

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Monday 5th January 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

Mr. H. Ainley, County Cllr Kevin Bulmer.

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. Several members of public who live on The High Street to talk about the proposed white line plan. Mr. Prater resident of the new house on the Village Green.

4. **War Memorial** – update on proposed design from Cllr. Martin Wise Goring Heath PC. Cllr. Wise presented the proposed plan for the changes to the War Memorial. This included a hedge to the peripheral, some new brick paving, a path to the kerb, wheelchair access. The cost for this had been quoted at £8000, the hedge would be an additional cost on top of this.

Mark Hatt has agreed to survey the area for services, cost of this not advised. OCC Highways have been informed and have requested a sketch of what is proposed, they will require an agreement to be signed stating that the PC will meet all street furniture regulations and maintain the area.

Discussion with a stone mason have been held to restore the memorial back to its original design before the top half was broken off by a falling tree branch. The cost would be £8500. There would be associated landscaping and quotes for this are awaited. Advice has been given that a charity should be set up if this project goes ahead for the funds raised. Gift aid could then be applied. The Church have been approached and are supportive.

The PC in the majority agreed that they could not support this project with any funds. Feedback from residents present and gained from the village was that this was not required and the war memorial and area are a quiet place and should remain as it is.

The next step is to hold a public meeting, invite people to come and view the plans, showing the costs (making it clear that the PC were not supporting any funds for the project) and get feedback to see if there is wide public support for this from Whitchurch residents. .

5. Agree Minutes Parish Council Meeting 1st December 2014.

Approved as a True Record.

6. Tapag – proposal for the Lower Narrows, other traffic issues.
Richard Wingfield presented for Tapag;

The meeting that had been held with Keith Stenning OCC Highways and The Chairman, Cllr Aldridge and Cllr. Slatter on Friday 19th December had been successful and the PC are awaiting the proposal back from them, which the Clerk had chased up that day.

Tapag had produced a 2nd version of a plan to mark the Lower Narrows area and the High Street with white lines to designate parking and passing areas to alleviate the current traffic issues caused by parked vehicles.

The plan was discussed in some length, with the toll bridge barrier speed North bound being raised as a possible help to reduced backlog in the pinch point of the Lower Narrows.

Cllr. Slater requested an amendment to the white lines planned on the High Street, asking for the white line to start opposite Mallards front door and run the length finishing at the end of Tudor Cottage. This was agreed by the PC and the residents of Mallards and Tudor Cottage who were present. Cllr. Slatter thanked Richard for his work on producing the plan.

TAPAG to amend the plan and send to the Clerk so it can be sent into OCC Highways.

7. District Councillors Report

Cllr. Slatter reported that SODC Planning Officers had Refused the planning application P14/S3443/0 – Eastfield House. This was good news, however the applicant is expected to go to appeal.

8. Planning

Cllr. Aldridge had been onto SODC website and had seen an application for a property 18 Manor Road for 2 storey side and rear extensions. The hardcopy plans had not yet been received.

9. Finance – Approve Payments/note receipts

Payments

OCC £110.00 License Fee for Hardwick Rd

Berinsfield Community Business £621.60 Maintenance to Village Green and Football pitch.

D. Lucas – £34.00 expenses

J. Welham December Salary

HMRC – December Tax.

All Approved. Noted no receipts.

10. Village Green – review managing, charges, maintenance.

The Chairman proposed due to her knowledge and history with working on the Village Green project at the beginning and being involved with the planning application for the new house that Cllr. Slatter should work with the Clerk on the Village Green management and the project for a new Pavilion for the green. This was voted and all agreed.

As the village green committee are defunct it was also agreed that Cllr. Slatter would be the Parish Councillor who would have responsibility for running the VG with the Clerk and the VG business to be managed from the Parish Council meetings, all agreed.

The matter of charging for use of the sports field was discussed but no firm proposals were finalised. Update on the progress to be presented at the next PC meeting.

11. Other Reports

Defib Project;

The clerk reported that she had spoken to Community Heartbeat organisation advising that the PC wished to proceed and was awaiting a final quotation. It was expected to be no more than £2000.

Village Hall;

Stephen Trinder had no new report.

Environment;

Cllr. Brooks had no major items.

The quotation for a new Notice Board for the PC in the village had been received and it was agreed to accept the quote for the 8 pages of A4 size at £972.53 Inc VAT. Installation would be extra, Cllr.

Brooks will get someone locally to instal.

Cllr. Brooks asked about Agenda items and publishing of agendas. They need to be published 5 days before the meetings. He was concerned that this quotation had not been an agenda, however as the Clerk advised in future there will be an item for Quotation/Grants under the Finance agenda item so any quote can be discussed if presented. This was agreed.

Allotments;

Cllr. Donahue had no new report.

12. Frequency of PC meetings, timing, frequency, audio recording, agenda's.

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 decisions via emails were exchanged with 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.

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 white lines in the High Street and a 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.

It was also agreed that the starting time of the monthly parish council meetings would be 7.30 pm.

Audio recordings of the meetings was debated and all felt that this would be worthwhile. The Chairman and Clerk to investigate suitable devices and costs.

13. Confidential Item

See Appendix 1.

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

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

Signed..... Date..2 Feb 2015.....