

WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the electronic Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors D. Chase, G. Francis, C. Laughton, P. Laughton, R. Henderson, H. Saddington.

Also Present: Councillor S. Michael of Newark and Sherwood District Council and one member of the public.

210501 To elect officers of the council – Chair and Vice Chair

Cllr. D. Chase stated that he did not wish to stand for re-election as Chairman. Cllr. P. Laughton proposed Cllr. G. Francis as Chairman; seconded by Cllr. C. Laughton. Cllr. G. Francis was duly elected as Chairman by a unanimous vote.

Cllr. G. Francis proposed Cllr. C. Laughton as Vice-Chairman; seconded by Cllr. P. Laughton. Cllr. C. Laughton was duly elected as Vice-Chairman by a Unanimous vote. Cllr. D. Chase expressed his thanks to his fellow Councillors for their help and support during his time as Chairman; an expression which was reciprocated by his fellow Councillors and Councillor Michael, who also congratulated the new Chairman and Vice-Chairman on their election.

210502 To receive Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Cllr. D Chase declared an interest in the matter of footpaths, which was to be discussed later in the meeting.

Open Forum – ten minutes to receive questions and comments from members of the public

A member of the public was present at the meeting and wished to express his view (and those of other residents with whom he had been in discussion) about the erection of a gate on the Normanton side of the Beck, which now prevented many residents from walking the track which they had done for many, many years, by which they were very upset. He mentioned that a number of residents were affected and that he had at least a dozen witness statements. He stated that he was aware of the change of ownership of the land on which the gate had been placed.

He stated that he had sought advice from the District Council and from County Hall as to whether the track could be designated as a Public Footpath, and had been advised by Eddie Brennan of Notts CC that he should ask the Parish Council to support any such Application.

It was also noted that the path at the top of Church Walk at the end of Bell Lane is in disrepair. This is a right of way and a request will be made to the Rights of Access Team at Notts CC.

210503 To accept the minutes of the meeting held on April 7th 2021

The Minutes were accepted unanimously.

210504 To note and report matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

i) Parish Clock Update and provision of equipment for volunteer time keeper

It was confirmed that the Faculty and the Quote from Time Assured match up. It was discussed whether a self-winding mechanism is something that could be considered in the future given current issues surrounding the winding of the clock. It was agreed that this is something that could be mentioned to Time Assured to see if it was a possibility for the future. In the meantime, the Clerk is to contact Time Assured to say that approval for the work is given. The Council

agreed that a cheque could be raised for the initial deposit when requested by Time Assured. The Clerk should also try to establish when work is likely to start and how long the project will take.

There was a discussion concerning the Council's copy of the church key. The Councillors were in agreement that this key should be in possession of the Council going forward. It is currently with the Vicar as his is being repaired, so it is unlikely to be returned to the Parish Council before that happens.

There has been no response as to where the new headtorch is to be kept.

ii) Update on Rural Broadband Scheme

Open Reach were asked for a formal bid. They came back with a figure of £174,326, which covers 146 addresses across Weston. Cllr. G. Francis has asked Open Reach and Callum Jones at Notts CC about the next steps and has been advised that there has to be a legally contracting entity who would be liable for the whole sum. Notts CC have said that Open Reach can ask for 130% of the amount of the quote in vouchers to cover the cost. Cllr. G. Francis has requested a meeting as to the next steps, particularly engaging the community and may well put out a request to the community for someone to volunteer to take this forward. The quote from Open Reach is valid until the end of June

iii) Bench at Colley Lane

Cllr. P. Laughton stated that any work to the bench or foundations should be carried out by someone who is qualified to work on the highway, or at the least be supervised by someone who is. As this is the case, the work should not be carried out by the Councillors. It is believed that there may well be a village resident with the necessary qualifications who could be approached, or VIA could be approached. Cllr. C. Laughton agreed to approach the village resident and Cllr. D. Chase said that he would approach Henderson's to see if there was anyone there with the necessary qualifications who could help.

iv) Discuss Villagers concerns erection of new gates near the Beck

Cllr. P. Laughton stated that some of the Councillors had walked the route to fully understand the issue. Councillors stated that they represented not only the dog walkers but also the land owner, and could not 'take sides'.

It is understood that the padlock on the gate has been removed, but that the gate is very stiff and has barbed wire on top so is very difficult to open. The previous landowner had experience of gates being left open and dogs being let off leads to run in fields without their owner clearing up after them. It was noted that the new bridge at Grassthorpe will allow a circular walk, but this did not negate the upset or concern of residents about the track being cut off to them.

Cllr. G. Francis noted that Parish Councils do not have a mandate to apply for footpaths to be created, and that this is down to NSDC or Notts CC. The Councillors stated that they could not put in the application, although they sympathise with the villagers.

It was agreed that the first approach would be to draft a simple letter to the landowner, expressing the concern of dog-walking residents and to ask for him to think again. The Clerk is to draft the letter and forward it to the Chairman for approval. It would then be up to the residents to decide if they wanted to make an application for the track to be made into a Public Footpath. If there is no agreement, the Access Team at Notts CC have advised that an application could take as long as 10 years and that there are currently 120 outstanding applications. If the placing of the gate is challenged, the landowner could be asked to keep it open during the application process.

v) Update on vandalism

No more incidents of vandalism. The glass in the bus shelter has not yet been replaced.

210505 To receive reports from County Council and District Council Representatives
Cllr Michael reported that as at 18th April, 630,297 vaccines had been carried out in Nottinghamshire. There has been a high take up rate of over 90% for 55's and over. A vaccine bus had been visiting areas where there has been a low take up rate, but this has been met by some protests.

210506 To receive and consider any highways issues
The Council had received confirmation that work on the bridge had started, but then stopped. At the time of the meeting, it was not clear what the problem was, but it was hoped matters could be resolved quickly.
It was noted that the Village Gateway sign was now back in place, and that there had been no charge for the work.

210507 To consider financial matters

i) To report receipts

The April payment of the Council Precept has been received.

ii) To report payments

There have been no payments. It was agreed that the payment to the Clerk of 6 months salary and the reimbursement to Cllr. P. Laughton for the purchase of a headtorch could be made. It was also agreed that the necessary sum for the renewal of the Parish Council's insurance policy could be made, although the Clerk is to make enquiries as to whether a lower premium could be found.

iii) Update on completion of Annual Accounts 2020/21 and Audit

The Clerk reported that these were underway and that the Internal Auditor had agreed to carry out the audit again this year. The Accounts could not, however, be completed until missing Bank Statements which had been requested had arrived.

iv) To complete the Annual Governance Statement & Accounting Statement for 2020/21
The Clerk stated that this would be completed once the Accounts had been audited, which would hopefully be in time for the next meeting

v) Update on change of Bank

No further progress had been made. It was agreed that the current mandate should remain and that Cllr G Francis would be added as a signatory once the new account was open.

210508 To consider planning matters and receive updates on ongoing applications

i) Decision re: Planning Application 21/00355/FUL – construction of vehicular access to create new vehicular access from Great North Road (retrospective)

Noted

210509 To review and agree council policies

i) Standing Orders

ii) Financial Regulations

Both documents were reviewed and accepted with not alterations at this time.

210510 To discuss Villager's concern raised about the increase in the amount of dog mess in the Village

Posters have been put up. Cllr. S Michael was asked whether NSDC had any provision for free poo bags. She agreed that she would enquire.

210511 Consider correspondence circulated to Councillors since last meeting:

i) Heather Sutton – Change of NPI at Newark & Sherwood

It was agreed that a letter be sent to Heather thanking her for her good work and service and wishing her well in her new role on behalf of Weston PC.

ii) RSN Rural Funding Digest

iii) VIA – Roadworks Bulletin

iv) Resident – Dog Mess

v) Tanya Grimes – Prince Philip Death

- vi) NSDC re Remote meetings
- vii) Tanya Grimes – Prince Philip Death (2)
- viii) RSN Rural Bulletin 13/4/21
- ix) Tanya Grimes – Personnel Newsletter March 2021
- x) Tanya Grimes – NALC Online Events
- xi) NHS Nottingham & Notts CCG – Covid-19 Vaccination Toolkit
- xii) VIA – Roadworks Bulletin
- xiii) Weston PCC – Faculty Confirmation re: All Saints Clock Repair
- xiv) Letter re Church Communication & H&S
- xv) NSDC – Planning Committee Agenda
- xvi) RSN – Rural Bulletin 20/04/21
- xvii) Julie Zemontas – Local Council Review Magazine
- xviii) Julie Zemontas – NALC Training Sessions
- xix) VIA – Update on Weston FP4 Footbridge Replacement
- xx) Tanya Grimes re DCMS Rural Broadband Consultation
- xxi) NSDC – Planning Decision Notice
- xxiii) Tanya Grimes – Chief Executives Bulletin
- xxiv) Tanya Grimes – Royal British Legion Centenary
- Cllr. C. Laughton stated that poppies would be put up around the Village to make the centenary.**
- xxv) Stephen Williams - Time Assured re: Church Clock
- xxvi) RSN – Rural Bulletin 27/04/21
- xxvii) Charlotte Allardice – Newark & Sherwood NPI

Open Forum – ten minutes to receive questions and comments from members of the public

210512 To consider and discuss any non-agenda items and business for the meeting on
Wednesday 2nd June 2021

There has been a Notts Police Alert concerning the theft of chemicals from a farm at Carlton. Enquiries are ongoing. Anyone with any information should ring 101
It was noted that the next meeting would need to be 'in person' but outside. Cllr. H. Saddington said that he would ask Hall Farm if the meeting could be held in their covered outside seating area and advise.

The meeting closed at 21:11

Website: www.westonparishnotts.org.uk