

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Woodchester Parish Council on Thursday 3rd June at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs. Lead, McNealey, Hamilton, Dunbar and Noon.

In attendance: Cllr Robinson, Cllr Smith, Julian Foxon, the Clerk and five members of the public.

2021/56 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Baynham-Honri and Cllr Hasinski

2021/57 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

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

2021/58 To receive a presentation from Julian Foxon on his role of Cotswold Voluntary Warden

There are 800 sq miles included in the Cotswold National Landscape (previously called Cotswolds AONB), it's the second largest area after the Lake District. Julian's area of responsibility is North M4 to Stroud. Wardens do three key things: 1/ check way markers are correct, needing to consult with landowners in order to make any changes. 2/ Clear paths were possible or organise a working party if necessary 3/ run guided walks. Every right of way has a unique reference, for Woodchester this is NWO. Landowner has the legal responsibility to maintain the right of way, the wardens will help. The local wardens are working on trying to get a list of wheelchair accessible routes and make routes more accessible. Julian is keen to hear from residents about any issues they come across on the footpaths. A link to the full presentation is available here:

<https://www.woodchesterparish.org.uk/2021/cotswold-wardens>

2021/59 To receive questions from members of the public and those attending in an official capacity.

A resident asked about making the path between North and South Woodchester more accessible as it currently has kissing gates. The resident asked if these could be removed all together or changed to opening gates. There was a discussion about the difficulties of keeping livestock safe in fields with opening gates and the point was made it would be up to the landowner, however this could be looked into. Cllr Hamilton asked whether there could be more yellow posts added in addition to the waymarking arrows. Julian said they were working to add more posts. A resident raised the issue of signing permissive paths as residents often don't know about them. Julian said landowners don't have to sign permissive paths, in fact they often close them for a while each year to establish the principle that they are permissive. He pointed out that post Brexit incentives for landowners will be changing with payments made for improving accessibility to the countryside.

2021/60 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 13th May, 2021.

These were confirmed as a true record and signed by Cllr Lead.

2021/61 To review actions from the Parish Council Meeting of 13th May, 2021.

All actions from the last meeting have been taken. It has been agreed that the maintenance contractor with his assistant, will clear the brick gullies and remove the waste to SWALT land, there after keeping them clean and lightly strimmed. He will contact the Clerk with a quote for repairs to the bus stop. St Mary's potholes have been reported. The Rooksmoor developers have confirmed they do not want to sign the permissive path across their land. Clerk has looked into online banking, but this has been decided against for now. Clerk has renewed the Parish insurance and set up PAYE with PATA. Cllr Lead has fed back the

decisions of the Council to the residents around St Marys Hill who decided to purchase their own cones, now in use. Clerk provided signs for cars as agreed (one re parking near a junction, one re parking for Woodchester Park). Cllr Lead reported that there has been a dispute at St Mary's Hill with a driver accusing a resident of damaging his car while placing a notice on it. The driver made his complaint to Cllr Dunbar.

2021/62

To receive County and District Councillor reports

Cllr Robinson confirmed plans are going ahead to resurface Church Road from the corner of Southfield Road as far up Church Road as is possible with the funding available. He also stated that there is a TRO planned in Nailsworth Town Parish and that it may be possible to add double yellow lines for areas in Woodchester to that TRO, as well as refreshing the zig zag lines outside the school. The National Trust has agreed to contribute to the TRO, and Forest Green Rovers may also contribute, plus Cllr Robinson, Nailsworth Town Council and Woodchester Parish Council (amounts to be agreed). The TRO will costs £12,000 to £16,000. Cllr Robinson confirmed his committee membership for this term of office are: Adult Social Care, Police and Crime Panel, Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) and Appeals for School Transport.

Cllr Hamilton thanked Cllr Robinson for his support with the repair of potholes in the area and requested he ensure a good quality job is completed in Church Road when it is done.

Cllr Smith reported his committees for his term of office under the Alliance led administration at SDC to be the Development Control Committee and the Environment Committee.

2021/63

To receive the Clerk's report.

This was received, with additional items:

David Armstrong, lead ranger at the National Trust, has agreed to lead a walk around Boundary Court for the Parish council and local residents for 90 minutes on Wednesday 7th July from 6pm. Maximum number allowed would be 30. This will be opened to Councillors first then advertised by word of mouth and notices in the Parish Notice boards. There's not enough time to add it to the Woodchester Word.

Councillors will begin to spread the word and the Clerk will do a notice.

Residents are concerned that an area of wildlife planting at the junction of High Street and Lager Lane in South Woodchester will be strimmed. The Clerk has contacted Gloucestershire Highways and the Parish Council's Maintenance Contractor to ask them both not to strim it. The Clerk has also made a sign which a resident took from the meeting to put up on the site.

The Clerk has been made aware of an Ash Dieback replanting scheme offered by GCC Highways in conjunction with the CPRE. The Parish can submit areas suitable for planting on highways land or request that whips/trees are donated to the Parish for planting. The deadline for applications is 31/7/21. It was suggested NT land might be a possibility.

Cllr Noon and Cllr McNealey to consider possible sites for this

A resident reported an unsafe Ash tree on Bospin Lane which has been reported to Western Power. The Parish Council has also sought out information about the Presbytery on St Mary's Hill for an interested resident. Further information is available from the Clerk.

Cllr McNealey and Cllr Smith expressed concerns about the resurfacing work done behind the Rooksmoor Mills development saying it slopes down towards the development and that the developers have dug away to the very edge of the track.

Cllr Robinson to take a look and liaise with Alan Bentley about it.

2021/64

To note the latest financial statements.

They were noted.

2021/65

To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.

These were noted and approved.

2021/66

To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.

These were noted

- 2021/67** To approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption to confirm the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year ended 31st March 2021.
This was approved and signed by the Chairman.
Clerk to send the Certificate to the External Auditor.
- 2021/68** To review the report from the internal auditor and amend or provide an explanation for any issues that arose.
The internal auditor did not identify any issues, so no explanations were required.
- 2021/69** To approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return).
This was approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 2021/70** To approve and sign the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return).
This was approved and signed by the Chairman
- 2021/71** To note the dates of the Public Rights as follows: Tuesday 15th June to Monday 26th July.
These were noted.
Clerk to ensure all documents are posted on website and notice on PC notice boards by the date agreed.
- 2021/72** To review the Assets Register
The Clerk has updated the value of the computer on the register to reflect the value of the new computer (£504). The Clerk queried whether the litter pickers and defibrillators should be on the assets register and the issue of the lease/ownership of the land for the Mountain biking trails was also raised.
Clerk to look into these questions, the asset register will be signed at a future meeting.
Cllr Noon highlighted that the grit bin on Frogmarsh has a broken lid and needs replacing. The Clerk also mentioned that the notice board in Frogmarsh was full of condensation all winter and needs attention. It was agreed there should be a review of the condition of all assets over the summer.
Clerk to be in touch with Cllrs about reviewing the condition of assets over the summer.
- 2021/73** To receive an update on the Mountain Bike Trail
The MTB trail had its annual inspection in April with some recommendation made. The Parish Council's response is available from the Clerk. Cllr Dunbar has advertised the proposed improvements to the MTB track both at the track and on Social Media with comments welcome before the end of May. The improvements to be undertaken are: 1/ a safer entrance and waiting area for cyclists 2/ to fence off the seasonal pond and create a wildlife area. 3/ to re-route the southern loop of the blue trail around the seasonal pond 4/ add new green and blue track signage to make the route clearer. The work will take place over several weekends starting Saturday 12th June. Volunteers are needed to help. Cllr Dunbar anticipates the work will be completed by the end of the summer. Cllr Dunbar continues to try to make contact with Trail Craft who originally designed the MTB track to discuss the improvements with them.
- 2021/74** To receive an update on the Woodchester Word.
The Woodchester Word will go ahead with two more issues this year. Cllr Dunbar is currently looking into sponsorship for it and the Parish Council will be seeking volunteers to deliver it to every household in the village. Cllr Noon queried if current advertisers would still like to be represented in the paper in some way. Cllr Dunbar said he planned to contact current advertisers and would discuss that with them.
- 2021/75** To discuss traffic problems on Rooksmoor Hill and agree a way forward
The Clerk reported that Rodborough PC had been in contact regarding the ongoing problems with large vehicles getting stuck on Rooksmoor Hill, which has been made worse recently by the roadworks on the A46. Rodborough PC are trying to mitigate the problem and wondered if Woodchester PC could assist. The Clerk has been in touch with Rooksmoor residents who would also be very keen to see something done. They have provided the Clerk with photos from both 2016 and just a couple of weeks ago when a large lorry became stuck for several hours and they have agreed to continue to gather evidence. Suggestions to

change signage to indicate a lower weight limit or to turn it into a 'quiet lane' were raised, but both would require a TRO. Cllrs are in full support of actions taken by Rodborough PC and would be happy to attend a joint meeting with Paul Helbrow if that was considered helpful.

Cllr McNealey/Clerk to respond to Rodborough PC

2021/76

To agree a date and format for the Parish Forum

This forum would be to discuss reviewing the Parish Plan (which was last reviewed in 2012) and the Design Statement and to develop a plan for the next four year term of the Parish Council. Cllr Noon said that David Armstrong from the NT would be happy to help with the Environmental aspects of it.

The current Parish Plan (2012) is available here:

<https://www.woodchesterparish.org.uk/about/parish-plan>

2021/77

To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.

The Chair opened discussion up to the floor regarding ideas for the next term of the Parish Council. Items raised were:

1/ Could we identify possible places for car charging in the village? Cllr Smith said he could help with possible sources of funding. Cllr Lead suggested that in consultation with the Village Hall committee the Village Hall carpark might be a possibility for overnight charging. The flat area of SWALT land near the road was also suggested as a possible place as was the area of parking on the High Street near the phone box/water trough.

2/ Cllr Smith stated he was interested in looking again at the idea of a playground in Woodchester and would approach the Parish in due course to discuss what has been learnt from previous attempts that have been made to do this.

3/ Could we remove the kissing gates between North and South Woodchester. Cllr McNealey suggested the only way to remove the middle gates entirely would be to fence the land either side, which of course would be up to the land owner. She stated we would need to look at the definitive map and statement to see what structures are defined.

8.45pm Cllr Robinson and Cllr Smith left the meeting.

4/ A formal consultation of the Parish Plan would be welcomed, raising awareness of places residents can go (e.g. the SWALT orchard is available to families with small children), a description of where the permissive paths are, generally helping residents to enjoy the environment but also to care for it. How residents can contribute to the vision for the village for example increasing wildlife spaces. Trying to increase awareness and create more enthusiasm for the Parish. Capitalising on the community spirit developed during COVID.

2021/78

To note the date, time and venue of the next meeting.

Next meeting is 1st July at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

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