Most relevant matters were covered elsewhere during the meeting and Cllr Jones had nothing more to add on parish matters. Together with County Councillor Davies, an update was provided on District Council matters including the fact that that Ebley Mill was gearing up for most staff to return to work shortly; some issues had arisen from staff being alerted to Covid close contact and thus being absent from work and this had particularly affected waste collection; the Lucky Severn lottery was up and running and had raised £55,000 thus far and, unfortunately, the application for infilling the former gravel workings at Fromebridge had been approved and had not been referred back to the Development Control Committee.

**12/08**

**Other Business**

Parish Noticeboards

Budget costs had been obtained for replacement hardwood noticeboards and posts at £1,200- 1,400 plus VAT. A cheaper alternative had been identified at an anticipated cost of £450 plus VAT but added to this would be the cost of posts and fixings. A catalogue was awaited with further details including colour choices and lead times.

County Councillor's Report

Cllr Davies had actively reported on a number of matters during the meeting and various questions had been asked of him. He confirmed he would forward details of the Build Back Better Community Fund being operated by the County Council and he would welcome an application for funding in support of the skate ramp replacement. He touched on a further District Council matter being that he had been putting forward calls for a policy to be adopted to take an overview of solar farm applications rather than the piecemeal consideration currently applying to a number of pending applications that might possibly lead to concentration in certain areas within the District. However, this would be unlikely to come into play prior to current applications being determined. He also gave information on new fire appliances being purchased for the County.

**13/08**

**Future Agenda Items**

It was agreed that the refurbishment and potential replacement of noticeboards would be revisited again next month and hence would remain as an agenda item.

Whilst not being an Agenda Item as such it was suggested that on a convenient future date new photos should be taken to update the website.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:15 pm.

**CHAIRMAN** - Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2021.