

**P A R I S H O F W E S T O N I N G**

**MINUTES of the Meeting of**

**Westoning Parish Council**

**held on Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall, Westoning**

**PRESENT:** Cllr J Nethersole (Chairman), Cllr E Bhasin, Cllr C Luff, Cllr P Ellis, Cllr P Kelly,

Cllr E Russell, Cllr A Rayment, Cllr N McLoughlin, Cllr B Rogerson, Cllr Y Omishore,

CBC Cllr J Jamieson

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs K Barker – Clerk

2 members of the public were present

Agenda published on the noticeboard and on the website

**7911 Apologies for absence** – There were no apologies for absence

**7912 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2023 were approved. Cllr Rogerson proposed, seconded by Cllr Russell the approval of the minutes as a true record. All agreed by those present and the minutes were signed by the Chairman.

**7913 Declaration of interests**

Cllr Nethersole - Finance Point 7917.2

Cllr Kelly – Finance Point 7917.2

Cllr Bhasin – Finance Point 7917.2

Cllr Russell – Finance Point 7917.2

Cllr Rogerson – Finance Point 7917.2

**7914 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**7915 Public Participation**

The landowners of Westview Farm attended the meeting and spoke of their offer of a strip of land for the burial ground. See Point 7920.1

**7916 Reports and representations**

CBC Cllr Jamieson gave a report:

-Westview Planning application Development Committee Meeting – CBC Cllr Jamieson raised some issues about the proximity of the development to Spensley Road

-Walking and cycling routes - a consultation has been circulated and Cllrs were urged to respond

-School transport – a consultation is due to be circulated in January. There is no clear free transport policy

-Council Tax – CBC’s proposal is to increase council tax by 4.99%. There will be cuts to various services

Cllr Rayment suggested that the number of Parish Cllrs for Westoning be increased from 10 to 12 members due to the impending new housing developments. The Clerk to ask CBC Cllr Jamieson to look into this. (**Action Clerk**)

Cllrs spoke about applying a 20mph limit on the High Street and the large amount of vehicles that park outside the Post Office which is dangerous. The Clerk was asked to email CBC Cllr Jamieson regarding these issues. (**Action Clerk**)

**7917 Finance**

7917.1 Bank balances and finance report:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Account** | **£** |
| TSB Community Account | 51,355.53 |
| TSB Instant Access Account | 67,434.91 |
| **TOTAL** | 118,790.44 |

7917.2 Cllr Luff proposed, seconded by Cllr McLoughlin the approval of the following payments, agreed by all Cllrs present:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Payment Method** | **Payee** | **£** |
| Transfer | Clerk – salary December | 547.07 |
| Transfer | Clerk – expenses December | 48.74 |
| Chq 785 | HMRC – Clerk tax | 7.60 |
| Transfer | Parish Warden – village tidying | 275.00 |
| Transfer | Clerk – reimburse for new PC laptop | 449.99 |
| Transfer | BATPC – subscription | 458.00 |
| Chq 786 | E Bhasin – Christmas event expenses | 34.50 |
| Transfer | B Rogerson – Christmas event expenses | 153.94 |
| Transfer | E Russell – Christmas event expenses | 40.00 |
| Transfer | Westoning Village Hall – hall hire | 19.50 |
| Transfer | Westoning Village Hall – hall hire Christmas event | 48.75 |
| Transfer | Wicksteed – play area inspection | 144.00 |
| Transfer | J Nethersole – Christmas event expenses | 175.00 |
| Transfer | P Kelly – Christmas event expenses | 339.00 |
|  | **TOTAL** | **2,741.09** |

7917.3 Other finance matters:

7917.3.1 Budget/Precept 2024/25

Cllr Rogerson proposed, seconded by Cllr Rayment to approve regular expenditure of £52,992.00 and a precept of £44,873.00 for 2024/25, agreed by all present. This amounts to a 2.16% increase on the Parish Council element of the council tax bill for 2024/25. The Clerk to return the precept request form to Central Beds Council. The approved budget to be placed on the website and attached to the minutes. (**Action Clerk**)

7917.3.2 CBC Cllr Grant Scheme

Match funding is available until the end of March 2024 and CBC Cllr Jamieson confirmed that funding for the planters can be applied for.

**7918 Highways**

7918.1 Footpaths/Highways Issues

* Layby on A5120 – CBC Cllr Jamieson is looking into the issue of the van and trailer being parked in the layby.

**7919 Recreation Ground**

7919.1 Recreation Club Licence

Cllr Rayment advised that the draft agreement will be re-circulated and reviewed at the next meeting. (**Action Cllr Rayment**)

7919.2 Dogs fouling on the Recreation Ground/Bye-Law

It was confirmed that some new dog signs have been put up. CBC Cllr Jamieson said that he will follow up the Bye-Law or an alternative.

**7920 Village Matters**

7920.1 Burial Ground

The landowners of Westview Farm were welcomed to the meeting. Cllr Rayment confirmed that the strip of land between the development and the railway line has been offered as a new burial ground by the landowners. He said that the site seems to be suitable but access to the site would need to be through the new housing development. As there is no prospect of the development starting soon, it could be a number of years before an access road is built thereby preventing access to the strip of land. This also needs to be agreed with the developer, Conolly Homes, although they have indicated that they would have no issue with the proposed access. Cllr Rayment asked the residents whether they would consider access to the site from Spensley Road at the rear of the small row of terraced houses and their allocated parking bays and then through their land as a temporary measure until the access road on the new development is built. The landowners said that they would discuss this further. The Chairman thanked the landowners for the offer of the land.

  7920.2 Grass cutting

The Chairman and Cllr Bhasin agreed to discuss the draft contract and circulate it prior to the next meeting. (**Action Chairman/Cllr Bhasin**)

7920.3 Christmas Events

The Chairman said that both the afternoon tea event and the Christmas lights event were successful. She said that she would like to see a bigger lights event next year and more lights put up around the village. Thanks were expressed to the Chequers for supplying hot chocolate and mulled wine. The total amount of money raised at the Christmas lights event was £325, (£150 from the tombola and £175 from donations). It was agreed that this be used to buy food for the foodbank. The Chairman said that £200 of the money raised was used to pay Toddington Band so this will need to be replenished from the Parish Council bank account towards the foodbank. Cllr Rayment said that he has received a suggestion to put the Christmas Tree outside the Village Hall in future. The Parish Council agreed the tree should remain where it is as it can be seen by all passing through the village.

* 1. Planters/Oak Tree
     1. Planters

The Clerk to ask CBC Cllr Jamieson how to apply for match funding for the planters soil and plants. (**Action Clerk**)

Cllr Rayment said that he hopes to get the remaining planters in place by the end of March.

* + 1. Dead Tree

The Clerk said that it seems that the tree is the responsibility of CBC and she has reported the dead tree to CBC for removal.

7920.5 Defibrillator Training

The training to be held after Christmas, date to be confirmed.

* 1. Noticeboard

The Chairman said that she has sent photos of the damaged noticeboard to the company that supplied it and they do not unfortunately offer a repair service but have sent instructions how to repair it. The Chairman said that she believes the noticeboard is not repairable. The Clerk to enquire whether this can be claimed on the insurance policy. (**Action Clerk**)

* 1. Parish Warden – review of duties

A list of current duties to be circulated. To be discussed and reviewed at the next meeting.

(**Action Clerk**)

7920.7 Flagpole

The Parish Council discussed a permanent location for a flagpole on the triangle of land by the School where the waste bin is. Cllr Kelly agreed to obtain a quote for installation and Cllr McLoughlin agreed to ask the School for their agreement.

(**Action Cllr Kelly/Cllr McLoughlin**)

* 1. Clock Tower

Cllr Ellis said that the clock has stopped working and this may have been caused by squirrels. He said that he will contact the Clock Company. (**Action Cllr Ellis**)

**7921 Play Area**

7921.1 Wicksteed Play Area Inspection Report December 2023

The report was noted.

**7922 Planning**

7922.1 Planning applications:

7922.1.1 CB/23/01771/VOC - 4 Westoning Manor, Manor Gardens - variation of condition number 3 of planning permission CB/21/01390/FULL (Erect a wooden gazebo). Variation sought to the height of the gazebo. The Parish Council has no objection to the application.

7922.2 Other Planning Matters:

7922.2.1 Solar Farm

Nothing to report.

7922.2.2 Land Off Flitwick Road

Nothing to report.

7922.2.3 West View Farm, Park Road

A Development Management Committee was held. The Parish Council did not attend but some issues were raised by CBC Cllr Jamieson, see Point 7916.

**7923 Committees/Sub Groups/Representatives/Reports**

Nothing to report.

**7924 General correspondence:**

There was no correspondence.

**7925 Date of next meeting: Parish Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall**

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Approved: ………………………………………………. Date: ……………………………………………………….