

DRAFT

Wolverton Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting on 11 November 2014 at 7.30pm
Venue: Wolverton Church

1. Present and apologies

Cllrs Stone, Payne, Rowley, Tunbridge and Barnes; Clerk, DC Richards and CC Horner attended for most of the meeting.

2. Co-option to vacancy

Councillors warmly welcomed Cllr Tunbridge back to the council. Cllr Tunbridge completed the requisite forms – *clerk to forward to SDC as necessary.*

3. Disclosure of interests

Cllr Stone declared a non pecuniary interest in any discussion regarding development of the land along Wolverton Rd.

4. Minutes from WPC meeting on 15 July 2014. The minutes, previously circulated, were amended and agreed as an accurate record. Clerk to forward amended version to all; and for Cllr Stone's signature.

5. Matters arising**a. Highway matters**

The footpath trip hazard issue raised by Cllr Rowley has been addressed.

b. WPC address and website

Cllr Tunbridge to progress email addresses.

The search engine seems to be effective now at bringing up the website – no current need to commission external ITC support.

Cllr Payne reported that, following discussion with SDC, links added on the website to WCC, the school and cricket club. Key dates have been added, including the Christmas party.

Councillors agreed that draft and signed minutes would be added, with signed minutes remaining on the website for 12 months.

Cllr Tunbridge to assist Cllr Payne to place relevant parts of the Parish Plan, (history, photos), on the website; and, in due course the summary.

c. Broadband The clerk confirmed she had written to CWS to express WPC'S concern at the slowness in improving broadband speed within the parish. *Clerk to forward copy of email and, once received, CWS's response.*

6. Parish Plan

Cllr Payne shared the draft summary with the meeting. Further minor amendments were outlined, including writing an introduction. Cllr Stone to *ascertain the cost of publishing 100 copies of the summary for distribution to parishioners.*

The clerk circulated draft Terms of Reference for the 'Action Group' sub-committee - councillors to give feedback to clerk before the next meeting.

7. Report from CC Horner

- a. CC Horner informed the meeting about WCC'S consultations on achieving £92 million in savings - whilst maintaining council tax at or below a 2% increase, despite budget pressures from adult social care and children's safeguarding and the need to maintain some financial reserves. He noted that some areas of service, such as roads, had been protected, but the budget situation was very challenging. Grants to the voluntary sector and parish councils would be reduced.
- b. He informed the meeting that WCC's funding of the discretionary Community Grants was increasing from £5,000 to £6,000 – applications need to be made by the end of September 2015. He reported on some of the successful applications from this year. Bids requesting more than £1,000 will need to include matched funding.
- c. Peer Review of WCC. Cllr Horner reported that overall the review had been favourable, with positive comment on political leadership and inter-party relationships.
- d. CC Horner drew councillors' attention to the Care Act, coming in April 2015, although advised that working protocols were not yet in place.
- e. Call for foster carers – CC Horner advised the meeting of the need to find more carers to support WCC's looked after children.
- f. Cllr Stone thanked CC Horner for resolving the footpath safety issue near Norton Lea. CC Horner asked Cllr Rowley to notify him directly if further issues arose.

8. Report from DC Richards

DC Richards updated the meeting on the progress of the Core Strategy. It will be open to public examination from 6 January 2015, for one month, although the deadline for the final examiner's report is not known – if all progresses smoothly, this may be by the end of July 2015.

Aspects of the strategy carry weight, pending the outcome of the public investigation, depending on whether or not a successful challenge has been made. The 5-year housing supply has been challenged.

The proposed development of 400 houses at Long Marston is likely to be approved, but without the original accompanying infrastructure.

He reported also upon a review of the state of the district – with many positives such as low unemployment, below average crime rates and good levels of satisfaction. However, improvements are needed, e.g. in relation to traffic and planning.

He advised the meeting that, without prejudice, an investigation by the Monitoring Officer was taking place into the probity of Cllr Saint's conduct regarding the development of the Gaydon and Lighthorne sites.

9. Planning Applications

- a. **White Cottage.** Cllr Stone reported that he had shared his concerns with SDC regarding the unavailability of the case officer and design & access statement that did not initially correspond with the building. He informed the meeting that SDC had provided a useful list of contacts – also issued to Cllr Payne at a recent SDC planning 'training' session – which Cllr Payne provided to councillors. SDC have also committed to conduct with parish councils a twice yearly satisfaction survey in respect of planning matters.
- b. 14/01839. **VARY The Chase** – Variation noted.
- c. 14/01578. **Oak Trees** – Pending.
- d. 14/02355/COUMB **The Grange** - noted, no response received. Environmental health objected
- e. **Development of land along Wolverton Road.** The clerk advised that Ms Dobson of Dobson Grey had requested to meet with WPC to present development proposals. To allow time to notify parishioners of this, an 'extra ordinary' WPC meeting, to which the public have a right to attend, dates of 1st or 2nd December, were identified. Clerk to arrange meeting. Item to be chaired by Cllr Payne given Cllr Stone lives opposite and may thus have a non-pecuniary interest in the matter.
- f. 14/02816/OUT **New, detached dwelling adjacent to Grange Cottages.** Cllr Stone went through the revised application for outline planning permission in detail. Cllr Stone to organise a site visit for WPC and to meet with the neighbours; and draft a response thereafter, to reach SDC by 24 November.

10. Finance

- a. Current position = £2987.74¹ (plus ring fenced N. Watch funds)
- b. Possible expenditure on website development support – not required
- c. Grass cutting invoice for £157.50 noted
- d. **Feedback from Grant Thornton, (GT), on the annual audit.** Although the accounts were approved, the clerk stated that GT wished to draw two other matters to the attention of WPC. Firstly, the Council Tax Support Grant was incorrectly accounted for in that it should have been detailed separately in box 3 (total other receipts), not included in box 2 as part of the annual precept. Secondly, GT advised that, “The internal auditor’s report sent to the external auditors was not correct. The internal auditor answered yes to test H. The correct response is N/A as the Council does not have any fixed assets or any other long term investments and assets, as per Section 1 of the Annual Return. The Council should ensure that the internal auditor’s report is reviewed before sending the document to the external auditors. The Council should minute the process. If there are any errors in the report it should either be amended or the Council should provide an explanation for the error.” The clerk stated that this issue reflected the uncertainty surrounding an asset register and the question as to what assets the council had. The clerk circulated a draft asset register – this was amended and will be formally agreed at the next meeting. In addition GT asked that any amendments on the face of the Annual Return be initialled.

11. Consultations

- a. Core Strategy – as discussed with Cllr Richards, above
- b. Planning training – Cllr Payne provided feedback he will re-forward relevant information.
- c. WALC AGM – 4 November 2014. Cllrs Stone provided feedback
- d. Arden Forum – Cllr Payne was unable to attend. Clerk to advise councillors of next forum meeting, councillor to attend.

12. Date of next meetings in 2015

- 26th January
- 30 March

Kathryn Hollinrake Clerk
 Tel 01789 730757
 Mobile 07891 396667
 Email kathryn@axis-connect.com

¹ This sum to be verified