

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WHITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN WHITMINSTER VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 6th MARCH, 2024.

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting including the two members of the public in attendance.

Public Forum

The members of the public present were afforded an opportunity to raise any matters or concerns but neither had anything that they wished to discuss.

00/03

Present

There were 6 Parish Councillors present including Councillors Jones (Chairman), Paynter (Vice-Chair), Braidford, Mrs Gilmore, Hay & Mrs Younger. The Clerk and two members of the public were also in attendance.

01/03

Apologies

None.

At this point in the meeting a letter of resignation was read from Cllr Tim Douglas with effect from 1st March, 2024. He thanked Council for the support, camaraderie and friendship he had received for over 20 years as a member of the Council, wished everyone well and looked forward to seeing the village continue to thrive. His resignation was accepted and he was offered heartfelt thanks from the Council for his diligent efforts in the interest of the Parish over so many years.

02/03

Declarations of Interest

None relating to agenda items.

03/03

Minutes

The Minutes of the February 2024 meeting were signed as a true record of the proceedings subject to the following amendments:

06/02 – Decisions to Note – 2nd line changed to read ‘S.23/2242/FUL Erection’ from ‘S.23/2242/FULErection’.

08/02 – Skate Ramp – 5th line changed to read ‘been’ rather than ‘bene’.

04/03

Matters Arising

Cllr Jones reminded Cllrs Paynter & Hay about installing the remaining replacement noticeboard.

Cllr Paynter advised he had been in touch with a local firm that did not seem particularly keen on work concerning the bush shelters.

Under this item there was also some discussion concerning the local elections, including Parish Council Election Timescale with nominations due by Friday 5th April. The Clerk advised he held sets of nomination papers that he would pass around during the meeting. Only seven sets had been supplied by Stroud District Council.

05/03

Police & Community Safety Issues

There had been no update from any Neighbourhood Warden, although it was noted there was no dedicated warden covering the Parish, and nothing received from PCSO Trebble.

Cllr Jones raised the matter of the poplar tree that had fallen close to the War Memorial. This had been cleared away but had caused damage to the railings and there was concern regarding the trees that remained. This has been raised with Stroud District Council but no reply had been received. Cllr Jones was following up.

It was agreed that 100 no. '20 is plenty; wheelie bin speed stickers would be purchased for distribution at a cost of £120:00 including delivery.

A copy of the Frampton-on-Severn Emergency Plan had been received and circulated. It contained a significant focus on the activities of a voluntary group set up to provide assistance within that Parish. Therefore, it might only assist as a template for Whitminster if a similar number of volunteers could be identified. Cllr Hay agreed to consider the matter and Cllr Jones proposed it should be a matter to be left until the new Council is formed after the election.

There had been concern voiced at the removal of trees in the copse adjacent to the Playing Field. This work appeared to be all in order and in accordance with consents. However, the mud left on School Lane by the contractors had been a significant issue and had been raised with the developer who had taken action and promised it would not happen again.

06/03

Planning

Decisions to Note

Application No. S.24/0028/HHOLD

May View Cottage, Bristol Road, Whitminster, Gloucestershire

Erection of a two storey rear extension.

Permitted.

It was also noted that the application relating to the Canal 'Missing Mile' had been granted subject to a S.106 Agreement restricting the use of the Café Manager's flat to the café development.

Applications to Consider

Application No. S.24/0343/TPO

Upton's Garden Whitminster Gloucester Gloucestershire GL2 7LP

Mature Lebanon Cedar (cedrus libani) TPO 502 - 3 metre crown lift.

Council resolved to leave this matter to the judgement and knowledge of the relevant office at the District Council given that it did not involve the removal of a tree.

Local Plan & Other Planning Matters

On the Local Plan Cllr Jones informed the meeting that a pause had been agreed in the process of review for 10 months to allow 7 months for consultation with 'partners' over the Inspectors' concerns and 3 months for consultation on any changes, if needed, before resuming in December, 2024.

There was nothing further received from Planning Enforcement following on from last communication received by Cllr Jones.

Council's comments had not appeared in relation to matters considered during February and this was being followed up with the SDC Planning Department.

Cllr Paynter again advised that he had not forgotten to inspect the trees currently located on the Grove Lane site and would do so as soon as better weather comes.

07/03

Highways & Byways

As reported at the last meeting, correspondence had finally been received on the matter of the Community Speedwatch Fund with further details requested on suitable sites for the equipment to be located. A minimum of three had been requested and these would be verified to ensure suitability.

before the matter could proceed. The Clerk had identified 12 locations that had been submitted for consideration and a response was awaited.

Cllr Paynter advised that he had still not received any acknowledgement from the Water Resources Engineer at Stroud District Council, Tom Barrett, in response to his request to discuss the various issues that had been raised recently concerning flooding. Localised flooding continued to be an issue, especially at Packthorne Corner and Whitminster Lane from Sandfurlong, and had been raised with the Area Highways Manager, Gary Wilson, at the meeting held with him and Cllr Davies on 29th February. Mr Wilson had agreed to look at matter and consider whether any culverts beneath the road surface were block along with roadside ditches and grips. However, he did advise the matter would be more complicated to resolve if the problems were being caused by blockages of ditches further downstream. Turning to the Hyde Lane/A38 left turn only island, he agreed to chase up the matter with the Legal Agreements Team at GCC as well as highlighting the issue relating to the bus stop. He also confirmed that A38 footway siding works would be carried out, albeit not on the area that was highlighted as being of most concern. Other issues raised for which feedback is awaited included ways to emphasise the roundabout in School Lane, the condition of the lane leading to Jaxons Farm and possible village gateways or traffic calming measures in the vicinity of the school. It was noted that carriageway repairs were expected soon to School Lane leading towards Frampton.

With regard to the obstructed footpath EWH26 adjacent to Whitminster Court, Cllr Davies had requested a copy of the Notice issued under the Highways Act 1980, Section 130A(1) to follow up at the County Council and this had been supplied along with a further copy sent to the Chief Executive, Peter Bungard.

Cllr Paynter reported on footpath matters and reviewed details of a number of obstructions and other issues he had reported on-line. He also reported on the response he had received clarifying that it is not an offence to ride a horse on a footpath, with only the landowner being in a position to take any action, and that the prospect of brush cutter training was back on the horizon.

08/03

Skate Ramp

Contact had been made with Exolum concerning a site meeting and matters were in hand to progress following the opening of the new bank account. Details of the GPFA grant were also discussed. Under this item Cllr Jones also touched on works planned to proceed shortly concerning the new Playing Field Pavilion.

09/03

Solar Farm

There was nothing further to report for the time being other than to note the commencement of works on site and that an invoice had been raised for the payment of the £40,000 community fund and payment was awaited.

10/03

Accounts

Accounts for Payment

Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association – Annual Membership	£50.00
Agreed at the previous meeting but signed during highways meeting on 29 th February.	
Whitminster Sports Club – Defibrillator Electricity Usage	£44.19
Agreed at the previous meeting but signed during highways meeting on 29th February.	
Clear Insurance Management Ltd – Insurance	£714.02

Other Financial Matters

A donation was agreed to support the work of Guideposts within the village in the sum of £100:00 following past representations by a local volunteer.

In regard to Audit, a request for additional information had been addressed and a response awaited.

It was noted that the CIL payment due to come to the Parish Council from the new development of 11 homes at Upton's Garden, between Parklands House and the Playing Field, would be £21,322.22 and would be due on the commencement of the works in instalments over a period of 18 months. PGA Payroll Services had provided a quote to deal with Clerk's salary payments in the sum of £25 per initial set up and then £15 per month going forward. It was proposed by the Clerk that this be applied from the completion of the opening of the new bank account and either take the form of quarterly or 6 monthly payments to reduce costs and this was agreed.

11/03

Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were received:

ElanCity brochure of interactive road signs.

Severn Voice Agenda for meeting of 13th March at Hardwicke Village Hall and Minutes of November 2023 meeting.

Clerks & Councils Direct Magazine.

Trow Magazine.

Councils Connected newsletter.

Stroud District Council eNews.

Parish Election Nomination Papers.

Other electronic correspondence had been circulated between meetings.

12/03

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

Most Parish related Chairman's matters had been considered during the meeting. Cllr Jones had nothing to add relating to District Council matters that hadn't been covered in discussions concerning planning issues, other than to advise that the Council Tax for 2024/2025 would increase by 5% overall. This took into account increases across all relevant authorities.

County Councillor Stephen Davies had submitted a written report detailing, amongst other matters, the increase in the Gloucestershire County Council budget by £50m to £616m (adding that the Council would not be making any cuts and was solvent); plans to support people in protecting their property from flooding; a fund to support climate change related projects; £87.9m of funding for highways projects from Central Government and a record number of care leavers going to university.

13/03

Other Business

Playing Field Pavilion – Cllr Jones gave a brief update on plans to form the base for the new pavilion that would be carried out by local firm, Smiths of Eastington. He advised that funding allocated from the Parklands Orchard development was being drawn down.

Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 15th May was set as the date for the Annual Parish Meeting to commence at 7pm to be followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council immediately afterwards at 7:30pm or shortly thereafter.

Parish Election – Nomination Papers were circulated to all 6 remaining Councillors with one set remaining. Elector numbers for Proposers and Seconders could be provided if requested. It was noted that there was interest from at least one elector who might consider joining the Parish Council.

It was agreed that consideration would be given to an appropriate gift for ex Cllr Tim Douglas at the next meeting.

14/03

Future Agenda Items

Newland Homes – it was hoped that a representative from Newland Homes might join the April meeting at an early start of 7pm in order to discuss the recently consented site between Parklands House and the Playing Field. This was yet to be confirmed.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:24pm.

CHAIRMAN – Wednesday 3rd April, 2024.