

MINUTES of the MEETING of WHITWICK PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2019 at 7 pm at Park Hall, Whitwick Park, off North Street, Whitwick.

Present: Councillor L Collins (Chairman)

Cllrs A Barker, S Gillard, T Gillard, P Moul, T Oldham, J Straw, R Woodward and M Wyatt [Items 1081-1089 only, except Item 1096]

In Attendance:

Mrs C Tibbles PSLCC, Parish Manager/Responsible Finance Officer

22 Members of the public [not all present for all of the meeting]

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1081. APOLOGIES

Cllr L Gillard, L Spence.

1082. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr A Barker declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a signatory at Walkers Flats Allotment 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 P Moul declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a Link Councillor to Whitwick Historical Group and as a member of Whitwick Bowls Club.

Cllr T Gillard declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Hermitage Leisure Centre and the new Leisure Centre.

Cllr S Gillard declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Hermitage Leisure Centre and the new Leisure Centre.

Later Cllr M Wyatt declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 1096 as a member of the District Council Planning Committee and left the meeting at that point.

1083. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 be approved as a correct record.

1084. COMMUNITY POLICING

With apologies from PSCO Rose who had been unable to attend for operational reasons, there was no summary available. A Beat Surgery was taking place at the Community Office on Saturday 2 November between 10 am and 12 noon.

1085. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Several members of the public asked questions to seek information and support for their objections to planning application Ref 19/01822/FUL. Councillors in turn clarified the planning process and relevant knowledge and experience. The Chairman explained the District Council was the body responsible for making the actual decision, with the parish council being a consultee. The parish council would consider submitting a recommendation but that view was not binding in any way. It was confirmed that at the request of the local District Councillor, the application had been called in for consideration by the Planning Committee so it would not be an officer decision.

For the benefit of public who arrived after the start of the questions, some information was repeated. In accordance with Standing Order 5.5, the 15 minute time limit for public questions was suspended and two extensions voted for by members, to allow a full and frank exchange of information. Areas under question included the following: increase in traffic, noise from potential generators, vague information on application for key factors, fear of retaliation and intimidation as objection to the application would be in the public domain, if the District Council could be requested to redact personal information, previous neighbour issues with the site owner, confirmation that a District Planning Officer had undertaken a site visit, temporary changes made to the site before the site visit was made, existing noise and nuisance from neighbouring site, lack of enforcement on house built without planning permission, insufficient chimney for existing heating installed in a building on site, maintenance of the land, length of time caravans allowed to stay on site, anticipated changes to quality of life, site would devalue neighbouring properties, no need for 72% of traveller allocation to be within Whitwick, parking, safety, highways, access, environmental issues, land contamination, lack of reports, past refusal to development plan for 6 houses on access grounds, rules should be applicable to both objectors and applicant, anticipated increase in noise, ability to submit views after the deadline (which was given as a guide), did late notification to neighbours invalidate the process.

The Chairman suggested bringing forward Item 1096 so that members of the public could observe the debate and decision by members on all planning applications.

1096. PLANNING MATTERS

[Cllr Wyatt declared a non-pecuniary interest in this matter as a member of the District Council Planning Committee and withdrew from the meeting at 7.59 pm so did not take part in the discussion or the vote.]

a) Applications

The Council had been consulted by NWLDC on the following applications and it was resolved that:

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 17/10/19 – extension granted for this re-consultation) – objections be raised on the following grounds: the access is insufficient for the size of vehicles using the site and insufficient provision for parking, contrary to Policy IF7, operation would be hazardous and safety of others compromised at this location which is a known hot-spot for speeding traffic, as borne out by recent Community Speedwatch and police operations.

REF 19/01822/FUL - 36 Brooks Lane - Change of use of land for the siting of eight touring caravans for gypsies (deadline 25 October): objections be raised on the following grounds: contrary to policy H7 the siting of eight caravans in this location is excessive for Whitwick; the current need for pitches within the District should be re-assessed on latest information since the adoption of the Local Plan and spread more evenly throughout the District; contrary to policy IF7 parking and access is wholly insufficient for the size of vehicles planned for the site; the increased traffic flow would be detrimental to public safety on this busy road; location of the access on a bend in the road would be hazardous to other road users and pedestrians; insufficient information provided on the application in regard to nature of caravans and accompanying vehicles, no operation plans specified for management of the site, insufficient details on installation of adequate services for water, power, sanitation and drainage; current unauthorised use of site for builders plant and equipment; insufficient space identified for turning and storage of new vehicles; inaccurate information provided on the application in regard to trees and hedgerows which were believed to be on site; contrary to policy D2 the site would be incompatible with the landscape and not in keeping with the visual character and amenity of this residential location; operation would be environmentally hazardous unless removal of contaminated land was safely concluded, under strict supervision and enforcement; safety of others compromised at this location which is a known hot-spot for speeding traffic, as borne out by recent Community Speedwatch and police operations

REF 19/01931/OUT - Land Adjacent To 98 Church Lane - Erection of two storey dwelling (outline; access and layout) (deadline 28 October) - no objections be raised

REF 19/01966/CLP – 202 Leicester Road - Certificate of lawful proposed use for alterations to existing roof to provide for a hip to gable roof extension, insertion of rear dormer and insertion of velux roof lights (principal roofslope) (deadline 30 October) - no objections be raised

(b) Decisions

NWLDC have now approved the following applications:

REF 19/00561/FUL: Land At Cademan Street - Demolition of existing building and erection of a detached dwelling with associated off street parking

REF 19/01215/FUL - 7 Whitwick Moor Thringstone - Erection of extension and alteration

REF 19/01601/FUL - 56 Coverdale - Proposed two-storey side extension

REF 19/01636/TPO - Beech House, Loughborough Road - Felling of 1no. Beech Tree (protected by TPO T113) (Members noted the number of trees lost at this location over recent years.)

REF 19/01869/NMA – Land Adjoining 191 Loughborough Road - Non-material amendment to application 18/00865/FUL to allow for alterations to the site layout and private driveway at

Additionally: REF 19/01566/FUL - Land Adjacent To A511 Stephenson Way - Construction of a temporary vehicular site access off the A511 for construction traffic and related works in association with planning application ref. 19/01343/FULM **Application has been WITHDRAWN.**

[Cllr Wyatt re-joined the meeting at 8.06 pm.] Many members of the public withdrew at this time.

1086. LEISURE CENTRE PROVISION

- a) New Leisure Centre – the District Council had approved the Planning Application for the new building and site design on Tuesday 15 October.
- b) Future of Hermitage Leisure Centre – a public consultation event was being held for residents and leisure site users on Monday 4 November at the Hermitage Leisure Centre between 5 pm and 9 pm to explore future preferences for the old site (and building) after the new Leisure Centre opened on the former golf course. Latest information could be found on the NWLDC website: https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/leisure_centres_project. Members discussed some of the options that had been shared by the District Council at a recent meeting, contrary to some past reassurances.

1087. PARISH PROJECTS – WORKING PARTY/LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Resolved/noted:

- a) **Project Working Party – resolved to accept the recommendation of the County Council to install new ‘parish’ posts for the VAS signs to avoid a lengthy delay if waiting for their scheduled stress testing (date unknown but possibly March 2021).** The Responsible Finance Officer clarified the estimated budget of £320 for testing would now be insufficient and the £530 that remained in contingency (£7500 allocated budget) would need supplementing from general reserves to cover the extra cost. Quotes for installing parish posts would be sought. County Cllr Gillard offered to ask the County Council what the timescale would be for testing of lampposts.
- b) Christmas Lights Working Party: meetings had been held and Ms Colledge demonstrated the prototype that she had made and tested. **Resolved to purchase own equipment and for businesses to be invited to contribute to new scheme;**
- c) Standing Orders Review Meeting: further date(s) need to be set;
- d) Civic Protocols Link Councillor: no report given;
- e) Defibrillator Link Councillors: no report given;
- f) Flood Action Plan Link Councillor: no report given;
- g) Grit Bins Link Councillor: no information been made available so Cllr Wyatt wished to relinquish the role;
- h) Quarry Link Councillor: the Quarry had been notified of Cllr Woodward’s appointment;
- i) Website Link Councillor: no report given;
- j) Whitwick Historical Group Link Councillor(s): Cllr Moulton reported the new lights had been installed at the Old Railway Station building and thanks had been received

1088. CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIVES

Resolved that:

- a) **Cllrs Moulton and Woodward be nominated as Parish Representatives to serve on the Audit and Governance Committee of North West Leicestershire District Council;**
- b) **no nominations made to participate in the voluntary Snow Warden Scheme;**
- c) **appointment of a voluntary Tree Warden was deferred;**

1089. INDUCTION, TRAINING AND FUTURE PLANNING

Resolved/noted:

- a) confirmation that all members had attended, or committed to attend a future event (where possible) and read the training information on the Code of Conduct Training provided by NWLDC Legal Services;
- b) that members meet on 14 November at 7 pm to review the Visioning Outcomes, with the Skills Audit to be reviewed** (forms to be brought to the meeting by Cllrs S Gillard, T Gillard, Moulton, Oldham and Spence);
- c) no information was confirmed on what prior financial training had been attended by members;
- d) that members consider at the next meeting whether to establish a Finance Working Party to assist with the budget preparations;
- e) the report of the SLCC National Conference by the Administrative Assistant would be circulated at a later date.

[Cllr Wyatt left the meeting at 8.44 pm.]

1090. COMMUNITY SUPPORT/EVENTS

Resolved/noted:

- a) to prepare a draft scheme to recognise Local Citizens for their contribution to the community of Whitwick and explore options of what may be appropriate ways to do this;**
- b) to expand on the work of the Community Safety Champion by the parish council holding a free self-defence training event in Park Hall, which the Chairman would organise and attend to support a qualified instructor (arrangements to be made);**
- c) to explore additional locations for future bench installations on non-parish land, with Bonchurch Close and Brooks Lane being suggested;**
- d) to provisionally start the community planting at Thornborough Road on 26 October at 10 am (+with councillors to confirm attendance to the Chairman) to improve parish owned open spaces within Whitwick;**
- e) agreeing in principle to hold a parish event for VE Day commemorations in May 2020, booking Park Hall and applying for a £250 grant from NWLDC towards the event, details to be finalised later.**

1091. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Members noted the minutes of the PMGP Committee meeting held on 10 October 2019 and the delegated decisions taken.

1092. VACANCY - PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Resolved that Cllr Straw be appointed to fill the vacancy on the PMGP Committee for the remainder of the civic year.

1093. NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT

Resolved/noted:

- a) that the statutory notice to advertise the conclusion of the External Audit be received, noting that the audit reply was received whilst the Parish Manager was on leave and therefore the notice was published one week later than the 30 September deadline;**
- b) to note the 'except for' matters reported by PKF Littlejohn, instructing that Box 4 figures should be slightly reduced and Box 6 figures increased by the same amount to re-allocate the cost of staff training; resolved to seek further advice from LRALC as when the Responsible Finance Officer had discussed**

the query with the auditor, the guidance had been described as ambiguous and this instruction was contrary to the practices previously undertaken by her satisfactorily since 2002. Members would be updated when a response was received.

1094. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr T Gillard reported current District Council matters. No questions were asked.

1095. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr T Gillard reported current County Council matters.

1096. Planning Matters discussed earlier in the meeting – see page 425

1097. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES/EVENTS ATTENDED

No reports given.

1098. PARISH MANAGER'S REPORT AND MATTERS PENDING

Members noted the report, with many additional late communications also received, including the Strategic Unitary Business Case from the County Council for a Vision for Local Government in Leicestershire, which would be placed on the next agenda; late notification of Modern Slavery campaign events in the county.

1099. FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Resolved that:

- a) the income of £147,650.25 and £7633.15 received since the last meeting be noted;
- b) the latest payment list and retrospective salary payments of £14,517.14 and £18,227.80 be approved;**
- c) the latest income and expenditure report for 2019/20 be noted;
- d) the bank balances at last month end were noted as Unity current a/c £271,853.07; Unity Deposit a/c £12,178.336 and CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund £145,000 be noted;
- e) following bank charges being levied each month and the cheque cancellation charge for a recent transaction, members urged the internet signatories (Cllrs Barker, Spence, Straw and Woodward) move ahead with making BACS payments to replace most of the cheques.**

Full signature of Chairman: Date:

[Cllr Wyatt withdrew from the meeting for Item 1096.]

[Cllr Wyatt left the meeting at 8.44 pm.]

The meeting terminated at 8.57 pm.

Date of next council meeting: Thursday 21 November 2019 at 7 pm