

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 3RD APRIL 2014 AT 7.15 PM**

PRESENT Cllr T Harvey-Smith (Chairman), Cllr G Fewkes, Cllr R Grainger, Cllr A Parker, Cllr Mrs M White, Cllr D Cross, Cllr J E D Milne, Cllr L Wright and Mrs M Meede (Clerk).

Members of the public: 2
Plus Borough Councillor D Poole

The Parish Council currently holds one Councillor vacancy.

After members of the public had taken the opportunity to raise their issues, the Parish Council meeting commenced at 7:35 pm.

189. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: The apologies Cllr Mrs J Green, Cllr Mrs H Timms and Borough Councillors Mrs S Bragg and Mrs C Watson be accepted.

190. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Chairman – Pecuniary interest at agenda item 201a (Finance)

The Chairman advised that Councillors could declare an interest later in the meeting should this become apparent for any agenda item.

191. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2014

All Councillors had been given the opportunity to review the minutes prior to the Parish Council meeting.

RESOLVED: The minutes of 6th March 2014, having been approved for adoption by those who had been present, be signed by the Chairman.

192. PROGRESS REPORT

A discussion ensued about the tree guard to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee. Councillors are keen to get the tree guard in place as soon as possible, and still liked the idea of the work being carried out by a local contractor. However, it was agreed that the Clerk should write to TSF (Coventry), expressing concerns about the lack of communication and updates about the tree guard. It was felt that TSF (Coventry) should be asked if they are able to progress with the tree guard, and consideration should be given to asking another company to complete the project if necessary.

RESOLVED: For TSF (Coventry) to be informed of Councillors concerns and that an update on the tree guard is required within five days.

Councillors were informed that the dispute about the Bluemel Park streetlights is still ongoing. WCC have stated that they are not the lighting authority for these street lights, while Taylor Wimpey feel that as WCC adopted the lights, they should be responsible for them. The Clerk has contacted both parties to reiterate that the Parish Council will not take responsibility for the street lights without first obtaining the agreed commuted sum. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact WCC and Taylor Wimpey again to confirm that Wolston Parish Council is taking no responsibility for the street lights.

RESOLVED: For WCC and Taylor Wimpey to be informed that Wolston Parish Council will take no responsibility for the Bluemel Park street lights in terms of the maintenance, repairs, electricity or insurance.

193. **PLANNING**

Planning application details were available for all Councillors to see before and during the Parish Council meeting.

There were no declarations of interest from Councillors for any of the planning applications discussed.

- a) *R14/0384 - Erection of a two storey side extension including raising the ridge and eaves heights of the existing dwelling, together with associated alterations including provision of a canopy and porch to the front elevation at Priory Cottage, Priory Road, Wolston.*

Councillors considered the plans. Cllr Milne proposed supporting the application which was seconded by Cllr Fewkes and all Councillors were in agreement.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council support this application, subject to neighbour consultation.

- b) *R13/1167 – Conversion of agricultural buildings to 5 residential units and associated works, including demolition of two barns and erection of new cartshed building for parking at Marston Hall Farm, Priory Road, Wolston.*

Councillors raised concerns about new properties affecting the already overloaded sewerage system – which Severn Trent have confirmed is in need of updating. Councillors felt that if the new properties are due to utilise the current sewerage system, that a restriction should be put on the development until the amenities have been improved, and are at an acceptable standard and able to cope.

Councillors also requested a condition specifying that builders improve the road surface up to the property.

Cllr Wright proposed supporting the application, subject to relevant restrictions/conditions as detailed above. Cllr Milne seconded the proposal and all Councillors agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council support this application, subject to neighbour consultation and planning conditions being put in place in relation to the residential units utilising the sewerage system, and road improvements.

- c) *R14/0276 - Single storey front extension, first floor side extension above garage and provision of solar panels at Riversley, Warwick Road.*

After a discussion, Cllr Wright proposed supporting the application, which was seconded by Cllr Parker. All Councillors were in agreement

RESOLVED: The Parish Council support this application, subject to neighbour consultation.

Note: Borough Cllr Poole left the meeting at this point, at 8:05 pm.

194. **VILLAGE MAINTENANCE**

- a) **Amenity Verge Cutting**

The Chairman proposed deferring this agenda item to discuss as part of agenda item 202, which was seconded by Cllr Cross and all Councillors agreed unanimously.

- b) *Lengthsman/Handyman Pilot*

Councillors were pleased to hear that Wolston had been selected to be part of the Lengthsman pilot. Representatives from the successful Parishes are invited to attend a meeting on 30th April at 6:00pm. The Chairman confirmed that he will attend the meeting, and Councillors were asked to inform the Clerk if they would also like to attend.

RESOLVED: For Councillors to advise the Clerk if they would like to attend the meeting. For the Clerk to confirm numbers with WCC.

c) *Pavilion.*

Cllr Grainger confirmed that he has been looking into grants to complete the work, and has been obtaining quotes/prices for the work that needs competing, in order to get an idea of costs and produce a budget.

d) *Streetlights.*

The Bluemel Park streetlights were discussed as part of agenda item 192.

The Clerk advised that E-ON has advised that streetlight 94 (in the car park area at Abbotts Walk) requires replacing. Quotes had been obtained for a range of lights and Cllr Wright proposed the Phillips light at £365 + VAT. Cllr Grainger queried whether an LED light should be used, and the Chairman agreed that LED lights were an option to consider, but due to the location of the streetlight, the Phillips light should be adequate on this occasion. It was agreed that a policy on street lights would be useful, to help determine what sort of light should be used, depending on its location. Cllr Mrs White seconded the proposal made by Cllr Wright, Cllr Grainger abstained from the vote and all other Councillors were in favour.

RESOLVED: For E-ON to be instructed to install the Phillips lantern at streetlight 94. For E-ON to be asked for more information about the options of lights available and their running costs.

A discussion took place about the streetlight layout within the Bloor Homes development. Councillors confirmed that they are happy with the layout, provided that it has been approved by, and meets the requirements of Warwickshire County Council. Councillors also felt that decisions about the technical specifications should be left to WCC Street lighting department, who have the expertise in this area.

RESOLVED: For Bloor Homes to be advised that Councillors will accept the layout design, provided that it has been approved by, and meets the requirements of WCC.

195. WAR MEMORIAL

It was explained that eight stonemason contractors had been contacted and provided with a copy of the specification, and requested to produce a quote for carrying out repairs to the War Memorial. Six contractors had responded with quotes, and were all invited to meet with Councillors at the Memorial, to discuss the requirements and their quote further. Three of the contractors responded positively to the request and met with Councillors, providing advice and suggestions on how the problem occurred and the best way of repairing the Memorial. After the meetings, a request for clarification was sent to the six contractors who had provided quotes. Only the three stonemasons who had met with Councillors responded to this request, and the information they provided has been compared and analysed. The three quotes and clarifications received included DOFF cleaning with high pressure steam, and all quotes were quite similar in terms of financial cost.

Councillors had a discussion about the type of stone that could be used, and Cllr Grainger had brought in samples of different stones, which Councillors reviewed alongside the quotes received. Cllr Grainger explained that he was looking at the grant application process, and confirmed that the stonemasons had agreed to assist with this process. Along with reviewing the quotes, Councillors agreed that they would want all the lettering on the Memorial refreshed.

Cllr Grainger proposed, subject to clarification about guarantee terms, and about the contractor's ability to complete the work by July 2014, that Boden & Ward be instructed to carry out the repairs in Portland Stone. Cllr Milne seconded the proposal and all Councillors agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: For clarifications to be obtained about guarantee terms and timescales, and for Boden & Ward to then be instructed to carry out the work detailed in the specification and in line with their quotation.

Cllr Fewkes asked that thanks to Cllr Grainger be recorded, for all his hard work and time in relation to the War Memorial repairs.

196. UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR WARWICKSHIRE

Councillors had been given the opportunity to review the Public Interest Debate document about the Unitary Local Government for Warwickshire prior to the meeting.

Cllr Milne explained that he had attended a meeting at Shire Hall where the move to a unitary authority was being discussed, and he updated Councillors on the main areas for discussion – including a reduction in the number of Borough Councillors and the anticipated money saving aspect of the change.

A discussion ensued about the possible impact of having a unitary authority, and Councillors felt that they would need more comprehensive information in order to make a more informed decision. However in general, Councillors felt that they were in favour of remaining with the status quo, due to concerns that the same level of service currently received from Rugby Borough Council would not be achievable under the proposal.

Councillors expressed an opinion that, due to the diverse area, under only one authority the ability to communicate would be lost and there would be more isolation. At least with a minimum of two authorities, services could be split between north and south – which would be the preferred option if a choice had to be made. However, Councillors retained that the current method is the most effective in ensuring that a good level of service is being delivered.

Councillors stated that they would welcome the opportunity to be included in further correspondence/meetings about this issue, and would also welcome more information when it becomes available.

RESOLVED: For WCC to be informed of Councillors concerns and opinions, stressing that the status quo is the preferred option, but that two authorities would be favoured over having just one unitary authority.

Note: Cllr Grainger left the meeting at this point, at 9:10 pm.

197. CORRESPONDENCE

Councillors discussed a consultation paper which had been received in relation to making it easier to set up a Town and/or Parish Council. Copies of the document were made available to Councillors.

RESOLVED: For Councillors to forward their views and opinions to the Clerk should they wish, so a collated response can be sent.

Councillors received information about a Rural Sounding Board for the Rural Services Network, which was asking for Councillors to be a representative on the Board.

RESOLVED: For Councillors to consider the information and inform the Clerk if they are interested in sitting on the Sounding Board.

The Chairman reported that Godfrey-Payton are arranging for a tree surgeon to look at the trees around the edge of the Leisure Centre site, to ensure that they are safe.

198. DELEGATES REPORTS

a) *Scout Hut Lease*

Cllr Milne reported that he has been in touch with the Parish Council Solicitor, who has advised that if the Parish Council are willing to accept the Scout Hut as an asset should the Scout Group cease, then the lease could be amended. Councillors discussed the options and concluded that if the building is maintained to a good standard with no cost to the Parish Council – and with no obligation to the Parish Council to pay compensation or pay for the building should the group cease, then Councillors would be happy for the lease to be amended. The Chairman proposed that the lease be amended as per the discussion about maintenance and no financial risk to the Parish Council, which was seconded by Cllr Wright and agreed unanimously by Councillors. It was also proposed and

agreed that maintenance agreements should be in place to ensure the building is maintained, with a schedule of conditions drawn up for the maintenance – to protect village interests.

RESOLVED: For Cllr Milne, Cllr Fewkes and Cllr Mrs White to meet with Scout Leaders to discuss the Parish Council proposals and report back to the Parish Council

b) St Margaret's Primary School

Cllr Cross provided an update on the progress of the new building, and also highlighted that car parking had been discussed at the Governors meeting – and it had been raised that the Parish Council may be asked to consider contributing to the costs of new car parking facilities in the Church Fields.

199. INFORMATION TO BE UPLOADED TO THE WEBSITE

- War Memorial
- Election
- Unitary Authority

200. INFORMATION FOR INCLUSION IN AVON GRAPEVINE

- Election
- War Memorial

201. FINANCE

a) To approve accounts for payment in March 2014

Payments made in March 2014			
Expenditure			
To whom payable	For what purpose	Cheque number	Gross Amount
St Margaret's Church	Photocopying for February Parish Council meeting	104190	£15.24
E-ON	Electricity Supply to Pavilion	104191	£16.77
Mr R Grainger	Expenses - Ink for printer	104192	£25.50
CPRE	CPRE Membership	104193	£36.00
Godfrey-Payton	Allotment land rent	104194	£1,300.00
BT Payment Services Ltd	Telephone Services	104195	£25.20
C.J Hobday	Flail Hedge Cutting- Dyers Lane	104196	£60.00
P Bird	Mower Maintenance and repairs	104197	£277.46
E-ON Energy Solutions Ltd	Repairs to Streetlight 17 -Manor Estate	104198	£6.00
E-ON Energy Solutions Ltd	Repairs to Streetlight 21 - Paddocks Close	104199	£34.80
E-ON Energy Solutions Ltd	Streetlight Maintenance for quarter ending 31/3/14	104200	£656.83
Employee 2	Staff Salaries	104201	£172.86
Employee 4	Staff Salaries	104202	£413.28
Employee 5	Staff Salaries	104203	£413.28
Employee 5	Expenses - Mileage	"	£3.83
Employee 5	Expenses - Fuel	"	£33.23
Employee 6	Staff Salaries	104204	£74.90
Employee 7	Staff Salaries	104205	£100.28
Employee 8	Staff Salaries	104206	£277.90
Employee 10	Staff Salaries	104207	£764.60
Employee 12	Staff Salaries	104208	£125.97
Post Office Ltd	HMRC - PAYE Period 12	104209	£151.06
Mr T R Harvey-Smith	Expenses - maintenance supplies	104210	£168.66
St Margaret's Church	Photocopying inc for March Parish Council meeting	104211	£23.58
			£5,177.23

RESOLVED: The accounts, as listed above, be approved.

b) To consider payments received in March 2014

Income			
From whom	For what purpose ?	Reference	Amount
RBC	Precept April 2014	PR 28	£43,800.00
			£43,800.00

RESOLVED: The Payments received, as listed above, be approved.

c) Parish Office rent

Councillors were advised that correspondence had been received from the Baptist Church asking for the rent for the Parish Office to be increased by £50 per quarter to £700 per quarter. This includes all electricity and heating. Councillors discussed the increase, which had previously been anticipated as part of the budget discussion, and agreed that it is still good value for money.

RESOLVED: For the rent increase to be authorised.

202. HUMAN RESOURCES

There were no members of the public left in the village hall whilst this agenda item was being discussed.

Councillors decided to discuss the deferred agenda item - **194 a) Amenity Verge Cutting** as part of this agenda item.

Councillors discussed the Amenity Verge Cutting contract rate being offered from RBC, alongside the quote received from the Parish Councils preferred grounds maintenance contractor (Countrywide Grounds Maintenance) to carry out the work on behalf of the Parish Council. It was also established that the Parish Council would be unable to finance an additional seasonal worker during the grass cutting season this year.

A discussion then took place about the impact any decision would have on the Parish Council Maintenance staff, and also about Human Resources issues. The Clerk provided information obtained from ACAS and WALC regarding these issues.

Cllr Wright proposed accepting the RBC rate for the Amenity Verge cutting, accepting the quote from Countrywide Grounds Maintenance, and informing all staff about the individual decisions made about them/their roles. This was seconded by Cllr Fewkes and agreed unanimously by all Councillors.

RESOLVED: For RBC to be invoiced for the Amenity Verge Cutting 2014 and for Countrywide Grounds Maintenance to be instructed to commence the Amenity Verge Cutting on behalf of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: For the Maintenance and Litter Picking staff to be informed of the decisions made about them/their roles.

203. PARISH MATTERS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councillors agreed that all parish matters had been discussed and raised during public forum part of the meeting.

204. DATE OF NEXT MEETING/S

The Chairman confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held at 7.15pm on Thursday 1st May 2014 at the Village Hall. If an interim meeting is required, an agenda will be issued to Councillors, displayed in the noticeboards, on the website and be sent to Wolston Library three clear days before the meeting is held.

As there were no further items on the Agenda the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:20 pm

Signed:..... Chairman

Date:

Notes on the Public Forum held prior to the Parish Council Meeting on 3rd April 2014

Borough Cllr Poole reported that Borough Cllr Mrs C Watson had tendered her resignation from the Borough Council. He also explained that the bill from the Bloor Homes appeal had now reached £151,000 – which RBC were appealing against.

Borough Cllr Poole advised that a meeting was being held at the Town Hall on Monday 7th April 2014 to discuss an approach to the Boundary Commission to consider the possible reduction of Borough Councillors from 42 to 30 Councillors.

Councillors were advised that the CCTV system had provided evidential value in relation to the robbery at the Post Office, and the offenders' vehicle had been caught on the ANPR camera. One of the CCTV cameras had been pointing down, but Borough Cllr Poole has arranged for this problem to be rectified – and this fault did not stop the other cameras identifying the offenders. It was also recognised that the CCTV cameras had provided evidential value in relation to the recent attack on a young girl within the village. The perpetrator for this offence has also been arrested.

Cllr Parker raised concerns about the poor and dangerous state of the pavements within the village, and highlighted certain areas that were in need of more urgent attention. A discussion took place around the need for improvements, and it was reported that a resident had recently fallen on an uneven pathway, causing injury to himself. Borough Cllr Poole agreed to report the concerns to Cty Cllr Mrs H Timms.

Cllr Wright felt that there had been no improvements made to the roads in terms of potholes and subsiding gulleys, and felt that certain roads were in a very poor and dangerous state. He gave one example of Coalpit Lane and the section of road by Barn Cottage Farm. The water retention and possible blocked gulleys on the Coalpit Lane junction were also highlighted by Cllr Fewkes and a discussion ensued about the problem areas within the village, which also included a residents concerns about potholes in the entrance to Brook Street. Borough Cllr Poole assured residents and Councillors that he had noted all areas of concern and that he would report them and follow it up. Borough Cllr Poole also advised that he had complained about the recent repairs that had been carried out on the roads, as he felt they had not been completed to a good enough standard. He was also following up on this matter.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman closed the public forum part of the meeting and all Councillors agreed to start the Parish Council meeting at 7:35pm.