

MINUTES of the MEETING of WHITWICK PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2019 at 7 pm at Park Hall, Whitwick Park, off North Street, Whitwick.

Present: Councillor R Woodward (Chairman)

Cllrs A Barker, S Colledge, D Everitt, T Gillard [Items 899-905 only], D Howe, P Moulton, T Pulford and J Straw.

In Attendance:

Mrs C Tibbles, Parish Manager/Responsible Finance Officer

3 Members of the public

Guests:

PCSO P Marriott, Bardon Neighbourhood Police Team [Items 899-903 only]
Mr P Sanders, Head of Community Services, NWLDC
Ms C Ormand, NWLDC

899. APOLOGIES

Received from Cllr L Spence. The Chairman reported that a resignation had been received from Cllr R Adams and a vote of thanks was recorded for the work undertaken by Cllr Adams in his years of service on the parish council since April 2016 and best wishes would be sent to him for the future.

900. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr T Gillard declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in Item 904 – Future Leisure Provision as a District Councillor.

Cllr S Colledge declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in all planning matters regarding the Green Wedge as a member of Whitwick Action Group and in the Hermitage Leisure Centre as a neighbour and member of Whitwick Action Group.

Cllr J Straw declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in all planning matters regarding the Green Wedge as a member of Whitwick Action Group.

Cllr D Everitt declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in all planning matters as a District Councillor and would not take part in discussions or votes.

Cllr P Moulton declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a Link Councillor to Thornborough Road Allotment Society.

Cllr A Barker declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a Link Councillor to Walkers Flats Allotment Society.

901. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February be approved as a correct record.

906. PRESENTATION

The Chairman expressed his pride on the successful completion of the CILCA qualification by the Parish Manager and, on behalf of the council, paid tribute to the studies undertaken by Mrs. Tibbles. He then presented the certificate and a bouquet of flowers.

902. COMMUNITY POLICING

PSCO Marriot thanked the council for the opportunity to give his report: there had been 2 burglaries (1 currently under investigation), 2 incidents of criminal damage and 1 theft in the latest period, with some details given where possible.

903. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

A member of the public thanked the police for the increased presence in the parish with speed cameras and then asked what the parish council was doing to get Speed Activated Signs for the parish. Cllr Colledge explained that the county council had not agreed to provide any due to lack of funding and that was why the parish was looking at the possibilities. Cllr Barker explained that a budgetary sum had been set aside in 2019/20 and the Parish Manager added that more research was needed to establish the most suitable design and appropriate locations, learning from the experience of neighbouring councils. Cllr Gillard said the evidence from the Community Speedwatch campaign had led to a recent discussion with the Leader of the County to consider providing mobile signs in Whitwick. Cllr Gillard was asked to put pressure on the county to give the results that parishioners were waiting for. This session was suspended to allow PCSO Marriot to leave and the next presentation to be made, after which there would be an opportunity for some questions.

904. FUTURE LEISURE PROVISION – GUEST SPEAKER: Paul Sanders, Head of Community Services, accompanied by Caroline Ormand (North West Leicestershire District Council)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Sanders explained there were no outlines yet for the future of the present Hermitage Leisure Centre site. He gave a presentation on the outline plans and designs for the new leisure centre, explaining the reasons why 'Everyone Active' had been chosen as the partner to deliver and manage the new leisure facilities locally and the refurbishment in Ashby. The company had a good record on price for value, with good outcomes for health and activities, having a trusted team who would deliver the £22 million facility. The planning application would be put in during spring, building starting in October and the Centre opening in July 2021. Facilities were outlined but the venue would host events too, as Hermitage Leisure Centre did. The Centre would still have squash, sauna, steam room, jacuzzi but extras too like soft play and clip n climb. The site would have outdoor walks and a parkland setting in a green space. The bridleway and trees would be unaffected and the woodland would have a high ropes feature, picnic area and benches, with green planting to hide the car parking. The building was at the back of the site to keep away from the noise of the A511. Paths would be lit at night and choices offered, from a curvy path to approach or a quicker straight path. With a 120 station gym and a separate spin room for cycling, there were wet areas on the left and sports on the right, a café/reception at front, a piazza outside the entrance which would be light, sunny and welcoming. The frontage would be wood and brick with high windows. An update on Ashby was also given.

The current focus was on behind the scenes so that on 1st May when the contract started there would be no noticeable change for customers other than seeing staff in a new uniform. Everything for the IT Back Office was planned to smoothly changeover from NWLDC on 30th April when it would be unplugged and replugged on 1st May to the new company.

Mr. Sanders offered reassurance that there would be a process later when the District Council would speak to the Parish Council. No decision or discussions had taken place yet on the future of the Hermitage Leisure Centre. The staff were all happy and all would stay the same, with Parks staff continuing to do the pavilion, the 3G pitches, lake and the grounds for now. The images showed the opportunities that are open to Whitwick.

903. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION (cont.)

The Chairman invited questions to be put to Mr. Sanders. Cllr Howe asked why they were taking the Whitwick name out of the title as the Centre was in Whitwick and the District Council were calling it Coalville? Mr. Sanders said the name was important and thought if it was called Whitwick it might confuse the traffic as it was off the A511 on the edge of Coalville. He did understand it was in the parish of Whitwick. A member of the public asked about access to the site if on the A511 and travelling west, hoping a physical barrier would control/prevent traffic from being able to turn right. Mr. Sanders said agreement in principal had been reached with County Highways that traffic would only turn left to go in and only turn left when it came out. Cllr Moulton said there were already accidents by this location and asked if the island would be changed to accommodate the extra traffic? Mr. Sanders replied that Whitwick should have less traffic now via Hermitage Road and their application would go through formal planning examination process with checks done by County on highways issues. Cllr Moulton asked if there would be any change? Mr. Sanders was aware that County were holding £20 million for improvements to A511 but could not answer that specifically. However, based on the m² of the building and the car journey estimate there was £1¼ million allowance in their budget. Cllr Howe asked if it would provide new access to Whitwick but was told that was not possible as the District Council did not own the land at the rear of the new Leisure Centre. He confirmed that the layby on the A511 was staying.

Cllr Straw saw an opportunity for the community and both councils to work together and asked for the Hermitage Leisure Centre site to be restored to open land, which was recognised by Mr. Sanders as design work had already done to protect the green space. Cllr Colledge hoped the best outcome for Whitwick would be working together to set a precedent with the new building's footprint in the green wedge being offset by the Hermitage site becoming part of the Green Wedge to restore the balance, which was supported by Cllr Gillard. Mr. Sanders said an empty building would not be good so in 2021 when Hermitage Leisure Centre was empty it needed to be quickly resolved by demolition or whatever. Cllr Straw thought it was an opportunity to create an accessible natural green space on the existing site for everyone to enjoy as part of the green wedge.

Cllr Moulton said the District Council had said at previous meetings in 2017 they wanted to work together with the Parish Council but that didn't quite happen when the announcement of the partnership was in the public domain before the parish council knew anything. There had been an open title on every parish agenda since October 2017 but the parish had received no information and he asked for a copy of the presentation, which Mr. Sanders confirmed would be sent to the Parish Manager. Cllr Moulton asked why the £20 million plan was now nearer to £23 million and Mr. Sanders explained extra items (as marked "*" in the presentation) had been chosen to take advantage of the parkland setting. The District were confident in the engineering and design detail and there was £1 million contingency in the budget to address any planning conditions. Cllr Moulton asked if it was future proof and it was explained that

the indoor areas were flexible, with space to the right of the building being available for outdoor leisure. Cllr Howe congratulated the District Council for building it and putting leisure at the top of the list. However, he recalled that facilities had been promised for the north of the District. Mr. Sanders replied that there would be £1million to help facilities at Castle Donington, Measham and other places. Cllr Barker noted that things seemed to be going ahead smoothly but how would the new leisure centre help with the footfall to Coalville? Mr. Sanders said the site at Bridge Street could not go ahead so there would need to be connections with footpaths from all angles and sides. Stephenson College were delighted with the location. Cllr Barker asked if there would be charges to park and was told this was not planned, although controls would be needed for night time usage. Cllr Gillard asked if there would be a time limit imposed, with Cllr Pulford highlighting the need to avoid people parking for 8 hours and going shopping. Mr. Sanders said there could be a system where you enter your registration number on a pad when you enter the Centre.

Cllr Gillard hoped the air quality would improve in Whitwick with less traffic and thought that County Council needed to fulfil their highway responsibility to agree measures on whether a central reservation was needed or not. The Chairman added his support for this vitally important matter. Cllr Gillard concluded that the name of the new Centre was wrong - it had been Whitwick Golf Course and the site was not in Coalville so it should be called Whitwick Leisure Centre and be the jewel in our crown. This was supported by Cllr Everitt and should be considered by the District Council. Cllr Moulton asked again about footfall aimed for the regeneration of Coalville and Mr. Sanders said Whitwick drew visitors from across the area and the new centre needed to draw visitors from a 5 mile radius. Cllr Moulton asked what would happen for the Whitwick community when that footfall from having the asset of the Hermitage Centre was gone out of the parish. The Chairman concluded that Whitwick was a parochial place and people were passionately protective of our green wedge. Mr. Sanders was invited back to keep the parish council updated.

905. ELECTION PROTOCOLS - PURDAH

Members welcomed the invitation from a local school to provide an impartial judge for the annual Easter Egg decorating competition but were mindful of the restrictions of purdah with the forthcoming elections (as circulated). The Parish Manager reported additional advice from LRALC and SLCC. **Resolved that the decision to find a judge be delegated to the Parish Manager, in consultation with members, who would await publication of the nominated candidates for election on 3 April and either select a retiring councillor not standing for election, or a councillor from a non-contested ward who was not a candidate elsewhere, or if no-one was available for the Parish Manager to judge the event herself.**

[Cllr Gillard left the meeting at 8.07 pm.]

907. CIVIC PROTOCOLS

Members noted the information but due to the preferred location for a flagpole being the front of Community Office to avoid the adjacent telegraph pole, the Parish Manager was asked to research prices of poles with internal ropes. Members endorsed the more durable stitched flags as better quality, with initial purchase of a union flag and St. George's flag. The purchase of a parish council flag could follow at a later stage.

908. GRIT BINS

Members noted that the County Council Officer had unfortunately not yet been able to review the locations and information submitted but additional staff were being recruited to hopefully improve the situation.

909. PARISH COUNCIL BYELAWS

Resolved that the draft document be adopted, subject to the revisions agreed:

- a) **byelaws for waterways (part 5) be retained as they are pertinent to the brook (more so if flooded);**
- b) **byelaws for prohibition of boats be removed as not pertinent;**
- c) **all areas be described as 'Public Open Space' for consistency (except for two recreation parks;**
- d) **no areas to be designated in Part 2 of Schedule 2;**

Noted that:

- e) in roads where two or more pieces of land were owned that public open space should be referred to as space(s) in the schedule;
- f) the amended byelaws be circulated to all members when sent to the legal department for processing;
- g) that the public consultation could provisionally take place from Easter to Whitsun and be advertised by the District Council (most likely in the Coalville Times and the Community Voice)
- h) additionally it would be promoted via the parish website, noticeboards, railings and open spaces and highlighted with local interest groups.

910. PROPERTY AND LAND MATTERS

Members received the minutes of the Property Management and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 14 March 2019 and noted the decisions taken.

911. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Everitt reported that the last meeting had been to discuss the budget but his concern about the reduction in planning applications being considered by Committee had been confirmed. Officers were making more decisions which he felt was excluding councillors and the public from the democratic process.

912. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No report given.

913. PLANNING MATTERS

a) The Council had been consulted by NWLDC on the following applications and no objections were raised:

REF 19/00200/CLE - Land Rear Of 87A Talbot Street - Certificate of lawful existing use as builders yard and operation of builders business from premises (deadline extension granted to 22/03/19)

REF 19/00207/FUL - 171 Hall Lane - Erection of four dwellings with associated vehicular access and off-street parking (Deadline extension requested to 22/3)

REF 19/00293/FUL - 2 Tressall Road - Single storey side and rear extension (deadline extension granted to 22/03/19)

REF 19/00337/FUL - 67 Leicester Road - Demolition of existing garage and erection of single storey side and rear extensions

b) Decisions notified and approved by the District Council:

REF 19/00037/VCI - 81A North Street - Variation of conditions 1, 6 and 7 of planning permission 18/01146/VCI to provide a detached single garage to serve No. 81A North Street at 81A North Street

914. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES/EVENTS ATTENDED

The Chairman reported he and the Parish Manager had attended the Parish Liaison meeting held at Moira on Tuesday 27 February. Cllr Moulton reported he had attended a meeting of the Thornborough Road Allotment Society and passed the minutes to the Parish Manager.

915. PARISH MANAGER'S REPORT AND MATTERS PENDING

Members noted the report, including the separate conference report that had been circulated, together with the updated list of outstanding council action points.

916. FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Resolved that:

- a) the updated income of £1081.00 received since the last meeting be noted;
- b) the latest payment list and retrospective salary payments of £13523.16 be approved;**
- c) the latest (and amended) income and expenditure report for 2018/19 be noted;
- d) to note the bank balances at last month end were noted as Current Account £56,683.59, Deposit Account £42,084.71 and CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund £145,000.00; a councillor independently scrutinise the latest bank statements after the meeting (undertaken by Cllr Straw);
- e) End of Financial Year – as recommended by the Responsible Finance Officer, the balances for the following cost centre were to be set aside as earmarked reserves to enable commitments to be fulfilled at a future time (subject to any later adjustments/transactions to 31/3/19): Election Contingency £2500, Community Initiatives £899, Salt Bins £1050, Contingencies for Community Office £241, Park Hall Running Costs £1742, Railways Station Running Costs/Survey £956, Renewals Fund Land/Buildings -£1805 (to be adjusted) Council New Projects/Initiatives £4712, Fencing -£4200 (to be adjusted).**
- f) The Parish Manager be delegated authority to process and pay invoices for salaries/goods/services received by 31 March 2019 to reduce liabilities being carried forward, with retrospective approval to be given at the April meeting.**

917. STAFF APPRAISALS AND INCREMENTAL REVIEWS

Resolved that

- a) the Parish Manager's verbal report on the completion of satisfactory staff appraisals and incremental awards from 1 April 2019 be noted;**

- b) the Staffing Committee make arrangements to set a date for the Parish Manager's appraisal and incremental review.

Full signature of Chairman: Date:

Cllr Colledge reminded members of the Easter Egg Hunt on 14 April at Park Hall and asked for help at the event and for help in promoting this opportunity to the local community.

The meeting terminated at 8.28 pm.

[Cllr Gillard left the meeting at 8.07 pm.]

Date of next council meeting: Thursday 18 April 2019 at 7 pm