

WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Wolston Parish Council held at 7:15pm
on Thursday 7th March 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)
RBC: Cllr S Ward
WCC Cllr Mrs H Timms
Plus 18 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 8:41pm

184 Apologies -To receive apologies
Cllr Derek Poole

185 Notice of Motion under Standing Order No 8 – In light of the Financial Climate and the need for the Council to increase the precept for Wolston, the Parish Council carry out an inhouse, in depth cost review of its staffing requirements in an endeavour to ensure value for money. (LW)
Proposal: To move item 185 be moved to the confidential section of the meeting after item 196.
Proposed: Cllr L Wright
Seconded: Cllr T Ramsay
Unanimous
Resolved: To move item 185 be moved to the confidential section of the meeting after item 196.

186 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.
Chair Cllr T Willis declared an interest as a Borough Councillor for anything to do with planning.

187 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)

Cllr L Wright – mentioned Facebook posts.

Chair reported that he had approached digital communications at RBC – officers were clear that the individual is creating a tort which is libellous and a civil matter. Screen shots of the posts were sent to RBC communications team.

Cllr L Wright – requested that WPC write to the MP and ask this to stop.

No volunteers stepped forward to be co-opted.
188 Minutes – To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 11th January 2024
A discussion took place regarding a typing error on the agenda, the date of the minutes to be approved should have been 1st February 2024.
Proposal: To defer approval of the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 1st February 2024 to the next WPC meeting.
Proposed: Cllr L Wright
Seconded: Cllr G Rainey
6 in favour
1 against
1 abstention
Resolved: To defer approval of the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 1st February 2024 to the next WPC meeting.

189

Finance

- a) To approve payments made in February 2024.

Proposal: To approve payments made in February 2024

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr A Milne

7 In favour

1 Against

Resolved: To approve payments made in February 2024

- b) To note payments received.
No Payments were received.

- c) To note appointment of Internal Auditor.

Clerk reported that the Internal Auditor had agreed to carry out the Internal Audit for 2023/2024 at the same cost as last year. In the interests of continuity and a good level of service this was noted.

Proposal: To note appointment of Internal Auditor.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr G Rainey

Unanimous

Resolved: To note appointment of Internal Auditor

- d) To note Bank Reconciliations

Proposal: To note bank reconciliations as per finance working group recommendation.

Proposed: Cllr G Rainey

Seconded: Cllr L Wright

Unanimous

Resolved: To note bank reconciliations as per finance working group recommendation.

190

Flooding update – To receive an update from Parish Council Working Group (TW/TR/SO)

Chair had presented this update in the open forum section of the meeting, see public forum notes below.

Cllr S Osmond commented on the great start, confirmation of volunteers, important issue.

Cllr T Ramsay – Thanked the Chairman for input on the Flood Action Group and plan.

Cllr L Wright – We should focus more on protecting the properties rather than holding the water back on Main Street, School Street junction would be difficult due to the pathways either side. Older properties require more work, and the river Avon needs to be dredged. Chair asked Cllrs to make their suggestions to the FAG.

Cllr G Rainey suggested multi-faceted issues require different approaches and timeframes. We need to form an agenda for the first group meeting with different timelines. The sooner we get our group up and running and apply for funding the better.

Chair noted that the three villages are affected differently.

Cllr S Dobinson stated that residents are frustrated and tired by dealing with insurance companies and finding out where to get flood protection, they need practical and moral support.

It was suggested that the insurance ombudsman should be approached.

Cllr L Wright proposed that WPC should ask Severn Trent how many properties in Wolston are still on a single sewerage system, this would be helpful in stopping further planning and overloading the current system.

Proposal: WPC to write to Martin Young of Severn Trent to identify how many properties in Wolston that are still on a single sewerage system.

Proposed: Cllr Wright

Seconded: Cllr Ramsay

Unanimous

Resolved: WPC to write to Martin Young of Severn Trent to identify how many properties in Wolston that are still on a single sewerage system.

- 191 **Review of Dyers Lane Hedge** – To receive an update from the Emergency Working Group regarding proposed remedial work required, inc. integration of surplus HS2 saplings and make any appropriate decisions, including potential appointment of a contractor to progress remedial works. (LW/TW)

Cllr L Wright presented his recommendations which Cllrs had received prior to the meeting. A discussion took place regarding the improvements and remedial works including how much had been spent so far.

Proposal: To accept the recommendations numbered 1 to 5 as outlined in the proposal sent to Cllrs prior to the meeting for remedial works to Dyers Lane Hedge as given.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr T Willis

Unanimous

Resolved: To accept the recommendations numbered 1 to 5 as outlined in the proposal sent to Cllrs prior to the meeting for remedial works to Dyers Lane Hedge as given.

- 192 **Open Spaces Group updates** – To receive an update on items below and make any appropriate decisions.

- a) Perimeter pathway around recreation ground Dyers Lane - resident request this for disabled access

Cllr G Rainy read out the report from the Open Spaces Working Group confirmed that this would be a grant funded issue and would be a multi faceted issue.

Cllr S Dobinson has researched provision in other parish councils with aid from Cllr S Ward.

- b) Car Park repairs,

Cllr G Rainey read out the report from the Open Spaces Working Group

A discussion took place regarding the quotes received and specifications.

Proposal: To place an order for remedial works as recommended by the open spaces group with the local contractor previously used at a cost of £5412.00

Proposed: Cllr Wright

Seconded: Cllr Milne

Unanimous

Resolved: To place an order for remedial works as recommended by the open spaces group with the local contractor previously used at a cost of £5412.00

The issue of the car park area in front of Pavilion to be added to the Agenda for 4th April 2024.

- c) Future use of Football Pitch/remedial works –

Cllr Rainey read out the report from the Open Spaces Working Group. The Open Spaces Working Group fully support the WJFC use of the pitch however they are not able to clarify what is required to bring the ground up to standard.

Action: A meeting will be arranged with WJFC, Grants are available from the FA to support council pitches. Chair requested information from WJFC to be sent into WPC prior to 20th March 2024.

- d) Pavilion - use of/refurbishment - costed business case required.

Cllr G Rainey read out the report from the Open Spaces Working Group and stated that this was connected with the use of the football pitch.

- e) Prospective Orchard for Wolston - application form to be completed - information is required re location, water source, maintenance (watering).

A discussion took place and it was agreed to add this item to the Agenda for April 2024.

193 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.

- a) Reference: R21/1130 Proposal at: MARSTON MILL FARM, PRIORY ROAD, WOLSTON, COVENTRY, CV8 3FX For: Prior Approval: Change of use - agriculture to 3 no. dwellings I refer to the above application that you may wish to comment on. The plans and documents can be viewed on-line at: www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk Consultation responses should be sent to calum.mason@rugby.gov.uk by 05-Mar-2024.

Cllrs had been asked to submit comments prior to the deadline. An extension to the date for comments had been requested of RBC planning.

Concerns were raised regarding access to the property onto the Coventry Way public footpath. Potential risk to users of this footpath.

There is a 42 mile race around the Coventry Way carried out annually.

Walking Groups regularly use the Coventry Way which was formerly a pilgrim route.

Proposal: WPC (Cllr L Wright) draft a letter to the Planning department to incorporate all comments made.

Proposed: Cllr T Willis

Seconded: Cllr J Galliford

Unanimous

Resolved: WPC (Cllr L Wright) draft a letter to the Planning department to incorporate all comments made.

194 Litter Pick – To agree a date for village litter pick from March 30th, April 13th or 27th, May 11th or 25th (TW)

Proposal: To agree the date for village litter pick to be 13th April 2024

Proposed: Cllr G Rainey

Seconded: Cllr S Osmond

Unanimous

Resolved: To agree the date for village litter pick to be 13th April 2024

Action: Clerk to remind Chair to obtain equipment.

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

NDP (Cllr G Rainey – Chair of NDP)

The now instigated recovery programme for the Neighbourhood Plan is underway and work on a revised timetable is being formulated. The return of Clare Malyon to the working group with Roger Ingles will complement the work on the physical document review currently in progress. Notes on this follow.

In parallel the communication group have commenced work to layout the activities required for consultation and referendum. It is hoped to recruit additional help in this area in the coming weeks.

A particular concern relates to the information management, evidence base and storage of our work to date which has revealed serious flaws. Tracie Ball is undertaking an IT review of our current situation and a recommendation is to follow.

NDP - UPDATED SITUATION – 5th March 2024

In November 2023, the situation with the NDP document and the lack of progress of the overall project was found to be more serious than we had been led to believe. In order to retrieve this situation, a provisional plan of actions was implemented.

Following some essential work to complete 3 sections and discussions with our consultants APS the NDP document was sent to them for review on 19th December 2023.

The NDP document was returned on 8th January 2024 with numerous changes, comments and suggestions, all of which have been addressed and implemented. Some major changes have also been made to the document to compliment the suggestions made by APS.

The updated NDP document was sent on 4th March to APS for a 2nd detailed review. We're now awaiting comments.

Work continues updating maps and photographs, ready to integrate these into the document when APS have completed their review.

Cllr G Rainey thanked members of NDP. Cllr T Willis asked if NDP members had anything to report and recorded thanks to the members of NDP for their input.

Action: NDP Additional WPC Agenda Item for 4th April 2024

AWG (Cllr S Dobinson)

Compound Licence dealt with previously, amendments to wording agreed.

Compensation to be dealt with at Allotment Association AGM

Spitfire meeting to be arranged to address snagging list including the drainage.

Documents have been previously circulated to Cllrs.

Proposal: WPC to instruct Solicitor to add to the provision of the compound licence for Spitfire to have the option to renew for an additional 12 months from the end of the initial 12 months the wording "subject to the approval of Wolston Parish Council, which shall not be unreasonably withheld"

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr G Rainey

Unanimous

Resolved: WPC to instruct Solicitor to add to the provision of the compound licence for Spitfire to have the option to renew for an additional 12 months from the end of the initial 12 months the wording "subject to the approval of Wolston Parish Council, which shall not be unreasonably withheld"

Finance Working Group (Cllr G Rainey)

Asset Register to incorporate same replacement values into this years AGAR.

Budget – to create an appropriate schedule of work for clerk and public works lead from HR for an understanding of what is actually required to run the council effectively.

Action: Item to be added to WPC Agenda 4th April 2024

Communications: (Cllr T Ramsay)

CCTV update moved into the confidential section after item 196 due to content.

Coronation Mugs - There is a surplus of coronation mugs, not enough children to claim them, propose to put a message out on Facebook for residents to collect.

D-Day 6th June 2024 7.30-10.30 – Cllr T Ramsay read out his report, and made the following recommendations in addition to a prospective road closure.

1) Consideration be given to supporting a village event to celebrate D-Day 80 in line with national campaign in line with current Councillor capacity and financial resources.

2) Consideration be given to either the purchase of a gas-fuelled D-Day 80 Beacon at £549 plus VAT, including carriage, or other options that may be more cost-effective and efficient in terms of the 'lamp light of peace' tribute.

3) Subject to approval of the above recommendations, WPC approaches local business partners and churches with regard to staging a village event on 6 June 2024.

June 2024 presents an opportunity for the village of Wolston to come together to commemorate the events of 6 June 1944. This should be measured against the appetite of local businesses, churches, and residents for such an event before any resources are committed.

A discussion took place.

Proposal: To accept the recommendations as listed (1 to 3) above but with the proviso that WPC would not purchase the beacon at £549.00 but investigate more cost-effective options.

Proposed: Cllr T Ramsay

Seconded: Cllr S Osmond

Unanimous

Resolved: To accept the recommendations as listed (1 to 3) above but with the proviso that WPC would not purchase the beacon at £549.00 but investigate more cost-effective options.

Ling Hall Liaison (Cllr L Wright)

Cllr L Wright will be attending the meeting next week on 12th March 2024 and requested any comments to be sent to him prior to the meeting.

196

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.

Chair read out the exclusion.

Proposal: To exclude the public and press

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr G Rainey

Unanimous

Resolved: To exclude the public and press.

Notice of Motion under standing order 8

Confidential Item

CCTV

Confidential Item

- 197 **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 was not discussed.
- 198 **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.
- 199 **Date of Next Meetings** – To consider and confirm the date 4th April 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 10:19pm

SignedChair Date

Notes on the Public Forum 7th March 2024

Public Forum began at 7:15pm

H Timms

Budget fixed – there were difficult decisions to make – cost rises in mending roads, inflation is up and costs of social care. Position is not as dire as some councils – sensible decisions were made in the past – we will be using reserves.

Looking at flooding issues – many meetings with partners EV Borough County Council – looking at solutions for the 3 villages which has been all consuming, looking at what can be done and the compensation moving forward. WCC working in background and RBC are delivering it to the public.

Cllr S Ward

Police pop in sessions – local PC's are looking to put on more sessions. There is a Saturday session in Binley Woods 11am till 2pm in the Pavilion in Binley Woods anyone can attend. This information will be shared on social media it is also available on the Council Lawfords Facebook page. The next session in Wolston is on Monday 18th March 1.30pm-3pm.

Questions

MOP Cllr L Wright – how much money will be taken out of reserves in round figures?

Cllr H Timms could not answer directly – some funds are ring fenced for certain things – what ever is left of reserves is released as much as possible – cannot give you an exact figure.

Cllr L Wright - Rates suggest a .5% increase –

H Timms – medium term financial plan over the next 5 years. RBC has only put it up .03% increase.

S Ward – RBC is in a good position, has a lot of reserves and will be ok for the next 4-5 years.

Cllr L Wright – RBC .03 increase – will this reflect a reduction in services –

S Ward this has not been discussed.

Cllr T Wills – the recording of the meeting is available on YouTube.

MOP – footpath between church and Churchfield needs repairing it is dangerous.

H Timms –this will be done when it is a little bit warmer. Pothole repairs at this time of year required cold tarmac patching – permanent repairs require warmer weather. When the date is fixed it will be shared on social media.

MOP – Fire and Rescue consultation – is 999 number mentioned in Borough, County and Parish Council comments.

H Timms – volunteer fire fighters cannot respond as quickly as full-time employees – This affects the south of the county and Nuneaton – there has been no change in response times in Rugby.

Response times to RTA are prioritised – If you dial 999 a fire engine will be coming from Coventry or Rugby there are reciprocal arrangements.

MOP - Wolston is in the lower response time red band.

H Timms – Wolston may be in the red band but the response will most probably come from Coventry which is quicker.

MOP – in December emailed pc question regarding the long delay in the payments of compensation. I raised the question at the last PC meeting.

Cllr T Willis – Responsibility sits with the Allotment Association who have set an AGM on 19th March 2024 the proposal for the compensation will be put to the membership to be voted on, to look at the formular for the compensation and will be forwarded to the Parish Council. Once the AA have obtained a majority of votes for this.

MOP – Response from PC is not good in general.

Chair and Vice Chair of PC have had meetings with the Allotment Association to get this resolved.

Cllr S Dobinson – Concerned that she had no response from the pc to let her know.

MOP – has had no response from the PC in answer to her email.

MOP – (member of AA – Allotment Association Committee inherited this – have finally got the rules from WPC – we have changed the constitution to abide by the rules – this subject will be dealt with at the AGM on 19th March 2024.

MOP – I have had no email response from Allotment Association, I will raise it again and again until it is resolved. There are elderly people waiting for this compensation.

MOP – Water samples taken last year – to test the cyanide in the water – attenuation pond, the ditch, levels were to checked to see if they were safe – In the parliament they have been discussing Zains Law – a boy died from cyanide gas.

Cllr T Ramsay – more samples have been taken.

Chair – The report came back was clear that it was safe. Apparently, there is cyanide in all water.
Action: PC will ask Henry Biddington and Michael Warren if they will report back.

MOP – Compound Licence discussion later – phase 2 bldg. shed and compound must be completed by the completion of the 30th house. Compound Licence should not be extended too much to allow the car park to be completed and the trading shed erected.

Chair – we need to amend the wording – the key trigger is the 30th occupation – the control of that situation of the extension reverted to us.

MOP – Problems with allotments have caused problems within the PC. Snagging lists from 2022 are still outstanding, phase one is not completed.

Chair – reassurance as a borough councillor will continue to meet on site and have round table discussions with the contractor. I have reported the drainage issues to colleagues at the Borough.

MOP – 5 sheds have arrived and been erected.

Chair – Excellent.

MOP – what time do the contractors start work? – 6.20am they were working on the site this morning.

Chair – please keep us informed if this continues.

Cllr L Wright – Action could WPC to write to the Chief executive of RBC and ask who has the delegated powers to release the 1st house and the 30th house. And will the PC be consulted.
Chair will also write to RBC.

MOP – Planning application – exit onto highway is actually onto Coventry way going up to the chicken farm.

Chair – RBC can call in planning applications to committee however the deadline for this has been missed even though Councillors were informed of this back in February 2024.

MOP – Dyers Lane recreation ground – WJFC use of ground for training at end of March. Chair – Teams meeting to be arranged to discuss this.

Cllr G Rainey – please email your events now and when your new season takes over before we get to the teams meeting. Are you finishing your season at the Leisure Centre. There are other considerations in terms of the pitch.

Flood Update Item 190 – Chair updated forum on what has happened since last parish council meeting. This item 190 was moved from the agenda into the Public Forum at the Chair’s discretion.

Flood headlines published on facebook and website.

Emergency services issue – still awaiting for Chief Officer to provide feedback – they are looking through the call logs.

Emergency services to be requested to attend a flood action group meeting as a key partner.

Chair spent 4 hours directing traffic on Brandon/Wolston bridge in early January and called 999 – services did not attend. Clearly a need to emphasise threat to life and limb to generate attendance. 6th and 7th February 2024 – concerns that flood was going to re-occur.

Sandbags and sand received – Flood action group will decide what we need to do with these as per draft action plan.

Compensation – 26 residents affected – payments followed up.

If anyone has not had their application followed up please contact us.

There is a copy letter from Cllr Tim Willis (RBC) available to residents if required confirming there was foul water in the flood in the centre of the village.

18th February 2024 – Cllrs monitored the flood levels, and alerted community to sandbags availability on facebook.

Planning – approached by properties on main street – planning is not required to put flood barriers in place as they are not permanent figures.

Flood Action Plan – this will steer the flood action group and meetings with multi agencies – looking at problems and short and long term solutions – scope of works currently being put together for Brandon response to flooding, particularly Avondale Road and Station Road (Royal Oak).

The early work in both Wolston and Brandon has started – multi agency view is now that we have a plan it is a community document – it has what we do before, during and after. We are now looking to the community for volunteers to join the group. We need names of volunteers. If we know what input is required from volunteers, we can have a meeting early in April to establish roles and responsibilities. The forecast is not great for next week. Sandbags are still in place. The flood action plan determines what action is taken by whom and when.

MOP – Spitfire development 2nd January 2024 – damaged sewerage pipe – investigation continuing into what happened – what has been done?

Chair – Spitfire have reached out for help brokering discussions with Severn Trent. The water from the site was being pumped into the ditch washing the foul water out of the ditch. Planning was informed, photographic evidence provided. Severn Trent operative came to investigate.

MOP – will information from that investigation be communicated to residents. Severn Trent were contacted about the manhole near Main Street properties backing up – they are putting a camera down from that drain down the road. Work may also be carried out near the heritage site at Castle Hill Riding stables.

H Timms – manholes near the castle have had cameras down and been cleared and jetted this week. WCC were picking up manholes and looking this was clarified this morning.

Chair – the manhole that was silted up last week is now clear.

H Timms – work cannot be carried out when it is raining. Work completed the beginning of this week.

MOP – Clarity on points raised at the last meeting. Happy to volunteer for the flood action group. Our property in the centre of the village was uninsured for three nights because of two open claims. Properties are now not insured against flood. Future proofing the property we need to move quickly. We need flood defences going up as soon as possible. Where are the grants to get the defences in place.

MOP – if Spitfire is responsible for this they should be held to account.

MOP – We need to protect our tenants. We need funding for proper flood defences.

Chair – National Flood Forum – has not been in touch yet.

MOP – In Gloucester it was the Environment Agency that put the flood defences in place. Flood doors are £3000 per door. Others are £600.00 per door.

MOP – Spitfire denied the damage to sewer pipe, said they were offsite.

Chair – we need an offline discussion on that.

MOP – 23rd February 2024 – I asked why planning was not on hold until the sewerage system was capable of coping with the new houses. Adding extra houses in the village is not going to help with further flooding.

Chair – will ask the question of the chief of planning officer.

MOP – Rainwater is in the same drain as the sewerage water.

Cllr L Wright – in 1960's the surface and sewerage water was divided.

Chair – This is an essential part of the Flood Action Group.

MOP – Further Planning should be stopped until the sewerage system has been updated.

Cllr L Wright – asked when emailing the Chairman please copy in the Clerk.

Chair – we need volunteers I have only one name.

MOP – I was present when Severn Trent dug up the pipe they said it was 8inc asbestos and probably crushed by heavy vehicles.

Cllr L Wright – Where did the contaminated top soil go?

MOP – Lorries went through village yesterday with soil in.

Cllr T Ramsay – please call for volunteers for FLAG on Facebook.

Chair – once we have volunteers names for the FLAG we will circulate the Flood Action Plan

MOP – who is responsible for the sewerage pipe on the allotment site?

Cllr L Wright – Spitfire were told there was a sewerage pipe underneath the hedge. Spitfire were told it was a pumping main serving the village discharging at the Ryton Works.

MOP – Are the attenuation pond drains blocked, is it still unconnected?

Chair – Borough Cllrs are visiting site.

Cllr T Ramsay – Spitfire were going to put cameras in the pipes on site can we have the results please?

Chair – it will be covered in the site visit.

MOP Has the ditch on Warwick Road been cleared?

Chair – meeting with Spitfire to be arranged.

Chair thanked the Borough and County Councillors for attending.

Public Forum closed at 8.41pm.