**Meeting of Watchfield Parish Council**

**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Tuesday 16th February 2021 at 7.30pm**

**Minutes**

**Present: Cllrs C Parker (Vice), D Griffiths (Vice), J Valadas, S Coombs, P Scratchley**

**C Arnold (Clerk)**

**District Cllr E Ware**

**Four members of Public**

***Introduction. Cllr CP states that the public will be allowed three minutes each to make their statement, all other participants will be muted during that time and if there are any questions, we ask attendees to please raise their hand after the statement for Q and A’s, the clerk has the power to remove anyone from the meeting due to abusive, threatening or foul language, the meeting will be recorded for the purpose of the minutes and transparency*.**

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| **ITEM** |  | | |  | |
| **167** | **To receive apologies for absence**  Cllr S Nodder, District Cllr S Howell, County Cllr Y Constance | | |  | |
| **168** | **To receive any declarations of personal, or personal and prejudicial interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting**  None | | |  | |
| **169** | **Coronavirus update**   1. **Volunteer effort –** No updates but Cllr CP would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all those who have volunteered. 2. **Grants and finances –** No updates. 3. **Restrictions and regulations –** Cllr CP states that things are moving in the right direction, the message to convey to residents is that we must keep doing all we can to protect ourselves and our neighbours and safeguard the vulnerable. The play areas remain open but fitness equipment is closed. 4. **Other – garden waste customers –** Vale has re-started collections this next week**.** | | |  | |
| **170** | **To take questions and comments from members of the public**  One member of the public would like to make three comments. The first asking the council what will be done regarding the build up of quagmire from the re-direction of walkways as the park is being refurbished. Secondly a request that a slow close hinge or lock is placed on the playground gate to prevent it being left open and therefore allowing dogs off the lead into the area and thirdly how has the council approached the hedge removal and fence erection. The council answer that firstly the quagmire build up will be addressed once the play area work has been completed, Cllr CP notes wood chippings have been distributed in the area. Cllr JV will communicate with the park contractors regarding a lock or slow close hinge being place on the park gate. The Clerk notes that the hedge removal and fence erection will be discussed in item 171. | | | JV | |
| **171**  **172** | **To take questions and comments from members of the Council**  Cllr EW reports on planning, Shrivenham’s new Pavilion construction will be commencing soon with completion planned for Autumn, CIL Consultations, Taxi Licensing policy under review.  Cllr YC report circulated.  Cllr CP states it is with sad news that we announce the death of Mickey Witherow who was on the Parish Council for a long time and headed the building of the sports pavilion. He is survived by his wife, Mary, WPC send their deepest condolences to his family and friends**.**   1. **Social Media Questions –** Cllr PS states high level of responses and questions regarding the hedge removal/erected fence. To be discussed next. Cllr CP states that foul, abusive and threatening language will not be tolerated on social media. WPC social media is not a platform for discussion with councillors, it is a way for the council to distribute information to as many people as possible. Complaints should be directed to the clerk. 2. **Erected Fence Complaints Received. -** Cllr CP states that WPC will not be commenting on the matter. It has now been passed onto the planning enforcement team (VWHDC) for investigation. If residents would like to view the planning enforcement details, we recommend you visit <https://data.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=EnforcementDetails&REF=VE21/26>   WPC recommend resident contact the planning enforcement team or review the case via ref. VE21/26, Telephone: 01235 422600  Email: Planning.enforcement@southandvale.gov.uk  The Clerk states that WPC have passed all formal complaints, made by residents in writing, onto the relevant authorities and we have no power or say on this situation, we are non-biased on the matter. VWHDC Local Planning department are investigating the matter.  County Cllr Y Constance has passed this draft statement from OCC regarding the matter:  ***Investigation of this matter has involved a number of council teams and correspondence with Bovis Homes, which was vital before responding.***  ***The ditch was filled in and culverted to protect the stability of the adjacent footpath that was constructed by Bovis Homes, as part of their Section 278 works. This is not an uncommon practice in this type of situation and also helps to protect the safety of pedestrians, removing a potentially hazardous drop off to the side of the footway.***  ***Responsibility for a roadside watercourse usually lies with the landowner through who’s land it runs or with the adjacent landowner if the land is unregistered. This is not the case is when a highway authority creates a new ditch when carrying out their own highway works. In these scenarios the ditch is specifically annotated on our highway records plans. I can confirm that this section along Majors Road is not a highway ditch.***  ***Prior to the Bovis Homes development being built, maintenance of the existing ditch would have been the responsibility of the adjacent land owner. This is still the case despite the ditch being culverted. If title of the adjacent land has passed from the original land owners to the current owners of 32 Curtis Close then, unless there were any special provisions within the title transfers, they will be responsible for the watercourse adjacent to the property as riparian owners.***  ***We were encouraging Bovis Homes to claim title through Land Registry in order for OCC to adopt the internal roads of their new development, however we could not force them to do this. From reviewing the titles accessible online, Bovis Homes has not successfully claimed the area between the hedge line and back of footway as part of their title.***  ***With regards to visibility, the fence does not appear to be causing an obstruction to the footway, blocking any street lighting and does not seem to obviously block any visibility splays.***  ***As the fence has been erected on unregistered land, which does not form part of the highway and it does not impact the safety of the highway, there is little that OCC, in its role as highway authority, can object to.***  **To approve the minutes of ordinary meeting held on 19.01.21**  Council Agree.  **Proposed: Cllr DG Seconded: Cllr SC Agreed: All** | | |  | |
| **173** | **To address matters arising from the ordinary meeting held on 19.01.21**  All matters are in hand or on the Agenda. | | |  | |
| **174** | **To address burial matters**  None | | |  | |
| **175**  **176**  **177**  **178** | **To address planning matters**   1. **Update on current developments.**   Clerk states that Wicktead will be conducting a site visit next week to discuss location and installation of new play and fitness equipment. Cllr JV will be attending and Cllrs to liaise with Wicktead on locations for equipment.  **To discuss/agree grass cutting and grounds maintenance contract for 2021.**  Quote and Contract Circulated. Clerk notes that WPC can continue with contracts that are already in place without having to go through the usual set of 3 quotes set out in Financial Regulations. If the council decide not to continue with BGG as the contractors, they will have to get the requisite number of quotes from other companies. Cllr PS discusses three locations that are not on the grass cutting list, Clerk to investigate if these locations are the responsibility of the council or not. Cllr PS offers to attend site visit to discuss grass cutting/maintenance locations. Clerk to add to next agenda for agreement.  **To discuss/agree remedial scrub clearance and dead tree removal from Backlands paddock.**  Cllr CP states that the paddock has now been empty for the best part of a year and there are brambles, elders and two dead elms that need clearing to ensure the paddock remains an open space. Quote Circulated for clearance of the scrub trees and shrubs and dead elm from around the shelter area in the backlands. Council discuss and agree to quote of £384 (inc.VAT). Clerk to organise.  **Proposed: Cllr CP Seconded: Cllr DG Agreed: All**  **To discuss/agree gateway improvements, footpath and cemetery path re-gravelling.**  Waiting on quote. Clerk to add to next agenda**.** | | | JV  ALL  CA  PS  CA  CA | |
| **179**  **180** | **Finance to Agree**  None  **Finance to Note**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Name | Spending Power | Total Gross | Detail | | British Gas | LG (Misc) Act 1976 s19 | 186.15 | Pavilion electricity | | Oxfordshire South and Vale CAB | Grant s137 | 100.00 | Grant | | C Arnold | LGA 1972 s112 | 544.00 | Dec salary | | T Brock | LGA 1972 s112 | 213.65 | Dec salary | | 707 resource managmenet | Litter Act 1983 | 60.84 | Litter picking | | Main Man Supplies Ltd | Litter Act 1983 | 65.70 | Bin bags | | Parkers | Open Spaces Act 1906 | 298.62 | Planting in village | | Paul Spencer-Matthews | Litter Act 1983 | 250.00 | Litter picking | | Information Commissioners Office | LGA 1972 s111 | 35.00 | Data Protection registration | | Krypton | Public Health Act 1875 | 126.00 | Mole control | | Inland Revenue | LGA 1972 s112 Contract/Pensions Act 2014 | 293.60 | TAX July - Dec 2020 | | BGG Garden and Tree Care | Open Spaces Act 1906 | 1,230.00 | Maintenance of cemetery | | 707 resource management | Litter Act 1983 | 35.90 | Litter picking | | | |  | |
| **181**  **182**  **183** | **Agenda Diary**   1. **Assets Register – update. Completed by the Clerk** 2. **Registration of Members’ Interests –**No Changes reported. If there are please let the Clerk know. 3. **Section 137 Payments**   None   1. **Employer PAYE – Completed by NetResult** 2. **Financial Regulations – Review**   Circulated. Council Agree.  **Proposed: Cllr DG Seconded: Cllr PS Agreed: All**   1. **Freedom of Information Policy – Review**   Circulated. Council Agree.  **Proposed: Cllr JV Seconded: Cllr DG Agreed: All**   1. **Data Protection Policy – Review**   Circulated. Council Agree.  **Proposed: Cllr JV Seconded: Cllr DG Agreed: All**   1. **Social Media Policy – Review**   Circulated. Council Agree.  **Proposed: Cllr JV Seconded: DG Agreed: All**   1. **Community First membership- Expires in March 21.**   £70.00 renewal for the year. Provides PAT testing equipment for pavilion.  Information and advice on issues affecting your community.  Council Agree. Clerk to organise.  **Proposed: Cllr PS Seconded: Cllr SC Agreed: All**  **To note correspondence**   1. **New tenant for Backlands Paddock.**   Lease agreed and contract signed. First payment of £175 (£75 discounted first month rent + £100 returnable deposit).   1. **Dog bins – Folly Field.**   Over filled bins reported to MoD. MoD response that they are emptied weekly, in most recent weeks the bin is also being used by households adding their dog waste.   1. **Overgrown Curb along Majors Rd**   Complaint received of overgrown curb along Majors Rd. Cllr SN has begun clearing a stretch of the overgrown curb along Majors Road (from Queens Close to the fly-tipped green bin [also reported]). Cllr SN has then taken photos in order to demonstrate the extent of the overgrowth for County and District Councils. Biffa are on reduced capacity due to Covid.   1. **The Red Cabin – Food Truck**   Owner of the Red Cabin Food Truck has approached the council regarding opening their food take away service from the village Hall Carpark. Clerk has responded informing the owner that WPC do not own the Village Hall Car park but has passed details onto the Village Hall Committee. Member of the public informs WPC that permission has not be given for the Village Hall Car park. The clerk has informed The Red Cabin Owner that if they wish to seek permission for a location on WPC land that they write to the council once Covid restrictions are lifted for consideration.  **Any other business**  Cllr PS asks if there has been any interest in residents joining the council, Clerk reports no interest yet but asks if residents who have joined this meeting are interested to please contact her.  WPC would like to thank Cllr Bridget Penrose-Lyall, who has resigned from the council, for all her work and dedication to the council. We wish her all the best.  Cllr PS asks if the Village Fete will be running this year. Member of the public (Village hall committee Chairman) states it will not but hopes next year it will. Cllr CP notes the Village Fete is ran and organised by the Village Hall Committee. | | CA  CA  CA  CA  CA  CA  TB | |
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|  | **MEETING CLOSED: 20:20** | | |  | |

Please be aware of the following points regarding online meetings

1. The meeting will be recorded by the clerk, this will be for the purpose of taking minutes.
2. Time for public comments (Item 170) is 3 minutes per individual. After item 170 the public will be muted and if you have a question or comment to make please raise your hand to be unmuted.
3. Threatening or foul language will not be tolerated, and you will be removed from the meeting by the clerk.

Claire Arnold, Clerk to Watchfield Parish Council 20/02/21