

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

Present: Councillor L Collins (Chairman)

Cllrs A Barker, L Gillard [Items 2010 - 2028 only], S Gillard, T Gillard [Items 2010 - 2028 only], P Moulton [Items 2016(b)- end only], T Oldham, L Spence, J Straw, R Woodward and M Wyatt [Items 2010 – 2018a only]

In Attendance:

Mrs C Tibbles PSLCC, Parish Manager/Responsible Finance Officer

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2010. APOLOGIES

Cllr P Moulton would be late arriving due to traffic delays.

2011. 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 Moulton would wish to declare a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a Link Councillor to Whitwick Historical Group and as a member of Whitwick Bowls Club.

2012. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

2013. COMMUNITY POLICING

With apologies from PSCO Rose who had been unable to attend for operational reasons, the Parish Manager read a summary of recent incidents and crimes in Whitwick that included the following types of incidents: 6 suspicious, 5 thefts, 1 with violence, 8 motoring, 2 environmental and 2 ASB. Whitwick Park had been the site of some anti-social behaviour and abuse to Rangers, which was being addressed with the support of the police. A Beat Surgery was taking place at the Community Office on Sunday 1 December between 10 am and 12 noon.

2014. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that public questions were invited only during this agenda item. Several members of the public raised their objections to planning application Ref 19/01931/OUT and explained historic factors relating to this site. Councillors in turn clarified the planning process, explaining the District Council was the body responsible for making the actual decision, with the parish council being a consultee. At the request of the parish council, District Councillor Tony Gillard undertook to call in the application for consideration by the Planning Committee. A member of the public commended the parish council for the new railings installed at Parsonwood Hill Recreation Space, particularly noting that real results were now being seen in the village by a young council that cared to make a difference. A member of the public commended the parish council for the display of poppies that had looked tremendous. A member of the public criticised the District Council for the lack of information about candidates for the general election – a list was available at the meeting (sourced by the Parish Manager from the District Council website) and a request was made for this to be displayed by the parish council on a local noticeboard. A member of the public commended the District Council for feedback given to confirm their views expressed at the recent Hermitage Leisure Centre site consultation.

2015. LEISURE CENTRE PROVISION

District Cllr T Gillard reported that 200 people had attended the consultation event held on 4 November about the future of the Hermitage Leisure Centre site, with suggestions of the activities, uses and sports being supported. The public consultation had been made available on-line by NWLDC for people who had been unable to attend the event at: <https://consultation.nwleics.gov.uk/communities/hermitage-site/> until Tuesday 3 December. 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.

2016. POLICY ADOPTION AND REVIEW

Resolved/noted:

- a) **to adopt the policy (based on the District Council model) to give procedures to follow on the Death of a Senior Royal, with agreement reached that:**
 - i) **the policy be enacted for persons listed at nos. 1-3 (national figures) and (g) for holders of the title Honorary Freeman of the Parish of Whitwick (local figures);**
 - ii) **when the District Council provided the Book of Condolence for the Monarch, it would be hosted at Park Hall for a minimum period of 9 am – 1 pm each day of the mourning period, with a rota of volunteers to supplement the Parish Manager’s availability, with a review mechanism in place to react to public demand as necessary so that some evenings and weekends were available for signing and laying of flowers outside Park Hall;**
 - iii) **Hire Conditions – to amend the hire regulations so that the council had the right to cancel a booking if Park Hall is required for emergency council use; to formally notify existing hirers of this change if agreed;**
 - iv) **that an action plan be quickly put in place to ensure appropriate resources are available;**

[Cllr Moulton arrived at 7.31 pm.]

- b) members discussed the proposal to reduce general reserves from 50% of the annual expenditure figure to 30% and commented on the need to be able to respond to local disasters, emergencies that might befall the parish council, how to react to uninsured incidents, the restriction on being able to respond effectively to changing circumstances, the agreement that earmarked reserves should be built up, ability of the council to continue to move forward, the scope to reduce the precept, public perception of reserves being held, the guidelines set by NALC and the background information provided by the Responsible Finance Officer on the council's fiduciary responsibility. **Following an amendment and partial deletion by Cllr Spence to the original proposal, it was resolved that the Financial Reserves Policy would change to read "the level of General Reserves is a matter of judgement and so this policy does not attempt to prescribe an overall level. However, the current level of General Reserves to be held by the council is targeted to be a minimum of 35% of the annual expenditure figure.** Under Standing Order 5.14, a request was made for a recorded vote, which was as follows: In favour - Cllrs Collins, L Gillard, S Gillard, T Gillard, Spence, Wyatt; Against – Clls Barker, Moulton, Straw and Woodward; Abstained – Cllr Oldham.
- c) **to adopt the Terms of Reference for Link Councillors, with the amendment of item 7 to read: Be aware of potential conflict of interest if you are/become a member of the organisation.** The Parish Manager would circulate the document to local groups.
- d) **to adopt the updated Terms of Reference for the Property Management and General Purposes Committee, in line with previously discussed amendments.**

2017. APPOINTMENT OF RESERVE MEMBERS / WORKING PARTY / LINK COUNCILLOR

Resolved/noted:

- a) **to appoint Cllr Straw as a reserve member of the Staffing Committee and any member of the council if required and to appoint any member of the council to be a reserve member of the Appeal Committee (subject to there being no conflict with the matters under consideration);**
At the request of some members, the joint meeting of both Committees was deferred and agreement reached to meet on Thursday 9 January 2020 at 7 pm in Park Hall.
- b) **to appoint a Finance Working Party to review new year budget plans against previous year income and expenditure, draft a schedule of potential virements when required, establish medium – long term financial plans, support the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO), with any recommendations reported and submitted to the Council for consideration. Members appointed were Cllrs Barker, Collins, Moulton, Straw and Woodward.** Meetings would be held on Wednesdays 27 November and 4 December at 7 pm in the Community Office for those members available to attend.
- c) **to delegate responsibility for grit bins to the Property Management and General Purposes Committee and no longer have a Link Councillor.**

2018. POLICY PROJECTS – WORKING PARTY/LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Resolved/noted:

- a) **Project Working Party –** County Cllr Gillard had asked the County Council when Whitwick lampposts would be tested and it had again been confirmed this was not

known. Quotations had been circulated. **Resolved, on the recommendation of the Working Party, to accept the quotations from Kiwa for testing and calculations (estimated to be £890) plus some post installations and from Westcotec (estimated to be £7350 for 2 battery operated signs, download options and spare brackets). An action plan could be drafted by the working party to work towards installation.**

[Cllr Wyatt left the meeting at 8.02 pm.]

- b) Christmas Lights Working Party: Ms Colledge reported that decorations and lights had been sourced in two designs, invitations had been extended to local businesses and hopefully up to 24 lights might be displayed this year. Thanks were given to Cllr S Gillard who had offered to remove a couple of brackets and install any new ones required. The Licence application would be drafted by the Parish Manager, who was awaiting confirmation of participating businesses.
- c) Standing Orders Review Meeting: no further meetings held;
- d) Civic Protocols Link Councillor: draft policy awaited from Cllr Spence;
- e) Defibrillator Link Councillors: Cllr Barker hoped to get some costings and Woodstock in Whitwick offered some interest and support for this project;
- f) Flood Action Plan Link Councillor: no report given;
- g) Grit Bins: the first 4 bins were being installed on the following morning;
- h) Quarry Link Councillor: the Quarry had informed the Parish Manager that the meeting scheduled for 26 November had been postponed to 19 May 2020;
- i) Website Link Councillor: no report given;
- j) Whitwick Historical Group Link Councillor(s): Cllr Moulton reported that minutes of meetings were passed to the Parish Manager, plans for next year may include a new book. Financial support was welcome and membership was promoted at £20 for dual membership;
- k) Hermitage Leisure Centre Steering Group – no meeting yet held.

Following requests from a member for reports to be given by Link Councillors in accordance with the agendas for the Property Management & General Purposes Committee, members discussed the procedures and were reminded that the system worked well until recently, with no changes if timely and regular reports were given.

2019. CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIVES

Resolved that:

- a) **the parish council wished to see the current 3 tier system remain, with the County Council, District Councils and Parish/Town Councils;**
- b) **the parish could benefit by the appointment of voluntary Tree Warden(s) and volunteers could be appealed for from interested residents;**
- c) **due to short notice, an opportunity from the Crime Commissioner was noted and future consideration given next year to making a nomination in the Safer Community Celebration;**
- d) **draft Equality Strategy 2020-2024 by the County Council – deferred;**
- e) Cllr T Gillard had attended a meeting and become aware of changes to the Highway Code which reduced potential solutions, although the County Council could (for a fee) provide a T Bar to highlight the entrance driveway on Leicester Road; **support be given to Whitwick Scout Group, in conjunction with the local policing team, for raising awareness to neighbours with letters explaining about parking problems;**
- f) **to respond to the request from LRALC, and future requests, by the Parish Manager nominating the longest serving member (chosen at random) who**

met the criteria to be entered for consideration for attendance at a future Royal Garden Party;

- g) **Urban Wildlife Verges – to proceed with applications at a future date to have permission for planting wildlife seeds at suitable locations, subject to budgetary provision.**

2020. GRANT APPLICATIONS

Resolved that the applications be approved for:

- a) **for £250 for Woodstock in Whitwick towards cost of free community Christmas event on 8 December;**
- b) **for £130 for Whitwick Scout Group towards cost of suggested road safety improvement for junction of their driveway on Leicester Road;**
- c) **for £250 for North West Leicestershire Society of Model Engineers towards cost of improving disabled access to garden railway with provision of hard standing areas within garden;**
- d) **for £250 for St John the Baptist Church in Whitwick towards the cost of siting Christmas Tree, installing electrics and making good safety procedures for the annual Whitwick Christmas Carols event.**

2021. INDUCTION, TRAINING AND FUTURE PLANNING

Resolved/noted:

- a) the training opportunities from LRALC;
- b) confirmation that Cllr Straw and Cllr Moulton had attended past parish council financial training events; **that a budget training presentation for all members would be given within a future meeting before the draft budget was adopted;**
- c) an ACAS training event in Leicester;
- d) deferred the review of the Skills Audit as some replies still outstanding;
- e) noted the review of the Visioning Outcomes would be incorporated into a new Parish Improvement Plan, which members felt would be beneficial to Whitwick;
- f) noted the report by the Administrative Assistant who had attended part of the SLCC National Conference;
- g) **to approve the request of the Parish Manager to attend the SLCC Practitioners Conference on 26/27 February 2020 at a cost of £299;**

2022. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Deferred – minutes not yet available.

2023. FUNDING APPLICATION – POCKET PARKS

Resolved to accept the offer from Cllr Spence to draft 3 funding applications for park improvements on parish land, for consideration at the next council meeting with submission required by 31 December 2019 and project completion aimed for by 31 March 2020.

2024. DECEMBER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved that the meeting should take place as scheduled at the normal time.

2025. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr T Gillard reported current District Council matters. A question was asked about the current status of the Marlborough Square re-development.

2026. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr T Gillard reported current County Council matters.

2027. PLANNING MATTERS

a) Applications

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

REF 19/02033/FUL – Land Off Loughborough Road - Erection of four detached dwellings, associated access and carports [Deadline 7/11/19 – extension granted] objections be raised on the following grounds: that the proposals fall outside the limits of development and should not be permitted; additionally it was noted that substantial loss of trees had already occurred at the location, e.g. the loss of "David's Wood" that previously existed on local maps;

REF 19/02065/FUL - 16 St Bernards Road - Erection of a two-storey and single-storey rear extension (Deadline 22/11/19) no objections be raised

REF 19/02191/FUL - 2 Mickleden Green - Erection of a two-storey side/rear extension (amended scheme) (Deadline 4/12/19) no objections be raised

REF 19/01931/OUT - Land Adjacent To 98 Church Lane – (AMENDED Re-consultation) Erection of two storey dwelling (outline; access and layout). The deadline given was 15 November and approval was given by District Council before a recommendation could be submitted by the parish council.

(b) Decisions

NWLDC have now approved the following applications:

REF 19/01885/CLP - 64 Rosslyn Road - Certificate of lawful proposed use for the erection of a single-storey rear extension and detached garage

2028. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES/EVENTS ATTENDED

Cllr Barker referred to his attendance at the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service, when a moving speech of thanks was given by the Whitwick Branch of the Royal British Legion when the Parade participants were dismissed. He felt it was a tremendous achievement for the branch to be looking forward to its centenary in 2 years time and that new participants might want to be involved that year.

The Chairman reported that bulbs had been planted at Thornborough Road and Car Hill Rock, with about 800 bulbs still to be planted if anyone wished to volunteer.

[Cllrs L Gillard and T Gillard left the meeting at 8.56 pm.]

2029. PARISH MANAGER'S REPORT AND MATTERS PENDING

Members noted the report, with some additional late communications also received, including the date for the first parish Grit Bins to be installed (22 November), an emergency road closure at Gracedieu Road for repairs to a water main, sample plaque designs for memorial benches and a Celebrating Great Communities event on 5 December by the County Council.

2030. FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Resolved that:

- a) the income of £8,421.00 received since the last meeting be noted;
- b) the latest payment list and retrospective salary payments of £24,023.64 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 £255,088.64; Unity Deposit a/c £12,178.33 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, the internet signatories were urged to contact Unity Trust Bank for assistance with logging on (Cllrs Spence, Straw and Woodward). Cllr Barker confirmed he had successfully logged on to enable the council to move ahead with making BACS payments to replace most of the cheques.**

Full signature of Chairman: Date:

[Cllr Moulton arrived at 7.31 pm.]

[Cllr Wyatt left the meeting at 8.02 pm.]

[Cllrs L Gillard and T Gillard left the meeting at 8.56 pm.]

The meeting terminated at 9.04 pm.

Date of next council meeting: Thursday 12 December 2019 at 7 pm