

Weston on the Green Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 9th May 2018

Previous Chairman (Kate Hessian) welcomed people to the meeting. Before the formal proceedings started she read out the attached statement (see end of minutes).

18.324.1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

There was one nomination, Diane Bohm – who was duly elected.

18.324.2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

There was one nomination, Susan Davis – who was duly elected.

At this point the previous Chairman stood down. Cllr. Stafford-Allen gave a special vote of thanks on behalf of the other councillors for the good job she had done and for the good stead that the council is in at the moment.

Cllr. Bohm, thanked Kate for her leadership and support in helping to get the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan for the village off the ground and supporting its drafting through to the submission stage.

Public Participation session: 15 minutes maximum

M.E.: Asked if the newly elected councillors could be introduced to those present.

All the newly elected councillors introduced themselves. Cllr. Carmen Griffiths, recently re-elected as the Oxfordshire County Councillor for this area also introduced herself.

S. L.: Could grass on the field footpath between North Lane and Westlands Ave., be cut as it is making walking difficult. Need to check the current alignment of the path with what is designated on the county footpath map. Footpath Warden to be notified of the issue.

T.H.: Thought more should have been said to thank John Miller for his contribution towards the village and especially John Roper for his long service in supporting village issues, especially in the fight in the 1970s to keep the village school open.

Council Business:

18.324.3 To receive any apologies for non-attendance

All councillors were present: i.e:

Cllrs. Bohm, Davis, Donne, Evans, Forbes, Mullane Stafford-Allen and Whitfield.

18.324.4 To receive any declarations of interest:

None declared

Note: at this point, the Clerk reminded Cllrs. that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office should be signed before proceedings progressed. The forms were individually signed by each councillor and countersigned by the Clerk.

18.324.5 To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 11th April 2018.

The Minutes were approved as read.

18.324.6 Past Subject Matters – for the purpose of report only

Actions arising from previous meeting.

18.323.7 – Reply had been sent to Lagan Homes declining their request for a meeting.

Clerk reminded councillors that new bank mandates would need to be set up with Barclays Bank so that future payment of invoices could be made.

18.323.13 – “bin-walk” not yet carried out. It will be done at another convenient time as soon as possible.

Clerk reported that an application for a “Transparency Grant” had been made that was for purchase of items that would enable the proceedings of the Parish Council be more transparent to the public by the use of the internet, emails, etc. The grant would cover cost of dedicated laptop and software, printer and setting up of website. A sum of £986.59 had been applied for and this has now been received. Actual purchase of items would need approval by the Parish Council

18.324.7 To approve the following items of expenditure

Cherwell D. C. Emptying of dog-bins (winter period) £192.19 - Approved

18.324.8 To receive information on Planning Applications and note decisions

The report prepared by Cllr. Donne was read and discussed – see attached.

Cllr. Davis reported on both of the following items, 18.324.9 and 18.324.10 but in reverse order.

18.324.10 To receive report on Joint Parish meeting with Bucknell, Chesterton, Middleton Stoney, Wendlebury and Weston on the Green.

The last meeting had taken place on 25th April, and attended by Cllr. Davis and the Clerk. Wendlebury were unable to attend. The purpose of the meetings is to review issues common to our group of villages and hopefully by pooling knowledge and resources find solutions. Cllr. Barry Wood, Leader of Cherwell District Council attended this meeting. He was prepared to answer questions and his responses to them were very helpful and constructive. One of the issues discussed was the lack of consistency of information supplied to parish councils regarding planning applications, especially in respect to “amendments” to the original application – often parish councils are not notified of these amendments. BW response to that was that CDC do not have the resources to keep PCs up to date with such changes and amendments. He suggested that if PCs have concerns about a particular application then they should submit those concerns to the planning committee members between 1 – 3 days prior to the meeting and the concerns are more likely to be noted. This is what developers also do – submit comments and changes 1 – 2 days prior to the planning meeting. He also suggested that the PC contact the planning

department and for delegated decisions, ask whether they (the officer) are minded to approve or reject the application. If you feel strongly against the officers decision request your district councillor to have the application called in for a decision by the planning committee. He also recommended getting a district councillor on your side at a Planning Meeting as they can speak for as long as they like (as opposed to the 3 minutes allotted to the rest of us!). And he suggested writing to Planning committee members - a hard copy to arrive a couple of days before the planning meeting – emails are too easy to be pushed away, deleted, etc. The other issue discussed was traffic – he warned us of the increase in HGV construction traffic related to both HS2 and also the East-West rail-link. As damage to road surfaces and verges is likely to occur he suggested that we build up an evidence database of what the roads are like now. The last part of the discussions centred on the re-structuring of the CDC/South Northamptonshire DC.

18.324.9 To receive report on Oxford/Cambridge Expressway.

Cllr. Davis briefly described the three possible routes, all of which would affect Weston to greater or lesser degree. The routes are just “corridors” at the moment but once the decision has been made as to the preferred corridor then a defined route within that corridor will be proposed.

Cllr. Griffiths indicated that OCC had agreed that there should be an expressway but no preference to either corridor had been expressed. Concern (from A. Henman) that no consultation has occurred prior to the three possible corridors being proposed. Cllr. Griffiths said that Highways England were the body currently looking at the three corridors, assessing and calculating the various scenarios. They will come up with a preferred route and then it would go out for consultation. The concern from the public is that that there hasn't been a consultation as to whether we need an expressway and that there were three corridors. We (the public) should be expressing our concerns before the preferred corridor route is chosen. John Howell (MP) had expressed views on the southern route but would be reminded that some of his constituency to the north of Oxford is also affected. Clerk informed people that the villages in and around Otmoor were starting to get together and Charlton on Otmoor had proposed a public meeting on 6th June.

18.324.11 To receive project updates on:

1. Traffic Calming (Cllr. Mullane)

Cllr. Mullane explained that the group were looking at proposals to reduce the speed limit on the minor roads from 30mph to 20mph and from 40mph to 30mph on the B430. An application would soon be submitted to OCC for this. But before that a speed survey needed to be conducted on various parts of the village and also the whole village needed to be consulted on the proposals. White lining needed to be renewed and the 40mph repeater road surface signs also needed renewing. “Twenty's Plenty” signs would be purchased. Redundant signage needed to be removed, broken signs mended, etc. Cllr. Griffiths requested that a list of such items should be prepared and she would take that to Paul Wilson (along with similar requests from other villages in her patch).

2. Transport - bus service (B. Hessian)

Help and advice had been provided as to what was available towards funding a Community Bus and also how these can be run. Getting volunteer drivers is the biggest obstacle. The Comet Service, run by OCC, is a bookable transport service for those who can't access suitable public transport. It is similar to the now defunct "Dial-A-Ride" service. It is popular in the Banbury area and also around Oxford but has been slow to take off in the rest of Cherwell. However, it is a "request" service and isn't a replacement for a regular daily service. A "Transport Need Survey" is required and it is hoped to conduct this in June.

18.324.12 To receive update on Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr. Bohm explained the current status of the Plan. Cherwell have assessed the Plan and have made helpful comments which have been taken on board. Some fine tuning of the contents is underway and once Cherwell are happy with the document then it will go to the external examiner. If approved then it will be ready for printing, circulation and the village referendum.

18.324.13 To receive report on Play-area & Playing-field

Clerk explained that a newer mowing machine is available. A couple of cuts have been made this month and already there is a marked improvement in the condition of the surface. A team of volunteers is available to use the machine on a regular basis.

18.324.14 Date of next meeting: 6th June 2018

Further dates for 2018: July 4th, August – no meeting,
September 5th, October 3rd, November 7th, December 5th.

Note: Annual Parish Meeting: 30th May 2018

See Outgoing Chair's Report on following page.

See Planning Report on following pages.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Good evening everyone and thank you for coming.

So as many of you know I have now been on the Parish Council for over 10 years I think now, and although some of that time I have lived outside of the village, I have felt I leave it in a good light with some excellent new and previous councillors taking the village forward.

It felt right for me to decide to not stand for election for many reasons, but it is sometimes better to leave when the going is good and hand over to some new blood. Over my time as a Parish councillor and Chair we have had some challenging times, but I really don't think we would have had so many people come forward if there were not as many interesting and inspiring things happening in the village.

Last year I reported we would have an election this year. . They are supposed to occur every 4 years but for the last 20 or so years there were never enough nominations received to make an actual election necessary and councillors were elected by default. This resulted in criticism being levelled at the Parish councillors that they hadn't really been elected although legally they had! But this year - Eleven nominations for the eight places available meant we could have a real election and wow – what an election it was! The count didn't take place until the following day with the results expected on Friday afternoon. But they never came! Just before midnight the clerk spoke with the returning officer and was told that the results had been announced but an IT issue meant they'd not been put on the Results page of the Cherwell website - we had to wait until just before lunch on Saturday for the results to be formally announced.

I would like to wish the new councillors all the best for their new role in the community but also the parish councillors who were re elected - thank you from me for carrying the baton onwards and upwards!.

I would like to thank past parish councillors for their insight, but also to John Miller who has really donated so much time and resources to helping shape the village, from man power to machinery power, to loaning the PC a mower so we could ultimately reduce how much money was being spent on mowing the playing field, and to Tony Norris who has been a driving force behind tidying and smartening up the village, often seeing him pruning branches back so you could see road signs. To John Roper who in his earlier days on the council helped get the footpath down the side of the playing field through grants. Most of all I want to thank all those councillors who over the years have given up their time to keep the parish council going. Sometimes it is a thankless task and you rarely hear of positive things that the council has done, but over the last 5-7 years we have definitely helped shape the village to what it is now.

Lastly to the Parish Clerk, yes he is my dad, and we have not always seen eye to eye on council matters, but he really has been an asset to the village and council, the go to person when something is not right in the village and he gets a call to help, or to attend meetings and report back. I know he will miss this part of the job, but it's time for me and my mother to get my dad back and for him to enjoy his retirement and not to have to worry about getting the Minutes written up and published, what is in the post if he is away, or taking his laptop on holiday so he can check emails and reply to anything that comes up (well he will still probably take it with him but he won't be answering parish council matters!).

And from me thank you, thank you for the years I spent living in the village as a child and into adulthood, it's a great village to be involved with and I look forward to seeing it develop in the way we want it to develop and not because some land-owner/property developer wants to build 15,000 houses on green fields – that was the Weston Otmoor proposal (which the Clerk reminded me was announced just over 10 years ago!)

But I am sure we will see many things happening over the next few years, hopefully all for the good.

Thank you

Kate Hessian

Outstanding Planning Applications Report for PC meeting:

9th May 2018

Concluded

18/00356/F & 357/LB | Erection of a single storey rear extension and erection of a porch canopy over the front door | Williams Cottage North Lane

There is also 18/00357/LB – as a listed building

Approved – No objection from PC

18/00350/F | Conversion of existing timber frame garage and store to form one dwelling - re-submission of 17/01865/F | The Dower House Church Road

Refused

18/00426/F | Variation of conditions 8 (caravans period stay) and 9 (caravans seasonal stay) of 00/01162/F - one permanent mobile home on site at all times | Manor Farm Northampton Road

Application withdrawn – PC objected – caravan still there?

Outstanding from last meeting with updates

Sycamore House / Westfield Farm Barn

18/00016/DISC | Discharge conditions 3 (external materials), 4 (stone sample), 6 (joinery details and rain water goods), 7 (landscaping scheme), 11 (means of access), 14 (biodiversity method statement) & 15 (mitigation strategy for bats) of 15/00187/F | Sycamore House, Shepherds Close. Also know as Westfield Farm Barn - **SEE ALSO 18/00168/F**- same site

Works have already started – PC have commented around tree work. The reply is that these were trees that could be removed under previous planning. (though not before conditions covered)

Also claim that barn fell down itself

18/00110/ENFB – Enforcement notice has been enacted by CDC (attached in email)

18/00168/F | Erection of 2 no. detached dwellings with associated parking and landscaping | Westfield Farm Barn Shepherds Close Weston On the Green

PC Comments made as agreed – plus we have highlighted the comments by N Wharton executor on adjoining property and that the application should be for ‘Land adjoining’ Westfield Farm Barn.

We are told by CDC councillors that this ‘will’ be called into planning if minded to be approved – currently planning dept are looking to refuse but we are very wary of the pressure the applicant put on planning department

Others

**18/00028/DISC | Discharge of conditions 4 (roof samples), 5 (doors and windows) and 6 (parking and manoeuvring) of 17/00920/F | Land To Rear Of Ladygrass Church Lane
No comment or objection made by PC – Works have started on the site**

NEW Applications

**18/00549/LB | Removal of a small timber casement window which, in-turn, is to be replaced by the insertion of new bi-fold doors to the rear of the existing extension and overlooking the rear garden. | Willow Cottage Church Road Weston On The Green Bicester OX25 3QP
This is the thatched house next door to the shop / post office – previous names Church Cottage and Homelands. The works are on the extension at the back rather than on the original listed building part.**

Comments Please?

Southfield Farm / Land north of Oak View

Nothing more at this time

School Field / Lagan Homes

PC replied a second time as agreed to SP Broadway, their planning consultants. Mr Lagan has looked to approach the PC directly and the same reply has been provided to him. There is a draft neighbourhood plan, which gives the village’s view on development.

Stonehouse, Northampton Road – Enforcement Issues for works

The clerk has alerted CDC to the works and enforcement have been in touch. The Planning Committee have passed neighbours ideas for how to manage this distressing situation of the Air BnB use of the property.

Cllr Donne

8/5/2018