



Minutes of the West Dean Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 10 August 2021 7:00pm, King George's Hall

Present: Harry Urquhart (HU) – Chair, Bill Seabrook (BS), Andy Francis (AF), and Ben Rowe (BR).
Others present: Melanie Camilleri (MC) – Clerk/RFO, Cllr Deborah Hook from WTPC, and four members of the public.

74/21 **Apologies for Absence:** Jane Higgins (JH) (who is convalescing after an op) and Cllr Richard Britton (RB) (due to a clash of meetings), Footpath Warden Christine Warry

75/21 **Declarations of interest:** None

76/21 **Minutes:** the Minutes of the Meeting held on **Thursday 24 June 2021** were unanimously approved.

77/21 **Public Forum**

78/21 **To receive a report from Cllr Richard Britton (Wiltshire Council):** Cllr Britton sent the following written report:-

1. My local casework is fairly limited at the moment: A housing issue on Spiders Island, Whaddon; complaints about illegal parking – also in Whaddon; issues arising from the closure of a permissive path in Pitton/Winterslow; and a couple of planning enforcement issues.
2. I am also doing a limited delivery of the Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner candidate's literature. I have 'met' Philip Wilkinson on a couple of occasions and I regard him as being a bit of a thug but a highly credible candidate.
3. There was a meeting of Full Council a couple of weeks ago where, amongst other things, we received the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel convened (by law) every four years to look into councillors' allowances. The Panel made various recommendations which amounted to an increase in Cllrs allowances of around 5.25%. We thanked them for their report and politely declined their recommendation. We agreed instead to take the same rise as our staff will get under the terms of the National settlement which is yet to be announced but is expected to be 1.5%. A thoroughly acceptable outcome I thought.

That's really all I have for you. As you know August is a really quiet month in the Municipal calendar. I'm quite pleased about that since it gives me chance to come to terms with my new roles: Chairman of Wiltshire's Local Government Pension Scheme (with members from over 80 local organisations); Chairman of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Board's Scrutiny Panel and a newly-appointed member of the Wiltshire Housing Board.

79/21 **NDP**

- i) Appointment of examiner for Regulation 16 document made
- ii) Other:-
 - a. TVBC taking lead
 - b. Consultee deadline for response 10 Aug
 - c. Renewal of NDP website approved in principle – clarify if this is for 1 or 2yrs

80/21 **Parish Emergencies**

- i) AF confirmed that he is the appointed Flood Warden for the village of West Dean. He receives alerts for both river and ground water flooding. He has acquired new signage (in storage) which he will continue to deploy with gel sacks, communicate via FOWD Newsletters, FB, and carry out door to door checks.

AF reported that the river is currently flowing well, thanks to the successful weed clearing carried out last Autumn.

- ii) AF agreed to complete and return the Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme Form
- iii) Relevant information will be published on the West Dean Village website, FOWD, and FB

81/21

Adoption of the Heritage Phonebox to be decommissioned by BT

- i) It was unanimously agreed that WDPC will adopt the Heritage Phonebox. HU signed the Agreement for Sale & Purchase.
- ii) All councillors and members of the public to think about how the phonebox will be used as a community asset.

82/21

Footpaths

- i) BR read out a report from the Footpath Warden Christine Warry:-
A complaint was received from a parishioner about the overgrown state of the length of footpath 9 which runs from Moodys Hill to the fence of Dean Hill Park. Ben Rowe kindly walked it and took photographs for me but by the time I received them another parishioner who had walked that footpath had drawn its state direct to the attention of the owners, Norman Court Estate, who had appeared helpful and said they would see to it in a few days. This did not happen so the same parishioner reported the problem to Wiltshire Council. Unfortunately, if their footpath staff for South Wiltshire remains at six as it used to be a swift response is unlikely with the hundreds of miles of footpaths within their bailiwick. Norman Court Estate was also approached again. At the end of July there were distinct sounds running into the evening of harvesting of the field along the edge of which the footpath runs so it is hoped that the footpath was made more accessible at the same time. Ben is going to try to fit in a check before the meeting and if he was able to manage it will update you.

Later on a broken stile was discovered on West Tytherley footpath number 12, one of those which runs from West Dean to Frenchmoor Lane. I supplied the name and email address of the West Tytherley footpath warden to the parishioner who discovered it so that he could be told about it and the parishioner who had seen it, which I had not, could answer any questions he might have. So far there has been no reply, but this will be pursued. *BR confirmed the latest - that he had walked the footpath and it was now clear*

As regards our application for the restoration to the Hampshire Definitive Map of the footpath to Park Cottage, I had an enquiry from Ben Marsh, who had recently taken over the application from Harry Goodchild, after the May election asking me who was now the person on the parish council, he should contact about it when he needed to do so. I had to break it to him it was still me he would have to put up with. I have heard nothing since but do not expect to hear from him for some time as, if HCC have finally given up hope of securing voluntary dedication by the owners of the land over which it passes, he will have a lot of work to do including researching evidence for himself and interviewing those who gave user statements.

Actions arising: BR to discuss with Cllr Britton grants available from Wiltshire Council to replace broken stiles with kissing-gates

83/21

Councillors' Reports

AF

- The King George's Hall committee has agreed to offer the hall to WDPC for its Parish Council meetings free of charge for the coming year as their way of sharing the hall which we all view as a wonderful village asset with the whole community. HU expressed his thanks to the committee on behalf of the whole Parish Council.

- The King George’s Hall committee currently holds £600 River Funds and £50.20 Defib Funds. It was unanimously agreed to accept the proposal that WDPC act as custodians of these funds. HU confirmed that David Sutton continues to be the guardian of the defib and its maintenance/logging with the Ambulance Service.

84/21

Finance

iii) The Cashflow report and payments were approved

Bank balances

Treasurers Account 06 July 2021: £2,715.70

Business Bank Instant 09 July 2021: £7,866.52

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Clive Francis	Grass Cutting (July x 2)	528.00	BACS
	Total debit	£528.00	

iv) MC ran through the mid-year budget 2021/22. All on track. Consideration to the 2022/23 budget to take place at the October Meeting.

85/21

Correspondence, AOB, and urgent matters

- Penn Farm Barns: AF delivered an update on referral to Wiltshire Council Enforcement Team regarding the deterioration of the barns. They have responded to say that due to limited resources, they are prioritising other cases above Penn Farm Barns. As the Barns are now at risk of irrevocable damage, AF will seek support from Cllr Britton on the matter.
- ‘Bus Back Better’ government bus strategy - survey update posted on FOWD. MC to request further engagement from the community specifically with regards to integrated transport approach (train and bus) in the community.
- Wiltshire Council’s mowing policy: notice sent out in FOWD
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service: free ‘Safe and Well Visits’ for those who are at increased risk of fire (including free supply and installation of smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide alarms, amongst other things): Notice sent out in FOWD
- RoSPA safety inspection of Rec Grd and Play Equipment: notification being carried out in September. AF to reinstall the middle swing (taken down to comply with COVID-19 social distancing measures). MC to explore what Grants are available to PCs for Rec Grds/Playgrounds.
- Capture photos of councillors for the WDPC website: MC took photos for the WDPC website.
- Hedges need cutting. AF to speak to Clive with view to action before the West Dean Fayre in Sept.

86/21

Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the date of the next **West Dean Parish Council** meeting will be held on **Tuesday 12 October 2021 at 7:00pm** in the **King George’s Hall**

Being no further business, HU closed the meeting at 8:17pm.