

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING  
OF WATCHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD AT  
WATCHFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

**ON  
TUESDAY January 15<sup>th</sup> 2013**

**AT 7.30pm**

Present:

- Cllr D Gale
- Cllr R Holman
- Cllr Skeffington
- Cllr Rawle
- Cllr Nodder
- Cllr Bush

Clerk – Dr C Matthews  
3 members of the public

**Item 184 To receive Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Bailey.

**Item 185 To receive declarations of personal, or personal and prejudicial interest, in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting. To note any changes in Councillors' interests**

There were no declarations.

**Item 186 To approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2012**

The minutes were **approved** after a minor change in wording of Item 171 to: "responses to all relevant parties at the Vale". **Proposed Cllr Nodder, Seconded Cllr Holman.**

Items 194 & 193 were taken before item 187 at the discretion of the Chair.

**Item 194 Discussion with Graham Stephens regarding Highworth & District Lions Club**

Mr Stephens gave a brief overview of the work of the Lions Club and asked WPC to notify him of any projects where the club could help Watchfield residents. Special mention was made regarding use of the minibus and driver.

**Item 193 Discussion with Guy Sawyer about an application to the MOD Community Covenant Scheme**

Cllr Nodder reported that she had spoken to OCC and had been advised that CCS money could not be used to purchase land. She had also contacted DIO about the procedure to purchase/lease MOD land (Folly Field) but had no response to date.

Guy Sawyer informed WPC that DIO makes decisions on MOD estates. Cllr Nodder asked whether WPC could have first option to buy Folly Field if it became available for purchase. Guy Sawyer agreed to enquire about this request. Cllr Nodder noted that WPC wanted to retain Folly Field as an open space for use by the community. Cllr Holman notified Guy Sawyer that there is a drainage issue on Folly Field as surface water runs down the cycle paths into the recreation ground.

Guy Sawyer mentioned successful bids from Watchfield School and the Jubilee Centre. The emphasis for these projects was integration of non MOD and MOD communities. Guy Sawyer asked WPC to formalise its ideas for use of Folly Field.

**Item 187 To address matters arising from the November (ordinary) meeting**

Item 86 – VAT deregistration – This item is **pending**.

Clerk

Item 71 – The WPC website link to VWHDC register of interests will be actioned by Cllr Gale when the link becomes available on the VWHDC website.

Cllr Gale

Item 73 – A new key is needed for the filing cabinet lock and will be sourced by the Clerk. – This Item is pending.

Clerk

Item 76 – Cllr Gale reported that the WVFF accounts were now closed and that the balances had been transferred to Bourton PC.

Item 78 – Cllr Holman commented that is still too wet to repair the drain behind 100 High St at the moment. This matter is **pending**.

Cllr Holman

Item 126 – Cllr Holman reported that the cull will be auctioned next week and the recreation ground will be closed during the cull.

Cllr Holman

Item 146 – The balance beam replacement is **pending**.

Item 147 – Cllr Holman has contacted Shrevenham fencing again to replace the newel post in Oxford Square and work is scheduled in the next two weeks.

Item 153 – Discussion about the purchase of a grit spreader – Cllr Bush reported that this idea was not viable as there were no volunteers to use a grit spreader if purchased.

Item 175 – The WPC response regarding proposed electoral boundary changes in VWHDC has been sent to VWHDC and The Boundary Commission.

Item 183 – The Clerk has notified the need for gully clearing in Star Lane on the OCC Highways website.

**Item 188 To take questions and comments from members of the public**

Cllr Gale adjourned the meeting to take questions from the public. Mr Shepherd commented that it was a good idea to secure some guarantees for amenity land (Folly Field) from the MOD. Cllr Gale re-convened the meeting.

**Item 189 To take questions and comments from members of the Council**

Cllr Holman took note of two consultation questionnaires detailed in the monthly "Rural Online" newsletter. One consultation was about improving the government planning website and the other was about taking powers away from district councils if they do not approve enough planning applications in a given time. It was **agreed** that WPC should respond the questionnaires (deadline 15.02.13) and **Cllr Gale proposed** that WPC delegated authority to Cllr Nodder to make the response. He was **seconded by Cllr Holman**.

Cllr Nodder

Cllr Nodder proposed that WPC discuss the VWHDC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (response due on 15.02.13). **Cllr Holman proposed** timetabling an extraordinary meeting on 05.02.13 to discuss this matter and was **seconded by Cllr Skeffington**. Cllr Rawle sent her apologies.

Clerk/All

Cllr Bush notified the Council that he had put a "Parish Jottings" article in the Parish Magazine.

The Clerk has written to BT requesting information on why a telegraph pole has been installed in Star Lane.

**Item 190 To address burial matters**

There were none.

**Item 191 To address planning matters**

- Knapp's Field Development P12/V1329/FUL update - Cllr Gale reported that the Section 106 request had now been finalised. The legal agreement had been received from Sarah Commins at VWHDC. He reported that in addition to the previously negotiated monies, WPC will receive £22,305 towards enhancement of the Sports Pavilion. The finalised agreement also included an additional £3,250 sports pitch contribution and an additional £24,000 tennis court contribution (within the vicinity).
- Cowan's Camp planning application update – Cllr Gale reported that he had been informed by Mark Doodes today that this application is likely to go before the planning committee on 18.02.13. Mark Doodes had commented that the WPC was very articulate and informed. He had received the ecological response and had taken note of Ed Vaizey's letter supporting WPC but commented that it did not support the Government's policies. Mark Doodes has commented that he will recommend that the site is given approval by the planning committee. Cllr Nodder commented that NPPF states that open space cannot be taken away unless there are adequate facilities elsewhere. Cllr Bush commented that VWHDC are not applying their own guidance. Cllr Nodder noted a lack of consistency in the VWHDC planning decisions on Stanford in the Vale and Kingston Bagpuize. Cllr Gale informed WPC that Mark Doodes had also contacted him to discuss WPC taking responsibility for the maintenance of the public space in the proposed development. Cllr Gale agreed to circulate the email to all Councillors for consideration.
- Travellers site update – Cllr Gale had spoken to Laura Hudson at VWDC and had been notified that this application will go to committee on 31.01.13. She had informed him that the as Highways have said the proposed crossing on the A420 will be "safe enough", she will not be objecting to the application. She also commented that she had asked a member of the Highways Team to be present at the committee meeting. Cllr Gale also mentioned the independent highways study carried out by CD Estates. Laura Hudson commented that she had seen it and it was not valid. Cllr Bush suggested WPC needed an independent audit to determine if the crossing was safe or not. He noted that WPC needed a definitive plan from OCC including lighting etc but one had not been made available. It was **agreed** that Cllr Gale would draft a response to VWHDC.

Cllr Gale

At 9.30 pm **Cllr Skeffington** proposed suspension of standing orders and was **seconded by Cllr Holman**.

- Travellers site update continued – There was a discussion about the proposed wording of the 3 minute WPC objection to be delivered at the planning committee. **Cllr Holman** proposed accepting the wording subject to any major developments and was **seconded by Cllr Gale**.

**Item 192** Finance  
Payments

- Elwyn Jones – litter collection for December - £195.60
  - Clerk's pay – for December £280.65 plus home use allowance @ £50 = £330.65
  - Bawden – account for December - £379.52
- These payments were approved – Proposed Cllr Holman, Seconded Cllr Nodder.**

To agree under Section 137

- Request by the Village Hall Secretary for a donation towards the Village Hall extension – Cllr Gale had received advice that a dispensation was not needed to make a grant to the Village Hall. Cllr Holman explained that a small grant was needed from WPC in order for the Village Hall Committee to be able to apply for matched funding from other sources. Cllr Holman noted that the majority of PC's give an annual grant to village halls of £500. Cllr Gale commented that in his opinion the benefit to the village is commensurate with spend. Cllr Holman requested a grant of £500 - £1000. The Clerk noted that this was beyond the total amount budgeted for S137

Clerk

grants (this year) and that she would seek advice to see if this level of grant could be paid under a power other than Section 137 before the next meeting.

- Abingdon & District Citizen's Advice Bureau – The Council did not agree a grant as they felt residents would access this service in Swindon.
- ENRYCH Oxfordshire – The Council did not agree a grant as there was insufficient information and no office address

**Item 195** **Discussion of a new cemetery maintenance contract**

Cllr Holman discussed the quotes received and **proposed** accepting the quote from Ben Gristwood of £70 per month (March – Oct) and was **seconded by Cllr Rawle. All Agreed.**

Cllr Holman

**Item 196** **Discussion of street cleaning offer by Mr Parrott**

This item was moved to the next meeting.

Clerk

**Item 197** **Consideration of the following dispensation proposal: "That the Clerk be delegated the authority to issue dispensations to Councillors"**

Cllr Gale advised that if the above was granted, the Clerk could issue dispensations per agenda item between meetings. Cllr Holman did not see the need to delegate responsibility to the Clerk and was seconded by Cllr Skeffington.

**Item 198** **Adoption of a Freedom of Information Policy – Agreement of policy wording.**

This item was **pending.**

Cllr Gale

**Item 199** **Proposal to move the monthly meeting from a Tuesday evening to a Thursday evening**

**Cllr Skeffington proposed** moving the monthly meeting from a Tuesday to a Thursday starting in March and was **seconded by Cllr Holman**

Clerk

**Item 200** **Agenda Diary**

- Online VAT Return – This has been completed by the Clerk.
- Employer's Return – The PAYE tax has been paid by the Clerk
- Bank reconciliation – The bank reconciliation was presented by the Finance Member (Cllr Nodder)
- Budget review – The budget was reviewed against spend by Cllr Nodder at the meeting.
- Precept Demand – The precept demand of £22,000 has been sent by the Clerk to VWHDC.
- Risk Assessment – The Clerk has started to review the Financial Risk Assessment and will present this to the Council for agreement at a later date
- Financial Regulations Review – This item has been done within the last year and is therefore not due.

Clerk

**Item 201** **Village website progress report**

Cllr Gale reported he was investigating website costs.

**Item 202** **Flood Group – progress report**

Cllr Holman reported that the FG will be convening to apply for a grant.

**Item 203** **Pavilion – maintenance and inspections; other updates**

There was nothing to report.

**Item 204** **To note Correspondence**

There was no correspondence pack was this month.

**Item 205** **To take any other business**

The Clerk had received a phone call from the Football Foundation requesting information about the pavilion. Cllr Bush agreed to deal with this matter.

Cllr Bush

Cllr Nodder reported that Ed Vaizey is visiting SPC on 27.01.13 to discuss developments in Shrivenham. She had asked Cllr Fitzgerald O'Connor to enquire about the progress of the Village Green Application but had received no response.

She advised WPC that she can attend the Swindon Expansion meeting on 29.01.13. Cllr Nodder also commented that the ORCC Housing Needs Survey results will be too late for Cowan's Camp and that it will be distributed by WPC.

Cllr Holman suggested setting up sub- committees to avoid lengthy WPC meetings and asked that important information is circulated prior to the monthly meeting.

Cllr Skeffington reminded the Clerk that WPC needs to change the signatories on the bank accounts. The Clerk responded that she had been waiting to hand over the WVFF accounts before doing this and now this was done, the signatory and address changes needed could be auctioned.

**Clerk**

At 11.10 pm **Cllr Skeffington proposed** reinstatement of standing orders (**seconded by Cllr Rawle**) and Cllr Gale and closed the meeting.

Dr C Matthews  
Clerk  
03.2.13

Approved:

Cllr - Chairman  
Watchfield Parish Council

Date: