

Wolverton Parish Council
Minutes of meeting on 6th January 2016 at 7.30pm
Venue: Wolverton Church Hall

DRAFT

1. **Present** Cllrs Payne, (chair), Rowley and Tunbridge; clerk; Mr Anthony; CC Horner and DC Richards for part of the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Stone. Cllr Payne welcomed Mr Easterbrook to the meeting as a new parish councillor.
2. **Disclosure of interests** – none.
3. **Minutes.** The meeting approved the minutes from November 2015, noting the alteration on the Speed Aware payment (£21.11 final sum); and from the extra ordinary meeting on 22nd December 2015. Minutes were signed by Cllr Payne.
4. **Matters arising**
 - a) **WPC website and email addresses** Cllr Tunbridge outlined an alternative service provider for the website, with the advantages of an improved planning application interface with SDC; a provider with experience of hosting parish council sites; and possible savings of £100 plus as the service is free to community organisations. However, it would mean losing the current email addresses, albeit these are not being used by all at present. *Cllr Tunbridge to check out the experience of Kingsclere PC; the web address WPC would have; and notice/penalty arrangements with 1&1 to enable a final decision at the March meeting.*
 - b) **Councillor vacancy.** Cllr Payne confirmed that, by unanimous decision, Mr Easterbrook had been co-opted to the council at the meeting on 22 December 2015.
 - c) **Lengthsman scheme** – trial results are awaited. The clerk advised that Snitterfield PC were interested in joining with us on the scheme. Councillors noted that making a decision, without sound information as to the financial implications, was difficult, especially given the precept timescale. *Cllr Easterbrook to lead on this issue for WPC; clerk to forward all available information.*
5. **Action Group Report** The meeting welcomed Mr Anthony's further report and congratulated him on the progress made with all actions well under way except for two minor matters. Key points include:

- Speed watch - three sessions held so far, by the vicarage, yielding three speeders. Further sessions planned, by the school. The meeting appreciated the superb contribution made by Mr Miller in getting the process organised
- Volunteers to address flooding issue at Wolverton Fields now identified
- Broadband upgrade– no new information
- Community assets – Mr Wilton is investigating the pros and cons of having the church rooms designated as a community asset, for the consideration of parishioners
- Severn Trent water pressure issues. *Cllr Tunbridge to ask Seven Trent not to decrease the water pressure. Action closed thereafter.*
- Verge protection at the Green – *CC Horner to seek WCC advice on possible protection measures*
- Litter – *clerk to send information on 'Clean for the Queen' (community clean-up day in March 2016) to Mr Easterbrook for information; and to place on noticeboard.*

Cllr Easterbrook reported on the progress made with the paths/verges/highways aspects of the Action Plan. He informed the meeting that he had reconnoitred the parish to identify issues, with a view to determining which authorities are responsible for remedial action and developing a systematic approach to flagging up and resolving problems as they arise in the future. Issues to take forward thus far include:

- Electric fence blocking access on the footpath from the Court to the Green
- Flooding / debris in road towards Snitterfield
- Two stiles in poor condition. *The meeting noted that all appropriate styles had been replaced with gates and closed this action.*
- Areas of potholes and blocked drains e.g. on the road towards Langley

Councillors thanked Cllr Easterbrook for his excellent work in pulling all this together.

In addition, Cllr Easterbrook reported on initial soundings as to the cost and feasibility of gas being supplied to the village – a gas pipe extension from Snitterfield to the village centre may cost in the region of £10,000, plus connection charges for individual households. *Clerk to place on the agenda of the Annual Parish meeting in May 2016.*

6. Finance

- Current position = £3169.08
- Budget and precept request (see information attached). A lengthy discussion took place as to WPC's financial position and implications for the next precept. Although finances are sound this year with an estimated closing balance of circa £2,700, councillors noted a number of planned / possible expenses for 2016-7, including new notice boards (estimated £800 to £1,000 shortfall); dog waste bins (£200 to £300); uncertainties as to the cost of the lengthsman scheme; £800 being allocated for grass cutting; and the possible move to employing (or sharing in) a trained, salaried clerk. Councillors decided not to make grants to the CAB or to the church yard this year or next year. *Proposed by Cllr Rowley, seconded by Cllr Tunbridge, councillors unanimously decided to request a precept of £2,500 in view of the additional expenses anticipated.*
- Clerk expenses of £60. Proposed by Cllr Rowley, seconded by Cllr Payne
- VAT registration – *to be actioned in line with Cllr Payne's email (circulated previously)*
- Asset register – to be finalised

7. **Clerking arrangements.** *Contact made with Ms Cox, clerk to progress.*

8. **Report from CC Horner.** CC Horner outlined a successful prosecution by Trading Standards against a car sales outfit and discussed the Consumer Rights Act. He informed councillors of a grant applicable to rural businesses, for leasing of electric vehicles. He outlined a challenging financial settlement for WCC. He explained that WCC were not intending to join the West Midlands Authority at this stage.

9. **Report from DC Richards** He informed councillors that SDC is in the top ten of councils for recycling and does well also with high employment rates. He advised that in January the council would be hosting twelve refugee families, as part of the national response. He updated on the Core Strategy, which, it is hoped, will be finally agreed in July 2016. He advised that SDC was likely to vote again to decide whether or not to join the combined West Midlands Authority, in the light of the additional information that has been made available.

10. Planning applications

- a. **15/04199/VARY Woolly Park Farm** – Cllr Payne had responded as agreed, in line with the CPRE's view
- b. **Primrose Cottage** – no objection

11. Future meetings in 2016

- 9th March
- 18th May – Annual Parish Meeting & AGM
- 13th July
- 14th September
- 16th November