

# WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 Village Hall.

## **Present:**

Cllr Harry Butterworth (chairman), Cllr Vincent Aldridge, Cllr. Nigel Grove, Cllr. Lindsay Austin, Cllr. Keith Brooks, Cllr. Matilda Oppenheimer, Cllr. Jim Donahue. Jenny Welham Parish Clerk.

## **In attendance:**

District Councillor Pearl Slatter, Stephen Trinder VHMC, Richard Wingfield, Peter Hawley (Traffic & Pavements Advisory Group), Diana Brooks, Geoff Weir Whitchurch Bridge Company.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

County Councillor Dave Sexon. Cllr. Donahue to arrive late.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **3. Agree and sign minutes of previous meetings**

Minutes of meeting 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011 and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 agreed and signed.

### **4. Matters Arising from those Minutes not on the Agenda Elsewhere**

None.

### **5. Public Forum**

Opportunity for members of the public to address the Parish Council on matters of concern.

Geoff Weir addressed the meeting advising that the bridge reconstruction will be delayed by one year as the planning process has taken longer than expected, English Heritage causing the most delay. The Section 106 is being progressed and once signed the Traffic Management Plan will be started with Traffic Officers from OCC and West Berks County Councils.

Drawings were shown of the various pedestrian options, the Parish Council will need to formally respond through the Clerk which option they wish to adopt. The Bridge company will not be constructing the footpaths it will be OCC. The Chairman thanked Geoff for coming and his presentation. Members from TAPAG requested if the scaffolding currently on the bridge could be made more presentable aesthetically, Geoff Weir confirmed that the Bridge company are already looking into this.

*(Cllr. Donahue arrive at the meeting 8.16pm)*

The Chairman invited all the members of public to then speak on the options shown for pedestrian access over the bridge. TAPAG members asked if the public will be given sight of the proposed options and suggested that they be posted on the village website.

There are 5 options forward, Option 0 being do nothing, this option to be discounted. The other 4 options were shown and discussed, it was agreed by Council that the next actions should be that the options should be reviewed by TAPAG and then put on the village website for the public to view and express their preferences. Following this the information to be discussed at a future Council meeting for a final decision to be reached and sent to the Bridge company.

#### **6. District Councillor report**

DC Slatter reported that all January meetings had been cancelled due to lack of business and everything is quiet. She has dealt with questions from residents regarding the trees in Manor Road. DC Slater wished everyone a Happy New Year.

#### **7. County Councillor's Report**

None as absent.

#### **8. Planning Matters**

None.

#### **9. Village Green Update**

Cllr Austin Chairman of the VG Committee reported on the December meeting, a new member had joined the committee Maureen Stovell who has good experience of fund raising. Further fund raising activities are being planned with an event in the Summer. Cllr. Austin will review all the outstanding quotations for work on the green and get updated quotations so everything is ready by end of January when the cooling off period expires. Following this period the website will be updated.

#### **10. Reports from Other Committees**

##### **Traffic & Pavements Advisory Group.**

Richard Wingfield reported that a list of works had been raised with priorities to be passed to County Councillor Sexon as he has a Locality Fund to spend on such repairs/works, copy of the list to be sent to the Clerk. Cllr. Donahue reported that he had spoken to Cllr. Sexon at the weekend regarding verges in Hardwick Rd and he asked if he could to look at wooden post to stop parking on the verges. John Southey has continued to report defects to OCC Highways and is having a good success rate as the work is being done, he will continue with this.

##### **Village Hall Committee**

Stephen Trinder Chairman of the Committee reported, their last meeting being on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2011. The Halls business is proceeding satisfactorily, with revenue slightly above the previous year, despite the increase in charges. Gas and Electricity costs have only risen by a little.

Annual inspection of the electrics has been ordered and minor works in satisfaction of risk assessment survey have been completed – new rear exit door, handrail.

A modest upgrading of the “unisex” toilet will be undertaken in the coming months.

Young Riparians are sadly disbanding, this will release a large storage cupboard and the committee will take the opportunity to review the overall distribution of storage space between the different societies who use the hall.

## Environmental Committee

Cllr Brooks reported following inspection and report from TAPAG the wooden bollard in Muddy Lane has been re-instated and also vegetation cleared from around the light at the top of the Lane and around the 30mph sign on approach from Chalk Hills on Hardwick Rd.

The TAPAG report found the following items for repair to the seat at the end of Manor Rd, clearing of the grips in Eastfield Lane, the repairs had been carried out by Cllr. Brooks and Stephen Trinder. The Council thanked them for their work. Richard Wingfield suggested that small jobs around the village could be put on the website and volunteers requested.

Two salt bins are ordered one for Hardwick Rd and one for Hillside. The cost is £600 for the two, the Council agreed to this cost, the Clerk to progress.

Two new style lights will shortly be installed in the High Street, one opposite the Greyhound Public House which will be re sited to improve lighting to the entrance to Eastfield Lane, this to be funded by the Parish Council and one by the Ferryboat Public House which will be funded by local residents from the area. The poor lighting at the end of Manor Road was discussed, this could be helped if the trees were trimmed back, but street lights may need to be considered.

## 11. Sustainability & Allotment Report

Cllr Donahue reported that the invoice for 25% of the NSLAG fee is due to be raised, he will liaise with the Clerk.

The 21 year lease is due to expire this year and an increase to 50% of the fee needs to be discussed and written into the lease. Several Councillors objected to the fee amount being tied into a 21 year lease term, this needs to be agreed by council before proceeding. The lease terms need to be investigated.

He suggested improvements to the Maze Land, such as use as a Community Orchard, and proposed an Apple Day in October, trees could be planted, Apple Juice made to sell etc. Generally the area needs more trees and landscaping, this could be incorporated into a Diamond Jubilee Project. Also the bricks are crumbling and will need replacing. The Council agreed to these ideas in principle. During March Climate week Cllr Donahue will organise a litter pick within the village this will be advertised on the website.

## 12. Finance

### Payments for Approval

1525	Whitchurch PC	Transfer funds from NatWest	<b>£12,665.38</b>
1	HMRC	Penalty for late return	<b>£400.00</b>
2	RBL Poppy Appeal	Wreaths	<b>£34.00</b>
3	J. Welham	postage costs	<b>£6.82</b>
4	H. Butterworth	Flowers for Clerk leaving	<b>£38.50</b>
5	J. Welham	Home Allowance Jan	<b>£40.00</b>
6	S. Butterworth	Printing cost of Jan Bulletin	<b>£340.00</b>

Approved

Noted no receipts.

The Clerk presented the letter of Engagement from Arrow Accounting to appoint them as the Internal Auditor for the Parish Council. Their fee is £250, and £33 per hour for additional work over and above if required. The Council agreed and approved their appointment.

**13. Other Matters for the Council to Consider**

Cllr Grove pointed out that the Village Notice Board had items out of date. The Chairman reported that this is in hand, Clerk to review.

**14. Close of Meeting & to Note date of Next Meeting**

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Date of next meeting is Monday March 5<sup>th</sup> 2012.

Signed.....Chairman/ Date.....