

WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Wolston Parish Council held at 7:15pm
on Thursday 1st February 2024 at The Village Hall, Main Street, Wolston

Present: WPC Councillors: Mr T Willis (Chair), Mr G Rainey (Vice Chair), Mrs A Milne, Mr L Wright, Ms S Dobinson, Mr T Ramsay, Ms J Galliford, Mr S Osmond and Mrs D George (Clerk)
WCC Cllr Mrs H Timms
Plus 5 members of the public

The Chair welcomed all in attendance and the meeting began with the Public Forum at 7.15pm
The WPC Meeting began at 7.37pm

167 Apologies -To receive apologies.

Apologies were noted from Cllr D Poole and Cllr S Ward.

168 Declarations of Interest (existence and nature) on items on the Agenda –

Councillors to declare any personal and/or pecuniary interest on items on the agenda.
Cllr T Willis declared a blanket interest in anything Borough related and in item 171 c) as part of the Wolston Conservation Group

Cllr S Dobinson declared an interest in item 172 as a flood victim and 174 as a dog owner

Cllr J Galliford declared an interest in item 174 as a dog owner

Cllr S Osmond declared an interest in item 174 as a dog owner

169 Co-Option of Parish Councillors – to discuss and consider co-option of prospective councillors, to receive any expressions of interest, and, if necessary, vote and co-opt a councillor (TW)

No volunteers came forward.

170 Minutes – To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 11th January 2024

Proposal: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 11th January 2024

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr G Rainey

7 in favour

1 abstention

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 11th January 2024

171 Finance

a) To approve payments made in January 2024.

Proposal: To approve payments made in January 2024

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr A Milne

7 in favour

1 abstention

Resolved: To approve payments made in January 2024

Cllr G Rainey on behalf of the Trustees of Village Hall would like to record their thanks for the help from WPC and report that they have received a grant in full from Valencia. The peaked roof will be replaced in the summer.

b) To note payments received.

No payments were received.

c) To consider and if appropriate approve a grant application for £500.00 for the Wolston Conservation Group

Cllr G Rainey recommended approval. A discussion took place.

Cllr L Wright asked if there was a lease agreement in place so that Wolston Conservation Group cannot be kicked off the site in the future.

Signed

Cllr T Willis - WPC action the Clerk to get clarity on there being a licence in place from the Conservation Group. The plantation is privately owned.

Cllr T Willis called for volunteers to join the Wolston Conservation Group, Saturday mornings twice a month out of nesting season and once a month in the summer.

MOP 3 – suggested approaching the primary school for children to get involved in forest school.

Proposal: To approve a grant application for £500.00 for the Wolston Conservation Group

Proposed: Cllr G Rainey

Secoded: Cllr T Ramsay

7 in favour 1 abstention

Resolved: To approve a grant application for £500.00 for the Wolston Conservation Group

- d) To approve transfer of £1661.03 (WCC Grant) to Wolston Hive Group
A discussion took place.

Proposal: To approve transfer of £1661.03 (WCC Grant) to Wolston Hive Group subject to Finance Group Chairman meeting with Chairman of the Wolston Hive Group and obtaining appropriate documentation.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Secoded: Cllr J Galliford

Unanimous

Resolved: To approve transfer of £1661.03 (WCC Grant) to Wolston Hive Group subject to Finance Group Chairman meeting with Chairman of the Wolston Hive Group and obtaining appropriate documentation.

172

2 January Flood – To consider the Public Meeting of 23rd January 2024 and to make any appropriate decisions with regard to next steps, inc. the drafting of a Flood Action Plan and formation of a Flood Action Group, and an Update on the Church Field (TW/LW)

Cllr T Willis – Thanked those who attended the worthwhile public meeting held on 23rd January 2024 comprising a multi-agency panel of Severn Trent, WCC Flood management Team, WCC Highways Drainage Team, Chief Exec from Rugby Borough Council, Chief Officer for Safety and Regulation and two representatives from the Environment Agency. Cllr T Willis reported the following update:-

Wolston and Brandon Flood Action Group will be created.

RBC – payment of council tax reduction if you were out of the house 48 hours not 47.

Warwickshire number of affected residents was over 50 and the threshold for flood relief has been attained. Communications will be sent out to those eligible.

RBC are looking at the frequency of street cleansing, notification when it is going to take place, if cars are parked in the way the cleansing cannot take place, Wolston require as much street cleansing as possible.

Ditch at the rear of Meadow Road – RBC have the responsibility for this and will take this forward.

Chief Officer of Safety and Regulation – there is a concern regarding what happens if unofficial groups are formed and act.

The EVA and RBC will be guiding and working with the Wolston and Brandon Flood Action Group they will have access to services required and funding for same. This is a long-term project.

Cllr T Willis asked if there are any other volunteer residents to join the official Flood Action Group.

Council tax – if you were out of the house for 48 hours not 47 there will be a credit for April May and June. Any longer vacant periods will be dealt with on an individual basis by the RBC.

Signed

RBC Chief Exec liaising with other areas who were affected and was unaware of the problems with Avondale Road. If in doubt, please ring the emergency services. Chief officer of safety and regulation is working on the question of there being no emergency services in attendance on 2nd January 2024.

8:15am The temporary lights got stuck on red and resident had to direct traffic this is actually illegal. 999 was dialled at 9:45am – no police response was received.

WCC will be the lead support to the Wolston and Brandon Flood Action Group.

There are two Flood Authorities WCC and EVA not the Parish Council or Rugby Borough Council

RBC will support in administration of the Flood Action Group.

Key point is that no single agency can do everything. Communications require improvement between all the authorities. Local intelligence is invaluable – please email Clerk, Chair or Cllrs.

Spitfire flood into the village – Severn Trent and WCC Flood Authority are looking into this.

Cllr L Wright – Spitfire were pumping effluent from the site into the ditch at the side of the road - Chairman took photographs.

Proposal: WPC form the Flood Action Group incorporating three members of Brandon Parish Council and four members of Wolston Parish Council, Cllr T Willis, Cllrs A Milne, Cllr T Ramsay and Cllr S Osmond.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr J Galliford

Resolved: WPC form the Flood Action Group incorporating three members of Brandon Parish Council and four members of Wolston Parish Council, Cllr T Willis, Cllrs A Milne, Cllr T Ramsay and Cllr S Osmond.

Unanimous

Cllr S Dobinson – Those of us who have been flooded with effluent need help with experts, can RBC loan us their top officers to visit each property affected.

Cllr T Willis – reported that Rugby Borough Council responded that it is not authorised to provide legal or financial advice and suggested that individuals approach Citizens Advice Group or take independent legal advice.

Cllr T Willis suggested we write to the MP.

Flood from 1998 – Brook Street residents offered flood protection was limited to over 65-year-olds.

RBC do not have records.

WCC Flood Authority and Environment Agency may have records.

Flood protection will be discussed as part of the Flood Action Group being set up with the Parish Council.

Cllr L Wright – suggested Cllr S Dobinson put the points on Coventry Radio.

Cllr T Willis suggested we go back with the same questions to the WCC Flood Authority and EVA. If there is no response, then we should take it to the MP.

Cllr S Dobinson requested WCC give practical support to the affected residents in dealing with their insurance companies.

Cllr A Milne - there must be an inspector.

Signed

Cllr L Wright – responsibility for clearing the sewerage from properties lies with Severn Trent

Cllr G Rainey – WPC should support affected residents – RBC and WCC have loss adjusters, we should ask RBC and WCC to provide advice and opinion.

Action: WPC send a letter to both authorities requesting advice and opinion to support residents.

Cllr S Osmond – Citizens advice will be able to explore all the contacts they have and expertise.

Cllr G Rainey – in the last 10 days there have been people with clipboards and tape measures wondering around the village.

Action: WPC approach the MP for assistance.

Cllr G Rainey – requested this be a reportable item on the Agenda going forward. Cllr T Willis confirmed that the Flood Action Group will be reported at each meeting.

Update on Churchfield – Letter to MP – EVA to write to Landowner and their Agent –

Action: Follow up progress.

173 Emergency Planning - To consider the drafting of a Community Emergency Plan for Wolston and make any appropriate decisions.

Cllr T Willis reported that the WPC have a template to be populated to include any emergency. The document will include cascade tree on who to contact for whatever emergency. The front cover instructs DIAL 999.

174 Dogs at Dyers Lane Recreation Ground – To consider Rugby Borough Council feedback with regard to insurance implications and make any appropriate decisions (LW/TW)

Cllr T Willis reported that he had received a response from the RBC regarding where insurance responsibility would lie following dog on dog attacks.

RBC response is:-

There is no fail-safe way to protect Wolston Parish Council from a claim but if one were to arise it is helpful to evidence how the risk has been managed, particularly if it is a known risk, in the scenario described any claim should be directed at the dog owner rather than the landowner.

Cllr L Wright – If dogs are loose they will dig up mole hills. WPC need to decide whether the area is a Recreation Ground or a Sports Field. Either Dog Owners must keep the dog on a lead or we find somewhere else for the dog walkers. In the local plan we need to ask RBC to identify an area of ground which can be used for recreation. There are few areas left in the village centre. Melodie's Meadow and Yardley's meadow being used by outsiders. Ask the landowner if he will allow a small area near the allotments. The flying field could be approached.

Cllr T Willis suggested this item be looked at by the Open Spaces Working Group and brought back as an Agenda Item at the next meeting. Provision of the appropriate facilities was discussed and a dog owner day. Action: Cllr S Osmond will approach dog walkers in the village.

Cllr A Milne suggested the village knows the play area as a playing field and that is what it ought to remain. Dog walkers would benefit from a larger area which they would be responsible for keeping clean. The play area should be for recreation.

Cllr J Galliford – Elderly dog walkers cannot walk too far to a different area.

Item 178 moved to this section at the Chair's discretion.

Working Group Delegates Reports – To receive updates from working groups including NDP (GR), Allotments Working Group (SD), Finance Working Group (GR), Open Spaces Working Group (GR), Communications Group (TR), Ling Hall Wolston Fields Liaison Group (LW) and make any appropriate decisions.

Signed

NDP

Cllr G Rainey reported that NDP had resumed correspondence with consultants. The levels of completion which were assumed to have been achieved were not achieved. Many areas of work presumed done are not done. There is no supporting documentation. The document prepared now needs to be re-worked against the best advice from the consultants. The evidence trail supporting the statements and aspirations within the document is missing. NDP will report back in March 2024 on progress. Referendum will possibly take place in August.

Cllr L Wright asked for comments from the NDP leader.

A secure digital vault or website for NDP documents is required. Meeting scheduled this month to consolidate.

Allotments Working Group

Cllr S Dobinson reported on the compensation issue and that drainage solution is not working, discussed with Spitfire, a contractor is coming tomorrow to address the issues. Phase 1 is still not signed off. The drainage system to the original planning specification has been amended but it is still not good enough.

A discussion took place regarding the original specification of the drainage system, increased channels and debate on the width of the pipes. The attenuation pond is still dry.

Finance Working Group

Cllr G Rainey requested a majority agreement from the Allotments Association for the distribution of the compensation or a definitive minute empowering the committee to decide. Cllr S Dobinson will arrange an emergency meeting with the Allotments Association.

Open Spaces

Cllr G Rainey reported that there were a number of issues requiring attention however no report was available as group have not met since December 2023.

Communications Group

Cllr T Ramsay reported that the King Charles Coronation Mugs had been advertised to residents on Facebook.

CCTV problems had been sorted and a meeting arranged with Rugby First Monday 5th February 2024.

Ling Hall Fields Liaison Group – Action: response from Chief Exec to be circulated to Cllrs.

175

Equipment Maintenance – To consider the repair/replacement of defective equipment and car park surface including kicker wall and make any appropriate decisions (LW)

Cllr L Wright reported on the list of outstanding maintenance from September 2022.

Requested quotes for car park resurfacing maintenance, a drain and soak away to comply with regulations. Meeting with another contractor tomorrow with a view to patching and resurfacing. Wearing course will probably do the job if we increase the depth to 1 inch. A discussion took place regarding the use of the pavilion car park. Depending on what we decide to do with the Pavilion will dictate what is spend on refurbishing the car park.

A new Springer is required.

A discussion took place regarding William Cree Close play area – carpet areas by swings is dangerous.

Cleaning the wet pour – damaged carpet through incorrect cleaning materials used.

Signed

Recommend we get a quote for having the carpet cleaned professionally. Some areas of the wet pour are dangerous.

Kings Coronation Tree to be planted on Wednesday 7th February 2024 located near cemetery or top corner of recreation ground.

Open Spaces will provide a Schedule of Works.

RBC are offering a grant for repairing the kicker wall.

Action Finance Group to review repairs required and bring recommendation to WPC.

- 176 **Review of Dyers Lane Hedge** – To receive an update from the Emergency Working Group regarding immediate remedial work required and make any appropriate decisions, including appointment of a contractor for remedial works. (TW)

A discussion took place regarding the quotations received. Alternative would be to install gale breaks instead of the solid wooden timber fence quotation for Dyers Lane Hedge. Close coloured green screen attached to the back of the fence, release the wind load. Samples of gale break have been requested. Option to paint the back of the scout hut green. Twenty Metres of gale break would achieve a saving of approximately £1500.00 on the original quote.

- 177 **Planning** – Councillors are to review planning applications prior to the Parish Council meeting. All planning applications and consultations can be viewed on the RBC Planning Portal Website www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk. To discuss and if appropriate comment on any planning applications received.

None received.

- 178 **Working Group Delegates Reports** – To receive updates from working groups including NDP (GR), Allotments Working Group (SD), Finance Working Group (GR), Open Spaces Working Group (GR), Communications Group (TR), Ling Hall Wolston Fields Liaison Group (LW) and make any appropriate decisions.

This item moved to between items 174 and 175 at the Chairman’s discretion.

- 179 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Parish Council is invited to Resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda items owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and the public interest would not be served in disclosing that information.

Reason for Exclusion – The exclusion is on the grounds that items of business to be discussed are likely to include discussions about staffing.

Proposal: To exclude the press and public.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr G Rainey

Unanimous

Resolved: To exclude the press and public.

- 180 **Human Resources (Staffing)** – To receive any updates on any items of business that are likely to include staffing discussions and make any appropriate decisions. (LW)

This item is confidential.

Signed

181 Amenity Grass Cutting – To consider the amenity grass cutting specification and contract extension and make any appropriate decisions. (LW)

This Item is confidential.

182 Future Agenda Items – Councillors are requested to use this opportunity to raise items for future agendas. Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision-making.

This item deferred to next meeting.

183 Date of Next Meetings – To consider and confirm the date 7th March 2024 at Brandon and Wolston Village Hall, Main Street, Wolston at 7:15pm. If an interim meeting is required, an agenda will be sent to Councillors and be put on the website and in the Main Street noticeboard three clear days before the meeting is held.

Meeting closed at 10:15pm

SignedChair

Date

Notes on the Public Forum Thursday 1st February 2024 7:15pm

MOP1 – Feedback from Severn Trent and Environment Agency – Sewerage in village from 2nd January 2024.

This item will be addressed on the agenda this evening.

MOP2 – Agreement between WPC and Allotment Association – as an allotment holder has been waiting for compensation for a number of years.

Cllr T Willis reported that WPC have had meetings with the Allotment Association Committee. Cllr G Rainey reported that a meeting was called to arrange a mechanism for releasing the compensation funds appropriately.

WPC needs an authority from the Allotments Association with an agreement as to how that compensation is to be distributed to members and ex members of Allotment Association. As far as we know no meeting has taken place – there is no minute to recording the approval. Chairman will write to all Allotment Holders, past and present, indicating how they Allotment Association Committee are proposing to dispense the compensation. They are proposing that not all the money will be paid in compensation – some will be held over within the allotment association funds for the benefit of the allotment in the future. There is nothing in writing to corroborate the approval of this. There is a combined group of allotments association and a group of parish councillors who have been over-viewing trying to find compromise. The documents that come from the people that have allocated the compensation money says in no uncertain terms that the compensation is paid to the WPC for specific payment to the allotment holders. Once we have a formal agreement we can make the payment. It is beholden to WPC to be seen to be sure that we have a majority vote for whichever of the schemes which are held. All the documents say this is what we would like to do but there is no record or minute that says this is approved by the Allotment Association. WPC Allotment Working Group need to make a recommendation to WPC based on the substantive vote. Cllr S Dobinson asked if there were any notes of the meeting held between the Chair of WAGA. Cllr A Milne – there was a query to payments to people, past and present. I believe no one has the current documentation.

MOP2 – Would like to have an answer on this.

Cllr S Dobinson will call a meeting of the Allotment Working Group and the Allotment Association.

Cllr L Wright – WPC are the leaseholders of the allotment site – has to satisfy all the members concerned. Suggest that we release half of the money on the understanding that that is paid in compensation to those who were plot holders and listed in the statement of common ground.

It is unjust that someone who had to give up their plot due to illness.

Has not been consulted as to how the compensation was going to be distributed.

Cllr G Rainey – The issue on the compensation is always going to be contentious – the set of rules on how it is to be distributed – there is no minuted vote of acceptance of any of the schemes put to the membership. There is no ability to pay it in the current rules.

Cllr H Timms – Budgets are now being set – we have reserves for this year – reconfigure services rather than cutting services. Working on looking at compensation for flooded properties – there needs to be a one stop place for people to apply – Council tax it is RBC – working on putting communication out to residents affected and how they can apply. Involving the EA ensuring water courses are clear and stay clear and ensuring back down into the flood plain as quick as possible.

Cllr T Willis – met with borough officers and Chief Exec and will update.

Cllr L Wright asked what the increase will be in the council tax.

Cllr H Timms – increase in council tax will be similar to the borough increase of 5%. Costs of services have increased. Glad WCC have been prudent in the past and held onto the reserves.

Public Forum closed at 7:37pm

Signed