

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the Remote Meeting of Woodchester Parish Council held on 3rd September, 2020 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs. Hamilton, Lead, Baldauf, Dunbar, McNealey and Warnes.

In attendance: County Councillor Steve Robinson and the clerk.

2020/80 To receive apologies for absence.

An apology was received from Cllr. Baynham-Honri.

2020/81 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

2020/82 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

There were no questions.

2020/83 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 23rd July, 2020.

These were confirmed as a true record. It was agreed they be signed by Cllr. Hamilton at a convenient time before the next Full Council meeting.

2020/84 To receive the County Councillor report.

Resurfacing is now complete on the A46, despite some delays.

Cllr. Robinson reported that Gloucestershire Highways (GH) are aware two stretches of the 'cycle path' remain unsurfaced; the contractors will return to complete the work.

Cllr. Robinson reported a Closure Order for the A46 between St. Mary's Hill and Culver Hill for tree work as result of ash dieback. The work is due to take place in October. It was agreed the clerk contact GH to express concern at the increased traffic this could potentially bring to South Woodchester and to ask that signage is provided to deter drivers from using that alternative route.

Cllr. Robinson intends to approach GH about replacement of signage at the bottom of Culver Hill and the poor state of Church Road up past Southbank. He will request an inspection of this section of road. Cllrs. asked that this inspection also include the bottom of St. Mary's Hill which has deteriorated.

Councillors asked for support in trying to reach a satisfactory conclusion to the work which began on Water Lane, but which has been halted due to rainfall. The situation is now a great deal worse than it was before work began. The Parish Council have been told that work cannot continue until the weather improves which could be a considerable time. In the meantime the road is impassable for any user. Cllr. Robinson agreed to visit the site.

As Woodchester is currently without a District Councillor, Cllr. Robinson offered to take issues from the village to the District Council. Cllr. Robinson was thanked for his work and all the support for the village in his role as County Councillor.

The clerk will contact the editor of the Woodchester Word to remove the District Councillor from the list of contacts.

Cllr. Robinson left the meeting.

Initials.....

- 2020/85 To receive the clerk's report.**
Items were noted.
In discussing the cutting of the hedge on Selsley Road, due to take place on Monday 7th September, Cllr. Dunbar will confirm with BT Openreach that their work, currently taking place in Selsley Road, will be completed by Monday.
- 2020/86 To note the latest financial statements.**
These were noted.
- 2020/87 To approve expenditure and cheques as per annex.**
Expenditure was approved. Cheques will be signed at a later date.
- 2020/88 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.**
These were noted.
It was agreed the clerk contact the owner of Rooksmoor Mills to ask that an update on the development be provided for the Parish Council meeting on the 5th November.
- 2020/89 To discuss the financial situation regarding the Woodchester Word and agree any action.**
The issues regarding the financing of the Woodchester Word were outlined by Cllr. Hamilton. The clerk confirmed that the issues are a combination of a fall in demand for advertising space over a number of years as well as the additional problem of companies facing some difficulties as a result of the current pandemic.
Councillors discussed the separate issues of funding the Word in the short term and looking at how self-financing can be achieved in the long-term.
Reducing the number of pages and considering the Word only being available for collection rather than distribution (to reduce number of printed copies) were a couple of suggestions considered.
It was agreed to approach the Editor for a meeting to discuss ideas and agree a way forward for the short and longer term.
- 2020/90 To consider and agree funding for any grant applications.**
An application had been received from the editor of the Woodchester Word. No decision on awarding a grant was made at the meeting. It was agreed under item 2020/89 to approach the Editor to hold a meeting prior to any decision being made.
An application from St. Mary's Church, submitted earlier in the year, had been withdrawn as funding had been found elsewhere.
- 2020/91 To receive an update on the issue of 'wild swimming' at Woodchester Park and discuss a 'group of friends' proposed by local residents.**
Cllr. Lead reported the worst of the issues having now passed as the weather has become cooler. Discussion and action now needs to take place to ensure that preparations are made for next spring.
It was agreed Cllr. Lead make contact with the National Trust in the first instance to discuss more informative signage at the lower entrance. Subsequently, with the agreement of the National Trust, volunteers be used to distribute informative leaflets, help with litter and to talk to people in the park to educate them about the issues.
Some local residents have already come forward with suggestions and a willingness to volunteer their time for this.
Cllr. Lead will report progress at the Full Council meeting in November.

- 2020/92** **To discuss three consultations issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on reform of the planning system, namely ‘Changes to the Current Planning System’, ‘Planning for the Future’ and ‘Transparency and Competition: a Call for Evidence on Data on Land Control’.**
Cllr. Hamilton outlined Government priorities leading to these reforms. Councillors agreed that a meaningful response was better made by professional planning authorities and charities such as the CPRE.
It was agreed Cllr. Hamilton and the clerk draft a response for comments.
- 2020/93** **To discuss Remembrance Sunday and agree any possible course of action.**
Councillors agreed that the laying of wreaths is planned as usual, but that plans may be modified in light of possible guidance nearer the time.
- 2020/94** **To receive an update from the Highways and Rights of Way Committee**
A problem with the gate on the permissive path at Boundary Court was resolved. There were no further issues to report.
- 2020/95** **To receive an update from the Events Committee.**
All events are currently on hold. The committee are awaiting guidance on the annual village carol singing.
- 2020/96** **To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.**
There were no members of the public present.
Councillors agreed to continue with meetings being held remotely. The clerk will ensure Kath Gay is aware that the Village Hall will not be required in the near future.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Chair..... Date.....

Initials.....