

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Monday 2nd February 2015 commencing 8.00pm.

PRESENT

Chairman	Mr. H. Butterworth Mr. K. Brooks Mr. V. Aldridge Mrs. L. Lucas Mr. J. Donahue Mrs. P. Slatter
Clerk	Ms. J. Welham

1. To receive apologies for absence

None.

The Chairman advised that Cllr. H. Ainley was absent as he had sent a letter to him resigning from the Parish Council.

2. To receive declarations of interest

None.

3. **Public Forum**: Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council. With the permission of the Chairman, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise. The owners of Mallards Cottage on The High Street to talk about the proposed white line plan.

4. Agree Minutes Parish Council Meeting 5th January 2015

Item 3.

Correction, spelling mistake it is Mr. Prater.

Item 7.

Correction, The planning Committee did not meet for this application as stated is was refused by the Planning Officers.

Item 12.

Correction, The Parish Council felt that section 12 of the draft 5th January minutes, already presented on the Whitchurch on Thames website included wording which was ambiguous. The correction should read;

After discussion, the Parish Council agreed that the current arrangements with meetings every two months was insufficient for the consideration of the growing volume of work expected of councillors. Accordingly, a parish council meeting every month was proposed and agreed. It was also mentioned that emails were exchanged, these were in regard to two subjects. This email contact was unavoidable due to the short time span available – immediately before Christmas and the New Year. This email contact was noted at the time as undesirable and unrepresentative of the manner in which the parish council usually act and make decisions: hence the statement” not good practice and had to stop”.

The subjects in question were:

1. the discussions and decision for the parish council to adopt the document that was presented as a challenge to the bridge company’s proposal to raise toll charges.

2. Discussions about the proposal for white lines in the High Street and meeting time and date between the highways officer and a member or members of the parish council regarding the parking problems on the High Street.

The Clerk to make corrections to these draft minutes and recirculate.

Now the PC are meeting monthly the PC agreed that “Draft Minutes” should not be posted to the public website, which is not standard practice, only “Approved and Signed” minutes should be posted.

5. High Street – White Line proposal

The clerk had the final costs from OCC for the revised proposal that was submitted as agreed at the PC meeting on 5th January. Mr & Mrs Garrett “Mallards” expressed concerns regarding the scheme and requested that the detail be made clear. The matter deferred to the next PC meeting for final decision.

6. Village Green – review and report

Cllr. Slatter reported that Mr. Prater who resides in the new property adjacent to the VG has offered to donate 6 ornamental trees for the VG from his old property at Goring that is being demolished. Mr. Prater has kindly offered to donate the trees and get them planted at his expense.

Currently the trees cannot be identified as they are bare but within a few more weeks they should be recognisable as to which species etc.

The suggested location for planting them was along the boundary of the VG fence with the horse field. Cllr. Donahue expressed concern and requested that the type of tree and the planting position should be referred to Wothabs for their more expert advice. Cllr. Slatter objected to this and felt that the decision should be a PC decision as the PC own the Green.

Cllr. Brooks suggested that he remembered some time ago that planting along the fence line had an issue but he could not remember why, it may have been for water utilities running along this line.

It was agreed that the type of trees offered be identified before any final decision to planting location be made, Clerk to follow up.

Cllr. Slatter then reported about progress on the Pavilion. A potential supplier had visited the site and given a quotation, the Clerk had also contacted two other potential suppliers for “estimated pricing”. All had been sent a copy of the plan that Cllr. Ainley had drawn up previously, so they all were pricing for the same footprint. There was a lot of variation in the pricing.

The next steps to be,

The supplier who had visited the site and was most local had offered to take Cllr. Slatter to a reference site, this to be arranged. Clerk to obtain more detail from the other suppliers regarding specification so a comparison can be made.

Cllr. Slatter raised the question of the ongoing maintenance of the village green and the cost of doing this. She proposed that charges be made for the use of the VG and that they be implemented if possible by April. The various sports clubs that use the green, the football and the cricket clubs would be charged. Also the School cannot use the VG as an extension of their playground for sports as they are a County Council funded school so should be paying for the use of the facility. The Clerk to follow up with the School and obtain from other parishes what they charge for their recreation facilities.

7. Reports from other Groups/Committees

Tapag

Richard Wingfield absent so no report.

Village Hall

Stephen Trinder absent, Cllr. Lucas who is on the committee reported that there were no major issues. Cllr. Brooks has joined the VHMC.

8. District Councillors Report

Cllr. Slatter reported that due to the fire at SODC offices the entire building may need to be demolished and rebuilt. Some staff are now working from the Abingdon premises owned by OCC and some staff are working from home, but most services are back up and running. Howberry Park the adjacent to SODC offices in Crowmarsh have kindly offered meeting room facilities free of charge. Cllr. Slatter has a new email address - pearl.slatter@btinternet.com.

9. Planning

Cllr. Aldridge reported that there were no new applications.

One Lawful Development Certificate for Walnut Tree cottage to demolish an existing extension to the rear and rebuild it. The Certificate was notification only and does not require the PC's comment or recommendation.

10. Village Maintenance/Environment

Cllr. Brooks reported that the new notice board had been delivered. He will wait until the weather is better before looking at installing it.

He also brought up the topic of the dead elm tree in Manor Road. The Clerk had been contacted by the Arboricultural Officer from OCC about this tree stating it had to be removed. The tree is on Parish Council Land.

The Clerk had obtained a quotation from Kings Tree Surgeons, a contractor who the PC have used before, the price for removal is £540.

The PC agreed and Clerk to instruct that the work be carried out.

11. Sustainability/Allotments

Cllr. Donahue advised that the Allotment AGM was coming up he will report back after this meeting.

He wished to give a report regarding the War Memorial project which he felt had not been fully explained by the councillor from Goring Heath.

Following up from the last PC meeting, he presented the overall process that he intends to follow working jointly with representatives from the Goring Heath PC in investigation improvements to the joint Whitchurch War Memorial.

Cllr Donahue thought he had discussed this process at a high level in the past when raising it to the council at other meetings, but given that some members are new and the reactions raised by some at the last meeting it is clear that the process is not clear.

- Some Background to the project:
 - The project was initiated by Cllr. Martin Wise of the Goring Heath Council with the intention of making some improvements to the existing War memorial during the period of 2014-2017 100th anniversary of WW I.
 - Some of the improvements under investigation are:
 - Improved access via road where it is currently difficult, particularly for elderly people.
 - Memorial plaque giving some history of residents in the Wars recently done by a local researcher in Woodcote.
 - Re-establishment of the memorial 'steeple' to its full height pre-1989 storm damage.
 - Improved sitting area with landscaping including a border of shrubs.
 - Professional cleaning of memorial.

- The process for completing the project will include the following steps:
 - Develop up to three options for presentation to the public – currently in progress ahead of open days.
Public consultation and collection of feedback on option at public open days at both Goring Heath and Whitchurch Village Halls – targeting April – after publication in March Bulletin and WOT web-site.
 - Finalisation of preferred option based on feedback
 - Submit to formal proposal for grant to War Memorial Trust – quarterly submission deadline of 30th June or 30th September – They offer Grants of £3,00 - £30,000.
 - Based on results of the grant submission– a decision would be made on:
 - What remaining funds are required and how they could be raised
 - Formal request for any support needed from PCs
 - Develop a timeline for the project including any additional fund-raising required
 - Current assumption is that a decision on design, grant, and fundraising to be made during 2015, with any agreed upgrades likely to happen in 2016/17.

- The quotes that Cllr. Martin Wise gave of £16,000 for the full steeple repair, land landscaping options, or £6,000 for just the landscaping options were meant to be indicative, and he certainly was not asking the council for any approval or commitment of funds.
 - Current rough assumptions are that the £16,000 steeple replacement option would only happen if a grant was approved, and the remainder would be a combination of public fundraising and PC funds split between the two councils, likely spread out over 2-3 years.
 - When the project gets to the point where we are asking for PC commitment of any funds, it will be made quite clear.

- Cllr. Donahue invited Cllr. Wise to brief the PC as he wanted the PC to have the opportunity to provide feedback on the initial design early in the process, before the public consultation. The following specific feedback was noted:
 - At least two people stated reservations about the red-brick landscaping being out of keeping with the memorial’s simple design.
 - Cllr. Lucas indicated a concern about the costs and responsibility for maintenance of new shrubs, but also indicated a desire to reinstate the full steeple if funds could be raised.

- Cllr. Donahue intends on keeping the PC informed and engaged throughout the process.

The majority of the Parish Council were not supportive of the changes to the war memorial and it was agreed that no funding would be made available as stated in the minutes of 5th January 2015 Agenda Item 4.

12. Finance – Approve Payments/note receipts

Payments

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
11/01/2015	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	177	£131	Annual Software Support
01/02/2015	J. Welham	SO	£391	Jan Salary
02/02/2015	National Allotment Society	178	£66	Annual membership
02/02/2015	Whitchurch OT Twinning	179	£300	Contribution for twinning visit
02/02/2015	Greenbarnes Ltd	180	£973	Notice Board
Total Payments			1,860.37	

All Approved.
Noted no receipts.

12.1 Quotations/Grants received

The Clerk had received the final quotation from The Community Heartbeat Trust for the Defibrillator.

Total cost including the Case is £1750.00

This does not include installing the case into the phone box, the PC will need to source this.

Awareness session is FOC.

Stephen Trinder has made a kind donation to the PC for this project of £1800.

The PC agreed to go ahead.

13. Other Matters for Chairman, PC to consider.

The Chairman reported that he had met with PCSO Mark Bell and the smart water project was progressing well with 74% uptake. The main area where there had been little response was the High Street. Mark Bell will be visiting the High Street again on Friday 6th Feb. The PC to circulate flyers to the properties in advance.

14. Note date of next meeting Monday 2nd March 2015.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed..... Date.....