

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT WHITMINSTER VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 4TH MAY, 2022.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting including the three members of the public present.

It was agreed that the agenda would be amended to start with the relevant elections and appointments prior to opening the floor for the discussion of any matters to be raised by the members of the public present.

00/05

Elections & Appointments

(i) Election of Chair

There had been no nominations received ahead of the meeting. Nominations were invited from the assembled Councillors and this resulted in Cllr Mrs Gilmore nominating Cllr Jones. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Braidford. Cllr Jones advised that he had been giving thought as to whether he wished to continue in the role, if invited to do so, over recent months and during a period of ill health. He confirmed that he would be willing to continue for a further year but he felt Council should be prepared for this to be his last year at the helm. All were in favour and Cllr Jones was duly elected Chairman.

(ii) Appointment of Vice Chair

Cllr Jones asked if Cllr Hay would be prepared to continue in the role for a further year. He agreed and was duly appointed.

(iii) Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer

Whilst it was noted that this position need not fall to the Clerk it was agreed that he would be appointed to this position for a further year.

(iv) Appointment to other positions:

- Footpaths Officer – Cllr Paynter
- Watercourse Warden – Cllr Paynter
- Representative on the Whitminster Village Hall & Playing Field Management Committee – Cllr Mrs Gilmore
- Representative on the Urbaser community fund group – Cllr Mrs Gilmore

01/05

Public Forum

There were no issues raised by the members of the public present.

02/05

Present

There were 6 Parish Councillors present for the meeting including Councillors Jones (Chairman), Hay (Vice Chair), Braidford, Mrs Gilmore, Paynter and Mrs Younger. There were three members of the public in attendance.

03/05

Apologies

There was an apology received and accepted from Cllr Douglas who was absent due to another commitment but hoped to attend the meeting before its conclusion if possible.

04/05

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest relating to agenda items.

05/05

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 6th April, 2022, were signed as a true record subject to one amendment within 11/04 Other Business within which on the third line the word 'by' was amended to read 'but'.

06/05

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not due to be discussed as detailed agenda items.

07/05

Police & Community Safety Issues

There had been no recent reports from the Warden Service but Cllr Jones commented that the shift pattern of the current Neighbourhood Warden would make it difficult for him to attend meetings regularly.

With regard to the proposed deployment of the Community Safety Partnership mobile/temporary CCTV camera, it was noted that it had been installed at the Playing Field to assist in combating the recent antisocial behaviour in the area. So far there had been no further problems reported.

It was understood that there had been no recent repeat of the incidents of cherry knocking within the village.

An email was received from a resident of the wider district warning residents to be wary of a company offering roof cleaning and maintenance services.

Finally, under this item, Cllr Jones reported that PCSO Mike Trebble hoped to attend future meetings as shift patterns and duties allow.

08/05

Planning

Decisions to Note

S.20/1590/FUL Stonepitts Bridge, Whitminster, Glos.
Whitminster Footpath 21

Full planning consent for removal of existing concrete fixed accommodation bridge and the installation of a new deck and new operating controls.

This application had been approved by the District Council. The decision notice received, dated 20th April 2022, appeared to be a duplicate of that issued ahead of the April Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Jones informed the meeting that the applications for Parklands Farmhouse and Packthorne Farmhouse both remained pending and in the case of the latter this had been so for close to a year.

Applications to Consider

There were no applications to consider. It was understood that a proposal had been submitted concerning a property at Rickyard Way but this was a pre-application request to determine if a full planning application is necessary or if works proposed would constitute permitted development. Therefore, Council had not been invited to comment.

Local Plan & Other Planning Matters

There was nothing further to report in regard to Local Plan matter other than to reaffirm that, for the time being, the candidate site between the A38 and M5 was not in the Draft Local Plan. However, Council was aware the alternative candidate sites for large scale housing were opposed and if arguments are put forward and upheld by the appointed Planning Inspector then matters

could be reviewed. If this were to transpire then Council may well need professional help at a notable cost, should it remain opposed and wish to fight any such proposal. For the time being it was agreed that the relevant contact at the Planning Inspectorate should be approached to determine the chronology, process and timescales relating to the inquiry.

On the matter of the solar farm for which consent had been granted, Cllr Paynter had prepared and circulated a note following the meeting that had taken place involving District & County Councillor Stephen Davies and District Councillor Haydn Jones. The headline conclusion was that pursuing a potential Judicial Review would be costly with a limited likelihood of success. Cllr Paynter did run through a number of flaws in the process and arguments put forward in the Officer's report and the discussion of the application at the Development Control Committee. In terms of process, it remained the case that the consultation on the application was not correctly publicised as relating to Whitminster on the District Council's website. In respect of the arguments, it was considered that the application did give rise to a number of negative impacts, however, it was determined that these were outweighed by the potential environmental benefit. This benefit was over estimated when compared with the District Council's published figures. It was also the case that the District had published information on available roof spaces on commercial properties and this was not taken on board nor given due consideration in the discussion.

This topic concluded with Cllr Jones providing a reminder of the meeting scheduled with Adam Withers of JBM Solar for 18th May at 7:30pm at the Village Hall to discuss the proposed community contributions.

On planning enforcement matters, Cllr Jones had circulated email communication from an Enforcement Officer who had visited the Whitminster Inn and observed the new retail unit and other works. Liaison was taking place with a Planning Officer and a further site visit was planned with an update expected. Meanwhile the planning history had been investigated and it was confirmed that none of the recent work or new retail units were permitted. There was no response on other enforcement issues within the village and this was to be followed up.

09/05

Highways & Byways

Footpaths

Cllr Paynter gave an update on matters. Unfortunately, he had been unable to make progress with the Public Rights of Way Officer as he had not been able to reach her by telephone but he would continue to try. He was also awaiting news on his planned strimming course. In regard to recurring matters, there had been no response from Robert Hitchins Homes concerning the spraying of footpath routes across crops; Cllr Younger advised that the metal barrier thrown into the River Frome at Lockham Bridge had not been removed and although the overgrown bush at the Little Holbury end of the Lagger had been removed (as updated by Cllr Hay) this had caused damage to the footway. This was undertaken at the same time as pothole repair work going on in the village, as reported by Cllr Hay. A query was raised relating to the recollection of a new footpath or permissive way being proposed to run from Parklands Orchard towards the canal. It was agreed that some research would be done into the planning history to check if anything was detailed.

Other Highway Matters

The issue concerning barriers left around an inspection chamber on Packthorne Corner had been followed up with Yakub Mulla and new temporary barriers had been installed in a sturdy fashion. However, no works of repair/reinstatement had been undertaken and this was to be followed up.

Other matters raised included the condition of the mounting post for a warning sign in School Lane and ongoing issues relating to Hyde Lane.

Finally, it was noted that an invoice from Mr Davies for verge cutting was expected but not yet received.

10/05

Accounts

Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were approved for payment:

None.

Other Financial Matters

The balance at the bank stood at £46,418.74 with a number of payments expected necessary over coming months. The first precept payment of £9,100.00 for the first half of the 2022/2023 financial year had been received along with a payment of CIL contributions relating to recent planning consents and passed over from Stroud District Council in the sum of £2,066.49 meaning recent receipts totalling £11,166.49 had been banked.

Audit papers had been received and the Clerk and Chairman were pursuing the matter of invoices for previous audit that were being chased but had not been received.

11/05

Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were received:

Clerks & Councils Direct Magazine.

Trow magazine.

Stroud District Council eNews.

Food Standards Agency product recall notice concerning Kinder chocolate products.

Letter from Siobhan Baillie MP asking for information concerning play areas and equipment suitable for children with disabilities.

Other electronic correspondence had been circulated between meetings.

12/05

Chairman's Items, District Councillor's Report & County Councillor's Report

There were no items raised by Cllr Jones that hadn't been covered elsewhere in respect of Parish Council matters. In regard to the District Council, he provided a summary covering the District Council's recent fully meeting including the report on the Blackboys Clock and statue at Blackboys House in Castle Street, Stroud; a debate on Islamophobia and a vote to train councillors and officers in regard to respecting race and different religious beliefs and a motion requesting a blanket 20mph speed limit on urban roads. This was a split vote but the motion was carried and a request was to be made to the County Council.

13/05

Other Business

Skate Ramp

Following the meeting that Cllrs Jones, Douglas, Paynter and the Clerk had with Ten Skate Ramps a revised price had been received but drawings were awaited. This was to be followed up at the same time as pursuing an application for the necessary Public Works Loan Board.

Royal Jubilee

Mugs to commemorate the Royal Jubilee had been ordered and discussions took place as to how they would be circulated, depending on the date of receipt.

Cllr Mrs Younger had made a successful approach to Highfield Garden Centre and an offer had been made to provide a bench, from those in stock, and two trees to commemorate the Jubilee. Meanwhile, Cllr Jones had obtained permission to place the bench and trees on the verge at the entrance to The Close/Henry Withers Place. Cllr Jones would obtain a price for installation while Cllr Mrs Gilmore suggested it would be appropriate to notify the owner of the nearest proper and

agreed to liaise accordingly. Meanwhile, Cllr Mrs Younger would revert to the garden centre and confirm that Council was very grateful and would like to take up the offer.

Mrs Honor Jones, who was present at the meeting, provided some information on the Tea Party planned to commemorate the Jubilee and taking place between 2-6pm on the Sunday of the Jubilee weekend.

14/05

Future Agenda Items

None.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:02pm.

CHAIRMAN - Wednesday 1st June, 2022.