



Minutes of the meeting of Woodchester Parish Council on Thursday 4th November at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs. Lead, Hamilton, McNealey, Baynham-Honri and Noon

In attendance: Cllr Robinson, Cllr Smith, the Clerk and seven members of the public.

2021/123 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Dunbar and Cllr Hasinski

2021/124 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest

2021/125 To offer half hour open forum for discussion and questions.

Issues discussed:

1/ Direction sign missing at Frogmarsh following car accident couple of year ago

Cllr Robinson to follow up

2/ Cancellation of Selsley Road resurfacing

3/ Resurfacing of Beech Grove

Cllr Robinson offered to report this but stated that as it is an estate road its unlikely to be a priority

4/Developments at the Ram Pub

5/ Traffic on the pavement especially at peak times on Selsley Road between Southfield Road and Beech Grove

6/ Is the Parish Council considering installing car charging points.

5 members of the public left the meeting

2021/126 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 2nd September, 2021.

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

2021/127 To review actions from the Parish Council Meeting of 2nd September, 2021.

2021/101: The triangle of land at Frogmarsh is owned by GCC Highways department.

Concerns about Ash dieback and unsafe branches have been reported by the Clerk.

2021/105: The Rooksmoor bus stop has been moved to the layby opposite the flats on A46.

The Post Office removed post box at Rooksmoor Mills at start of development work.

Recently declined to re-instate box because there is "no longer a place for the post van to safely stop". Cllr Dunbar has escalated this, pointing out that the new bus stop layby is a safe place to stop. This is ongoing.

2021/115: The emergency plan has been posted on website and forwarded to interested parties. SDC have been provided with a copy, however GCC no longer require one.

All other actions were completed.

2021/128 To receive County and District Councillor reports

Cllr Robinson reported;

- he is continuing to put pressure on Gloucestershire Highways department to resurface Selsley Road but avoiding the weak bridge at the bottom of the hill. This is ongoing.
- There was considerable work planned by Gigaclear in the County, including Woodchester, laying cables for superfast broadband. However, their contractor has collapsed and they are now working with GCC to try to find a new utility company to do the work.

- Ringway (who do most of the smaller highway's jobs such as pot holes and signs) are short staffed so many jobs are getting delayed.
- GCC are looking at fixing charging points for electric vehicles but they are considering Cheltenham and Gloucester first.
- The PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) report for Gloucestershire Constabulary is now available: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/police-forces/gloucestershire/> Gloucestershire Constabulary was rated inadequate in 6 areas. They are taking action to improve (e.g. employing more staff to reduce wait times for 101).
- The sign has been fixed at the bottom of Culver hill.
- The vegetation is overgrowing near the new footpath to the bus stop on the A46.
Clerk to ask maintenance contractor to clear overgrowing vegetation.

Cllr Smith reported;

- The Applegarth enforcement case found that it is the tenant not the owner of the property doing the work. The owner now has 28 days to deal with the concerns raised after which time SDC will take enforcement action.
- The enforcement case for the Ram found that the property remains a viable pub.
- There is an ongoing dispute about the use of a property for business purposes in Pauls Rise.
- Cllr Smith is looking into the ownership of the light in the path behind Sennen House.
- More widely he reported that SDC are now advertising for a development partner for Brimscombe Port, and that they are involved in a joint bid for an experimental fusion research facility for Berkley/Oldham.
- Cllr Smith said he would be available to meet individually with Parish councillors to discuss any interests or concerns.

2021/129

To receive the Clerk's report.

This was received and is available on the website or from the Clerk. It was also noted;

- that grit bins have been topped up for the winter
- there is a new school bin on order by SDC for Woodchester School railings.

2021/130

To agree dates for Parish Council Meetings in 2022

The following dates were agreed for meetings in 2022 (generally the first Thursday of every other month): January 6th, March 3rd, May 12th (Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Council) June 9th, July 7th, Sept 1st, Nov 3rd.

Clerk to post to website and book the Village Hall for the agreed dates

2021/131

To note the latest financial statements.

These were noted

2021/132

To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.

These were noted and approved

2021/133

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

These were noted

2021/134

To receive an update from the Planning representative (Peter Lead) to include an update on The Ram Pub and proposals for St Dominic's School.

- The Ram; Cllr Lead thanked the resident who had consulted an expert on planning law recommended him to him by the Plunkett Foundation. Her comments have been noted. Also noted is the SDC finding that the Ram is still intact as a pub. A relevant application has been submitted: S.21/2355/DISCON | Discharge of Conditions 3 (Materials) & 4 (Landscaping) of S.18/1039/FUL | Ram Inn High Street South Woodchester
- St Dominic's School; Cllr Lead reported residents would like to protect the school buildings for Community use and are in dialogue with the Priest at Woodchester Priory.

Cllrs Robinson and Smith left the meeting.

- 2021/135 To receive an update from the Strategic Planning/Village Services representative (Katharine McNealey)**
- SDC have published a corporate strategy and a revised district plan which have gone to Inspectorate. The corporate strategy can be viewed [here](#):
 - The Village Shop is continuing to do well. New volunteers are always welcome.
 - The Parish Council have found a new volunteer to help check the defibrillators
 - There is now a young volunteer keeping the telephone box book swap tidy. This is a well-used village facility.
- 2021/136 To discuss and agree a policy on the 'climate emergency' drawing on the policy of SDC/NALC**
- Cllr McNealey presented a paper on the climate emergency. This was circulated prior to the meeting and is attached below.
- The Parish Council agreed to declare a 'climate emergency' and to incorporate the agreement into the review of Village Plan.
- 2021/137 To receive an update from the Environment/Climate and Community Engagement representative (Caroline Noon)**
- There are various opportunities for volunteering in the village, specifically lunch with friends needs more help. Cllr McNealey is writing a piece re volunteering for Woodchester Word
 - Cllr Noon is looking into the possibility of a Community Bus stopping in Woodchester
 - Cllr Noon is working on a Welcome Pack for new arrivals.
 - Fair on 27th November: Parish Council will have a table with PC fliers and the banner used previously (Cllr Dunbar) and a suggestions/comments box (Cllr Noon) also flower seed if there is any left (Clerk). Cllr Noon will be on the PC table with other Councillors as available.
- 2021/138 To receive an update from the Public Health and Safety representative (Gervase Hamilton)**
- The Emergency plan is now with SDC and our District and County Councillors.
 - There has been a marked increase in Covid-19 in the area, probably related to the large number of false negatives from the testing site in Wolverhampton that effected the area. The numbers in intensive care are increasing.
- 2021/139 To review the Parish Risk Management Matrix**
- This was reviewed and agreed.
- 2021/140 To review the Parish Privacy Policy**
- This was reviewed and agreed
- 2021/141 To receive an update from the Finance representative (Paul Baynham-Honri)**
- Cllr Baynham-Honri is in discussions with Cllr McNealey and the Parish Events Committee about moving the events committee budget back into the Parish's accounts as bank charges are making having a separate account very expensive.
- 2021/142 To receive an update from the Highways and Road Safety, Woodchester Bike Trails and Communications representative (Iain Dunbar) to include discussion about website changes.**
- Cllr Dunbar sent his apologies but provided a written report summarised below
- WMBT. In the last few weeks; outer perimeter overgrowth cut back from cycle path, track cut back and tidied, new berm constructed to contain seasonal pond and overflow pipe fitted.
 - Gloucestershire "20 is plenty" scheme: a zoom meeting on 22 October was well attended. The plan is to encourage extensive lobbying of County Councillors. The organisers are encouraged by the fact that neighbouring Oxfordshire County Council have just approved a similar county-wide scheme. Cllr Dunbar will continue to support and attend meetings.

- Play Area update: National Lottery 'Places Called Home' funding application successful. Maximum amount awarded (£4995). Very confident that further funding/grants can be achieved. Awaiting response from GCC re land adjacent to WMBT. Discussion opened with PCC re use of part of village green. Meeting with vicar planned early January. Initial visuals and quotations have been received from Discovery Timber Play Ltd (Stonehouse)
- Rooksmoor Hill. Still awaiting a zoom meeting with Rodborough PC, Paul Helbrow, and residents' representatives, to discuss the next step. We can then decide whether Woodchester Parish Council will be able to support the proposed action.
- Communications strategy: New logo agreed and now in use, 'Parish Bulletin' double page now appearing in every edition of the Woodchester Word, Woodchester Parish website being reviewed this month following feedback from all councillors
- Re traffic on the pavements: traffic volumes have increased Nationally by 42% in the last 25 years and this is projected to continue. There is little the Parish Council can do about traffic volumes other than encourage people to use different forms of transport. To put new signs on the highway involves a Traffic Regulation Order which is very costly. There is a new movement, of which Woodchester Parish Council is part, for 20mph speed limits in all towns and villages in Gloucestershire (as above).

2021/143

To receive an update on Rights of Way/Cycle Path, Education/Young People (Liz Hasinski)

Cllr Hasinski sent her apologies. The Cotswold Warden (Julian Foxon- JF) provided a written report summarised below:

- Most activity over the summer has been keeping the footpaths clear of vegetation
- Wardens have improved the steps up to from Woodchester Valley Village and improved the waymarking helping people to stay on the correct paths when accessing Woodchester Park from the Eastern end. Access here is still work in progress.
- JF is also liaising with Woodchester Vineyard to improve waymarking at the top end below Bown Hill as they frequently get 'lost' people wandering across their land there. The boggy patch of land north of the Priory is being handled by the King Stanley Warden.
- Across the South District of the Cotswolds (Hawkesbury up to Stroud) Cotswold Wardens are working to promote existing rights of way for disabled access (all forms of disability not just wheelchair use, so mental health, hearing impaired, learning difficulties etc). The idea is to increase awareness of existing routes. One route under consideration is the Boundary Court Footpath from Lagger Lane to the Selsley Road and back. JF is aware there is no effective parking at the northern end and will make that clear and it wouldn't be suitable for wheelchair users in its current state. JF in contact with the NT about this.

2021/144

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

1/ a resident reported disruption on cycle track from E-Scooters

2/ a resident wondered how popular the re-opening of the Ram pub would be overall and was concerned it would exacerbate parking problems in South Woodchester.

2021/145

To note date of next meeting.

7pm Thursday January 6th 2022 at Village Hall.

The Meeting Closed at 9.25pm

Chair..... Date

Initials.....

Background

There is growing acceptance that we are facing an era of environmental crisis, headlined by the climate emergency. The UK is already experiencing changing climate, including periods of drought, higher temperatures and heavy rainfall. Human impacts are having a detrimental impact on wildlife and natural habitats. The United Nations Climate Change Conference (CoP 26) is being held from October 31st to 12th November in Glasgow, and is being hosted by the UK Government. This event will ensure that tackling climate change remains a high priority for Government, nationally and internationally at all levels.

Climate change action in Stroud District

Stroud District Council (SDC) was one of the first Local Authorities to declare a Climate Emergency in 2018 and to put practical action to help combat climate change into their policies. On October 25th Stroud District Council published their corporate plan, identifying the Environment and Climate change as a top priority over the next 5 years.

Over 300 local councils, including Parish and Town Councils have declared a climate emergency. A number of Climate Action Network (CAN) groups have been set up across Stroud District, supported by Transition Stroud. There is an active group in Nailsworth.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) believes that across 10,000 local councils we can tackle climate change locally and create more climate friendly communities. NALC is committed to guiding and supporting local councils in accessing funding, expertise and power to influence climate change within their communities.

What can we do in Woodchester?

Even though as a small Parish Council we own no land, vehicles or property, it is an appropriate time for us in Woodchester to also endorse this approach. We can this by:-

- Declaring a Climate Emergency, and recognising that climate change is a real threat to the way we live, and to the future of both our local environment and our planet.
- Identifying what local action we can take collectively, to create a more climate friendly environment and include this in our next Parish plan. For example this could include wildlife habitat improvement, tree planting, promoting recycling and encouraging people to walk and cycle rather than use cars for short journeys.
- Identifying and promoting other local networks and communities where climate change action is being taken, and taking advantage of their experience.
- Being supportive of District and County Council policies where they contribute to a Green agenda, such as recycling, minimising waste, supporting renewable energy projects.

Recommendation.

Councillors are asked to support the proposal to recognise the climate emergency and to suggest projects and initiatives which would contribute to practical action and a more climate friendly environment.

Katharine McNealey
November 2021