

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Monday 13th April 2015 commencing 7.30pm.

PRESENT

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

1. To receive apologies for absence

None

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. A very large amount of residents to speak about the charges for clubs to use the village green.

Mr. D. Mattimoe on behalf of the Cricket Club outlined the proposal for the CC to purchase the green for £5K and hold a trust/charter for the governance of the green. He also referred to the agreement between the PC and the CC stating that this did not detail any charges to be levied by either party. He felt very strongly that this agreement had been made in trust and that for the PC to make any charges would be unacceptable.

The Chairman replied saying this was a ridiculous offer and that when the field was privately owned it had been offered to the CC to purchase for £300K and they had not been interested.

Mr. Mattimoe expressed that he thought the Chairman was offensive and a poor negotiator.

Mr. P. Kemp a resident stated he objected to charges as he felt the children that use the green would be penalised. He had concerns about controls over charging and if the amounts would rise year on year and that the green was a community amenity and is paid for by the residents from council tax.

Mrs. N. Taylor stated she felt that individual groups such as clubs that use the green should not be charged as all of the residents in the village in some way use the green, and that she supported that it was paid for by the council tax from residents.

Mr. L. Williams from the Cricket Club said the majority of the Cricket Club who play cricket are not residents of the village, he pointed out that there was an existing agreement between the CC and the PC for a period of 30 years. He also stated that any cost would be met by the CC if necessary.

Mr. J. Steward who in the past cut the outfield for the cricket club said he would be available to do this again. He stated that Cllr. Brooks had spoken to him recently asking if he could do this work for a small fee of £100. Cllr. Brooks denied this, Mr. Steward re affirmed that this was the case and called Cllr Brooks a liar.

Mrs. L. Austin – a previous parish councillor and Chair of the Village Green committee said she felt sad that this is the current situation when so much work had been done to make the green a community asset, and that charges would sit uneasily with the residents.

Mr. M. Butt referred to the Pavilion on the green stating that the CC own that and should they charge for its use? This is a decision that only the CC can make as they own the current building. However it was pointed out to him that should the existing Pavilion be replaced any new Pavilion would be owned by the PC. He questioned this, Mr. Mattimoe confirmed to him that this was the case and it is in the agreement.

A resident of the village spoke (she did not give her name but stated she was a Mother) she felt that the children should be encouraged to use the green to play for recreation and charging was negative to this principle.

It was obvious that there is strong feelings about this and Mr. Kemp asked if any charges had yet been paid. The Clerk confirmed none had been paid. The Chairman advised that this is all on hold at the moment as due to the Elections the PC are in the period of Purdah and no new decisions or projects can take place until the new PC is in place after the May 7th elections.

Following the elections the PC would need to re debate this whole issue, details of this to be advised following a PC meeting after the elections.

4. Agree Minutes Parish Council Meeting 2nd March 2015 & Extra Ordinary Meeting 17th March 2015.

Approved as true record.

5. District Councillors Report

Cllr. Slatter reported that she was now winding down as she is not re standing for election as a District Councillor. She had been in office for many years and worked with Ann Ducker and she felt now was the right time to stand down. She had a wonderful time during her office with SODC and was now enthusiastic to help the village as a member of the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Slatter for all of her hard work on behalf of the PC in the past, all agreed.

Mr. Simister was present with the public and introduced himself as one of the candidates standing for office as District Councillor to replace Cllr. Slatter. Parish Councillor Brooks is also standing for election as District Councillor.

6. Reports from other Groups/Committees

Tapag

Richard Wingfield reported that there were not really and new issues.

He asked about the white lines and repainting of existing lines at the Lower and Upper narrows. The Clerk has chased OCC regarding this, the existing officer was on holiday returning today so she will chase again.

The other outstanding matter was the grips along the hill, this has been chased but so far no reply has been received, Clerk to chase again.

One new item was pot holes in Eastfield Lane are bad and are a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists.

The Clerk advised that Tapag encourage every resident to report this in as OCC are slow at repairing pot holes to lower classified roads, and resident pressure often gets a quicker response.

Village Hall

Cllr. Lucas reported.

The handover transition is now complete. The next task is to move the banking online for a more efficient process.

7. Village Green – review and report

Cllr. Slatter reported that she had visited Flint House with Cllr. Aldridge to view the building that had been erected there by Homestead one of the suppliers approached by the PC for a replacement Pavilion. They were impressed with the workmanship and the organisation at Flint House were very pleased with it.

A representative from Homelodge (another supplier) had visited site and given an estimate of £250K for a replacement, this was in line with the estimate from Pinelog.

Cllr. Slatter reported that she had spoken to Sally Woolhouse WOTHABS regarding the Village Green and WOTHABS involvement. The discussion had been regarding the hedge pruning/maintenance on the VG. Cllr. Brooks mentioned that WOTHABS did not want to actually carry out the work, Cllr. Slatter stated that she was of the impression that they did and she had a report from Sally. The PC then agreed that this work should be undertaken Clerk to contact SW to check if WOTHABS wish to carry out the work or if the PC are to instruct a contractor and report back.

Cllr. Slatter asked Cllr. Donahue if he was a member of WOTHABS he confirmed he was, she pointed out that as he was a member he could only comment on activities discussed as an individual but he could not vote as he had an interest. Cllr. Slatter checked this with the Clerk and the Clerk confirmed this is correct procedure.

This ruling would also apply to the Chairman as he is a member of Tapag.

8. Planning

Cllr. Aldridge reported that he had examined the following application plans,

P15/S0906/HH (Householder) Proposal: Two and single storey extensions following demolition of existing conservatory; single storey flat roof extension & storey and a half side element. Address: 11 Swanston Field Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7HP
Recommendation No Strong Views.

P15/S0745/LB (Listed Building Consent) Proposal: Removal of existing truncated chimney, make good the roof to match existing slate covering and extend the existing rain water gutter. Address: Rosemary Hardwick Road Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HH
Recommendation Approval.

Applications Granted by SODC

P15/S0113/LB Replacement of the three front ground floor windows. (As amended by plans 2015_03_25 to omit the use of double glazing and horns).

Site Location : 4 Whitchurch House High Street Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7EP.

9. Village Environment.

Cllr. Brooks reported that the new notice board was installed. He had given the old one to Peter Woolhouse. The PC made thanks to Peter and Martin for helping with installing the new notice board with Keith.

He advised that there was a mark along the top of the new one and the Clerk had sent a photo to the supplier, with the aim to request a replacement. Clerk to chase this up as to date no reply has been received.

The Clerk asked Cllr. Brooks if he would inspect the trees in the village that the PC owned, he declined stating he did not have enough knowledge. Cllr. Brooks to give contact details to the Clerk of a resident who could do this.

10 Allotments/Sustainability

Cllr. Donohue reported,

He raised the question of the War Memorial project again in regard to the public consultation he was planning to organise for the village. The PC had strong objections to this stating that this matter had been debated and the PC majority did not support this project and it had been agreed by the PC and put in the minutes that there was no funding of any amount to be made available for this project.

There was some discussion regarding this as Cllr. Donohue had been told by the Chairman he could hold a consultation, however the PC had not voted on this and agreed it.

Cllr. Donohue advised that this was a joint project with Goring Heath PC, the Council understood this but also stated that Whitchurch on Thames PC did not support this project as previously debated and agreed by Council.

The PC agreed that the public consultation could only proceed if all reference to Whitchurch Parish Council was removed and any reference to Cllr. Donahue on any of the documentation and notices about this consultation. All responses to be directed to Cllr. Wise of Goring Heath PC.

Allotments – Cllr Donahue had attended their AGM, some change shad been made, a new Treasurer is appointed Mark Arland as Mike Marshall is moving. Rosamund Heath is remaining as Chair. Some new members have taken up plots and they are now near full capacity.

Some of the larger allotment plots will be offered as “half” allotments to encourage rental.

The metal gates into the allotments are in poor repair and the committee have requested if the PC would consider payment for replacing these. The concern expressed by Cllr. Slatter was that it may not just be the gates but the entire fence. The Allotment committee to look into this matter.

11. Finance – Approve Payments/note receipts.

Date Paid	Payee Name	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
13/04/2015	Philip Weir SiteSpider	76.38	Web hosting 1 year
13/04/2015	Arrow Accounting	232.18	Internal Audit
13/04/2015	Village Hall MC	2,000.00	Annula Grant from PC
13/04/2015	OALC 191	154.69	Annual Sub
13/04/2015	Berinsfield	192 218.16	Grass cut March
Total Payments		2,681.41	

Approved.

The 1st half precept payment and CTRS Grant had been paid into the Bank Account by SODC.

11.1 Bank Mandate – update remove signatories and add signatory.

Clerk advised that this item to be deferred to the next meeting when the new council was in place so all signatories can be removed or added. Council agreed.

11.2 Quotations/ Grants received.

None.

11.3 Year End Accounts FY2014/15 – review and sign.

The Clerk presented the Annual Return, no issues arising, the Chairman signed the Annual Return and Summary as balanced and agreed by the Clerk/RFO.

12. Other Matters for Chairman, PC to Consider.

The clerk advised an email had been received from Mr. Butcher regarding a tree in the entrance to Old Gardens, he wanted this tree reduced as it was blocking light to his property. The location of the tree was described as on the PC’s strip of land. The Clerk requested that this be checked by a councillor before a request when into SODC as this area is Conservation and no work can be carried out without their approval.

Cllr. Lucas mentioned weeds in the kerbs in Swanston Field already growing and now was the time to encourage residents to “weed their own strip” outside their properties. Suggested this be in the next Bulletin for May.

13. Note Date for Next Parish Council Meeting Monday 11th May (Annual Parish Council Meeting)

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

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