

WANSTROW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes held at The Village Hall on Monday 14th February 2022

Present: Cllrs Andrea Dexter, Geoff Andrews, Michael Gay and Bob Sargent

Also, in attendance: Kate Egan (Clerk)

Items were taken out of order from the agenda

361/2022 Election of Chair

Cllr Geoff Andrews proposed Cllr Andrea Dexter as Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Michael Gay and unanimously agreed.

(a) Signing of the Acceptance of Office Form

Cllr Andrea Dexter signed the acceptance of office form.

362/2022 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Nigel Clements

363/2022 Absent**364/2022 (a) To receive declaration of interests from Councillors on items on the agenda**

No declarations of interest were received from Councillors on items on the agenda.

(b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests

There were no written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests

(c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

No requests for dispensation as appropriate were received

365/2022 Public Session

There were no members of the public in attendance

366/2022 County and District Councillor Reports

County Councillor Phillip Ham was not in attendance and no County Report had been forwarded. District Councillor Michael Gay had forwarded his report prior to the meeting, it has been included as appendix A.

367/2022 To confirm the minutes of the previous meetings held on 10th January 2022, previously circulated.

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the meeting held on 10th January 2022 be accepted as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

368/2022 Matters arising from the minutes but not on the agenda

(a) Transferring of assets from Mendip District Council to Wanstrow Parish Council. An email was sent asking for confirmation of contact details, no reply was received, this will be chased. Following the meeting the contact details have been received and a request will be sent.

369/2022 Planning Applications – If other planning applications are received between the date of this notice and the date of the meeting, they may be considered.

No notifications of Planning Applications had been received by the Council since the last meeting.

- 370/2022 Notifications of Decision from Mendip District Council regarding Planning Applications.**
- (a) 2020/2510/OTS** Application for outline planning permission with some matters reserved for erection to 4no. dwelling houses with details of access and layout. Land at 37144 141521 Station Road, Wanstrow. **Update** Mendip District Council refused the application.
- 371/2022 To be resolved**
- (a) Discussion on the dust issues within the village and whether Dust Monitors can be installed.**
The various issues were discussed and Cllr Michael Gay will contact the quarries to request the installation of a dust monitor in the village hall carpark. Cllr Geoff Andrews will also contact Somerset Highways to request regular cleaning of the A361 to try and stop the amount of dust collecting on the side of the road.
- (e) Discussion and possible proposal on the purchase of an acre of land.**
The land agent joined by Zoom and various questions were asked about access and restrictions across the land. This item was discussed further later on in the meeting.
- (b) Discussion on issuing the next Parish Council newsletter.**
Councillors will put together various news items. Cllr Bob Sargent will compile the newsletter. It will be available as a hard copy and digitally and publication will possibly be the beginning of April.
- (c) Discussion and proposal in adopting a logo for the Parish Council.**
A brief discussion was held and it was suggested that an Oak Tree form part of the new logo. Some ideas will be brought to the next meeting.
- (d) Ratify a proposal to transfer £30,000 from the Nationwide account to the current account for the purchase of land.**
The Council **RESOLVED** the transfer of £30,000 from the Nationwide account to the current account for the purchase of land.
- 372/2022 Clerk's report**
- (a)** The grant application for £2,380 was submitted to SALC/SCC on 24th January for new picnic benches for the Playing Field, so older members of the community and those with mobility issues can join in with others.
- (b)** The paperwork in regard to the application for a village green has been returned to the Clerk. An application can be resubmitted but further evidence is required between the date of the previous application and the resubmission. **Update** The application will be resubmitted to Somerset County Council.

373/2022

Finance**Bank Balances as at: - 7th February 2022****Nationwide Account - £42,797.25****Unity Trust Bank - £5,995.35****Receipts****Payments**

- (a) ICO – Annual Subscription - £40.00
- (b) Purchase of Ink and Paper - £25.16
- (c) Clerks Salary – January - £324.48
- (d) Home working allowance – January - £26.00
- (e) Annual rent for Parish Allotments - £175.00
- (f) Parish Council Websites – Annual Hosting - £216.00
- (g) Alan Penny - £300.00

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the above payments and also **RESOLVED** to accept an additional payment as below: -

- (h) Wanstrow Village Hall – Hall Hire - £162.00

374/2022

Correspondence

- (a) Publication of Draft Supplementary Planning Document: Design and Amenity of New Development, Guidance for Interpretation of Local Plan Policy – DP7 – forwarded 13.1.22
- (b) Winter Councillor Training Events – forwarded 18.1.22
- (c) Invitation to the next meeting of the LGR Advisory Board Meeting on Thursday 3rd February at 3.30pm via Teams – forwarded 26.1.22
- (d) Registration for Town and Parish Council Conference – Thursday 17th February being held virtually – forwarded 2.2.22
- (e) Frome Area LCN – Development Work Brief – forwarded 4.2.22
- (f) Nomination Papers for Somerset Council, Town and Parish Council Elections May 2022 are now available – forwarded 14.02.2022

375/2022

Reports**(a) Village Hall**

Cllr Nigel Clements was not in attendance, so there was no report from the Village Hall.

(b) Highways

Stiles are being replaced on Footpaths in the village with Gates, four have been replaced on the track between Bruton and Burts Hill, steps have also been installed up leading from underneath the railway line.

Orange marking has appeared on Back Lane, Coalpit Lane where hopefully the pot holes will be repaired.

A project manager has now been allocated to the Traffic Calming Scheme for the village, the Parish Council are waiting for the new contact details.

The number of volunteers for the Speed watch group has reduced due to residents returning to their normal lives as the restrictions are being lifted.

Tower View was flooded again recently during the recent rains; the culverts are blocked but as they are located on private land the landowner would need to be contacted to clear them.

Cllr Michael Gay has written to South Somerset District Council highlighting the issues on the road between the Mendip sign and Gilcombe Farm on the A359.

371/2022 To be resolved

(e) Discussion and possible proposal on the purchase of an acre of land.

The Councillors discussed the possible purchase of the purchase of an acre of land and listed the positives and negatives. A meeting will be arranged with the village hall committee to discuss the plan for the land.

376/2022 Matters to report / items for next agenda

There were no matters to report or items for the next agenda.

377/2022 Date and time of next meeting – Monday 14th March 2022 at 7.30pm to be held in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Appendix A

Covid

Noting that Government have waived most restrictions, I'm sorry to say that infection rates in Mendip and in the villages remain high (over 900 per hundred thousand people and above the national average), with an increasing number of people in local hospitals. So my own view is that we should all remain careful, maintaining distance, mask wearing as appropriate.

Lateral flow tests are again available by post if you order on the Government website, but there is a clear indication that they will not remain free as time goes on...so it's important to keep a stock. Let's hope the peak passes soon.

LCN

I am in contact with both the Bruton and Frome pilot studies, and noted Cllr. Sheppard's involvement. The Bruton pilot LCN is meeting next on the 17th (focussing on well-being). There is nothing to stop parishes attending more than one pilot so they can gain experience of how each group is working for them.

It should be stressed that these are pilot studies, so final decisions on who will fit where and the limits of authority and influence are still to be finally determined. But the more active and assertive parishes are, the greater their subsequent agency will be.

Having spoken with the officer in charge of the workstream, she recommends the following link for further information <https://newsomersetcouncil.org.uk/local-community-networks/>. The Chair and Lead have corrected the previous statement, parishes have not been asked which LCN they want to join but this is likely by the Autumn

Council costs

Further to questions asked, I have received the following advice from the Monitoring officer at Mendip relating to the May elections.

'Parish Councils will only pay for their elections, the County Council will pay for the County/Unitary elections. Obviously both elections will share the same resource in terms of hall hire, poll clerks and presiding officer etc and they will be proportioned.

As each parish is different in terms of varying electorates, hall hire costs, number of polling stations required, number of candidates etc it will be virtually impossible to set a ceiling figure but subject to inflation the costs should be similar to those previously provided/met.'

Unitary

I attended the meeting of the joint committee of the Local Government reorganisation, one of the emerging concerns is that the initial survey suggests a budget shortfall of £28M in the first year of the new Council. Although this is likely an over-estimate, I reiterate I have never believed in the Unitary business plan from day one.

Planning

2021/2809/HSE, amendments to Bungalow at Lone Lane, approved in line with PC recommendation. 2021/2863/FUL , slurry store, objection by the Environment Agency, insufficient information about protection of watercourse and disposal of slurry.

Freightliner

Freightliner operate the quarry trains out of Torr Works, and are a subsidiary of HSBC rail. I attended a meeting of the liaison group, they are hoping to achieve ISO 14001 status (environment). I advised our concerns relate to road traffic, dust, water, visual impact and littering by contractors, and that run-off from embankments were a potential issue for consideration of flood mitigation. The lead officer (Charlotte Broughton) will also attend the AI liaison group.

Council work

This month has seen the usual large amount of planning in the Ward, preparation for the Full Council meeting on the 21st, and an Audit meeting: the books for the preceding year of 20/21 are still not signed off owing to an objection to the accounts.

There is a draft protocol for liaison with the LGR/Unitary body on financial plans. At this point, MDC are able to look at transferring MDC assets to other bodies (such as parish and town councils) given an appropriate business case, but it is likely (due to this protocol) that by the middle of March the route to any such transfer would be more difficult: so if WPC has any Mendip asset they want, act promptly.

Noting a proposed increase to the Council Tax Hardship Fund this year, I have requested that a much greater increase is made available. It should be noted that every penny if this fund was used last year, and we know how the impact of energy costs, national insurance rises, and inflation are going to be a massive.

The Government have announced a modest rebate for qualifying people to help with costs, but I'm afraid there are no details as yet...indeed the Government haven't finished advising on annual monetary outcomes including announcements made before Christmas as yet, so District Council finances remain best guesses.