

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Woodchester Parish Council on Thursday 2nd September at 7pm.

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

In attendance: Cllr Robinson, Cllr Smith, Sergeant Gloyn, the Clerk and sixteen members of the public.

*what3words: every 3m² in the world can be identified using three words <https://what3words.com/about>

2021/99 To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr McNealey

2021/100 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest

2021/101 To offer half hour open forum for discussion.

A/ Policing: Sergeant Gloyn gave a presentation on local policing.

Sergeant Gloyn has been a police officer in the district for 25 years and now manages the neighbourhood policing team for Nailsworth, Woodchester and Horsley. Other members of the team are PC Katie Finch (Beat Manager) and PCSO Steve Phillipson. Contact details are available here:

<https://www.woodchesterparish.org.uk/2021/neighbourhood-policing>

Sergeant Gloyn explained that neighbourhood policing has a focus on crime reduction/prevention and problem solving, as opposed to response policing which deals with 999 or 101 calls. He said crime levels in Woodchester are generally fairly low (29 reported crimes last year and similar this year so far). Residents can go to www.police.uk to look at crime rates in the local area. Sgt Gloyn reported that young people responsible for antisocial behaviour in August were stopped at the time and although prosecutions aren't likely, police have made visits to their homes with 'expressions of concern'. He also explained that four people will be sentenced later this month for drugs offences in the area, one of whom operated from Woodchester. Sgt Gloyn said the police would be very interested to hear of any ongoing suspicious activity in Woodchester related to this. Crime can be rung in to 101 or reported via the website. Please do not use email addresses to report crime as emails may not be picked up very quickly.

Cllr Noon asked about neighbourhood watch. Sgt Gloyn said local info can be obtained via <https://www.yourcommunityalerts.co.uk/> with residents able to select alerts for their areas of interest. But if people were interested in setting up a neighbourhood watch scheme, they could contact him and he would put them in touch with Phil Sullivan who co-ordinates it locally.

Initials.....

B/ Plans for triangle of land: Two members of the public have drawn up a plan for improving the triangle of land alongside the A46 at Frogmarsh (what3words*: tightrope.flips.raced). The plan includes wildflower naturalisation, making it more accessible and adding a picnic table/bench near the stream. Stroud Valleys Project have agreed to help for a half day on 21st September. The residents/Parish Council will be looking for sponsors and/or volunteers to develop and maintain it. Possible sponsors from the businesses close by were discussed. Personal Best has already indicated they may be interested in sponsoring the picnic table/bench.

Action: Cllrs Lead and Baynham-Honri to investigate the ownership of the land and the possible ash dieback

C/ Selsley Road Hedge: A resident asked if the hedge along Selsley Road could be cut back earlier as it is impossible to walk down the pavement and residents have to cross to the other side or walk on the road. Cllr Dunbar explained that the hedge will be cut by the landowner on Monday 6th. Sgt Gloyn clarified that the Wildlife Act makes it unlawful to intentionally damage any nests/eggs or birds in a hedge, so cutting cannot be done if birds are nesting.

Action: Cllr Dunbar to discuss with the landowner for future years

D/ Playground: A resident asked if a playground could be provided in the village. Cllr Lead said this would be addressed under item 2021/118

E/ Parking at the Ram Inn: Cllr Lead offered an update on parking at the Ram Inn. The current landowner of the bottom section of the Ram car park plans to complete the work on the car park in accordance with planning consent for the Ram Inn by the end of November. It is not clear who will have use of that car park after that. The Landlord of the Ram is not responding to attempts to contact him. Cllr Lead suggested that the Parish Council obtain advice regarding the legal status of the Community Asset at this point. He also suggested that the Council or the Ram Supporters Group write to the owners of The Ram expressing an interest in purchasing the pub. This would be to reduce the likelihood of the owner being successful in any application to change the use of the property to residential.

Representatives from the Ram Supports Group said that they are considering becoming a Community Benefits Society. They stated that the current landowner of the lower car park had previously said he would consider selling the parking area to the community and that in their view the Parish Council should buy the land to keep the Ram viable and also to offer parking to local residents. They consider that the Precept in Woodchester is very low compared to others in the area (£50 less/ Band D property than the average) and that community facilities are being eroded. They said that the public loans board could lend a considerable amount towards the purchase and that a loan of £100,000 would cost £3800/annum for 50 years. Some residents

could be offered parking at say £600/year to contribute towards those repayments. The representative also said that their primary objective is to get the pub running again and he felt there would be no application for a change of use to residential until the pub is on the market.

Survey of households; The Ram Supporters have done a review of the current parking problem in South Woodchester. They surveyed 50 households and 26 replied. 92% of those who replied said they were very worried about access for emergency vehicles. 50% were worried about parking for themselves and 70% were worried about parking for tradespeople and visitors. 76% felt there would be serious problems with parking if the Ram reopens. The Ram Supporters are concerned this may put residents off the idea of the Ram reopening. Cllr Baynham-Honri suggested that it might help to mark parking out on the road and also to ensure that vegetation doesn't overgrow from boundaries reducing the width of parking. Sgt Gloyn suggested parking could be marked out by 'hockey stick edges' painted on the road. Highways will do this without a TRO required.

Other thoughts: A resident stated strong support for the idea of getting legal advice about the status of the parking as the cheapest option would be for the parking to be protected as part of the planning consent on the new property. Cllr Smith stated he had some suggestions for getting legal opinion about that. He also said that an enforcement case has been opened for the Ram. He was interested to hear that the Parish would consider writing to the Ram regarding a possible purchase. A resident pointed out that access across the lower car park had stopped on 31st August for members of SWALT. Another resident suggested in connection with the parking that consideration be given to electric charging of cars for the residents of South Woodchester in the future. Cllr Baynham-Honri stated that the Parish Council were considering spending more on maintenance (and possibly increasing the precept to do so). He acknowledged the issue of residents paying twice for services but stated that in practice those services are not being provided by other levels of Government. Cllr Smith highlighted that increasing the precept raises the possibility of infrastructure projects (e.g. a playpark) and that if an asset became available the Parish Council could purchase the asset and make money from it. Cllr Lead summed up saying that integrity of lower car park is essential for the future of the Ram as without it the Ram can't be developed so establishing the legal status of the car park is the first priority. Cllr Dunbar highlighted that an aim of the current Council is to improve communication with residents including discussing any increases in the Precept and how residents would like to see any increase spent.

15 members of the public and Sgt Gloyn left the meeting

2021/102

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

As above

Initials.....

- 2021/103 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 1st July, 2021.**
These were confirmed as a true record and signed by Cllr Lead.
- 2021/104 To review actions from the Parish Council Meeting of 1st July, 2021.**
2021/81 Cllr Robinson contacted Highways about overgrowing vegetation, however their inspector said it was within guidelines. Work on the triangle of land is ongoing (as above)
2021/83 Cycle track subsidence is being addressed by the developer. Alan Bentley is happy that the cycle track width has remained the same. The Clerk asked the Glos Assoc of Parish and Town Councils about whether the MTB track should be included as an asset. They replied: *The asset register only includes land/buildings/equipment owned by the PC, so if the land is still only leased then it does not need to appear.*
2021/84 Frogmarsh ramp resurfacing is ongoing. None of the businesses asked are able to offer parking when Selsley Road is closed. The Council have given consideration to other potential sites for double yellow lines under the proposed TRO and decided there are no other sites where double yellow lines are required.
All other actions were completed.
- 2021/105 To receive County and District Councillor reports**
Cllr Robinson reported that the patching of St Marys Hill will now occur after the work to install faster broadband mentioned in the Clerk's report. Glos Highways have now completed their second cut of the verges. There are plans for to cut overgrowing vegetation from the bottom of Culver Hill towards Nailsworth. Each County Councillor has £40,000 to support the work of Community groups or Parish Councils that they represent over the next four years. It needs to be allocated across the area and proportionally for the size of population. Cllr Robinson suggested a contribution to the proposed playground may be possible and Cllr Noon raised the idea of a crossing near the burger van layby as a possible use. Cllr Robinson raised the proposed TRO and Councillors confirmed they would like to apply for double yellow lines the length of St Marys Hill, but that would be the only location they would apply for. Cllr Robinson said a resident had contacted him about the pond in the MTB track. Cllr Dunbar confirmed there is a plan to reroute the track. Another resident has asked about the bus stop and post box at Rooksmoor.
Action: Cllr Robinson to look into what's happening with the bus stop.
Action: Cllr Dunbar to contact the Post Office about reopening the post box.
Cllr Noon asked about reinstating missing road markings
Action: Cllr Noon to send a picture of the faded slow sign at Frogmarsh to Cllr Robinson to pass on
Cllr Smith reported that the local cycling and walking infrastructure plan was on going. He felt there were two major priorities: Fixing the end of the cycle track where it comes out by Quickfit in Stroud and widening the section near Gidynap Lane. He stated that that a vermin problem has been reported around Southbank in Woodchester, SDC have been proactive to tackle it but it is ongoing. He reported that an enforcement case has now been opened

against both the Ram and Applegarth and that Applegarth will now be required to submit a planning application. Cllr Smith said there is a plan to reinstate the 'planning review panel' so that there can be more scrutiny of planning decisions that have been made.

2021/106

To receive the Clerk's report.

This was received

2021/107

To note the latest financial statements.

These were noted

Action: Clerk to add account titles to bank reconciliation

2021/108

To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.

These were noted and approved

2021/109

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

These were noted

2021/110

To receive an update from the Planning representative (Peter Lead)

St Mary's Hill house has been sold subject to contract. Springhill Frogmarsh Lane has gone to appeal, but the Parish Council are not a consultee.

2021/111

To receive an update from the Strategic Planning/Village Services representative (Katharine McNealey)

Cllr McNealey was unable to attend but emailed a report:

A/ the grit bins will be filled by Glos CC during this month. It would be helpful if anyone who lives near a grit bin could keep an eye on it and let the Clerk know if it needs topping up. Spare bags are at Browns woodyard.

B/ Cllr McNealey recommended the Parish Council should budget for replacing the metal notice boards at Frogmarsh Mill and Rooksmoor next year. They are both very shabby.

C/ The village shop continues to do well but is run by a limited number of volunteers. John Willoughby is currently updating the volunteer list and hopes to recruit some new volunteers or encourage some of the original ones to come back.

D/ We are having a scaled down village picnic on September 11th with a fun dog show in aid of Guide Dogs UK at the request of Angela Morton who is judging again. There will be music and a children's entertainer too.

Cllr Hasinski and Cllr Dunbar will represent the Parish Council on their stall.

2021/112

To agree plans for Remembrance Sunday.

Action: Clerk to agree this separately with Cllr McNealey

2021/113

To receive an update from the Environment and Climate, Church and Older Adults representative (Caroline Noon)

Cllr Noon reported that the Boundary Court walks were very successful and that the NT representatives are happy to offer other themes walks such as a bat walk or a Halloween walk.

Lunch with friends is back following Covid with 'Tea on the green'. It was very enjoyable with 4 gazebos holding 65/70 people. Lunch with Friends also needs more volunteers.

Action: Cllr Noon to write a piece for Woodchester Word to promote this.

Cllr Noon suggested the Parish Council consider arranging a welcome pack for new arrivals in the village.

- 2021/114** **Action: Clerk to send Cllr Noon contents of the previous Welcome Pack.**
To receive an update from the Public Health and Safety and Emergency Planning representative (Gervase Hamilton)
 Emergency plan has been updated over the summer.
 Cllr Hamilton has signed up to the Community Hubs Project which is designed to enhance support for communities. He will update the Parish Council as appropriate.
- 2021/115** **To review the emergency plan**
 This was agreed and signed.
Action: Clerk to add the plan to the website and send a copy to Emergency Planners at Stroud DC, Gloucestershire CC, also to Cllrs Robinson and Smith.
- 2021/116** **To receive an update from the Finance representative (Paul Baynham-Honri)**
 Cllr Baynham-Honri reported that there had been an informal meeting of the finance group (Cllrs Baynham-Honri, Dunbar and Lead) at which the issue of the maintenance of the Parish had been raised. It was felt that general maintenance in the parish needed more attention (hence recent problems with brick gullies in South Woodchester and the roof of the bus shelter as well as over growing vegetation etc). The current budget for maintenance in the Parish is £3500, this covers the fee for the maintenance contractor (of £2420 for 2021/22) and other expenses. There is an additional budget (£700) for certain assets such as notice boards/bus shelter. It was agreed to double the maintenance budget to £7000 for next financial year with some additional spend this year using money from savings if necessary. It was also agreed to set up a sinking fund of 5% of the precept (£635) for unexpected expenses. Budget versus actual accounting for the parish can be found with other financial documents on our website here:
<https://www.woodchesterparish.org.uk/about/parish-council-finances>
 Cllrs Lead and Baynham-Honri will be doing a review of the condition of assets in coming months.
- 2021/117** **To review the assets register**
 This was reviewed and agreed
- 2021/118** **To receive an update from the Highways and Road Safety, Woodchester Bike Trails and Communications representative (Iain Dunbar)**
 A/ There has been a two day pedestrian traffic survey and a two week vehicle traffic survey on Rooksmoor Hill. Results are pending for the vehicle survey; Cllr Dunbar has pedestrian survey results.
 B/ There is a new Gloucestershire wide '20 is plenty' group. Cllr Dunbar has been in contact with the group and shared his previous experience of trying to implement such schemes. He will keep the Council informed of any developments.
 C/ Both the pond and the spring on the MTB trail have dried up so the blue loop has been reinstated for now. Longer term options are; decking and boarding it, which is very expensive or creating a new berm.
 D/ Cllr Dunbar has been in touch with GCC property services department regarding a suggestion to extend the land the Parish has leased from them (for the MTB trail) to include the section between the MTB trail and the path

to Selsley Road to allow for a playground to be built. He has been advised that if this goes ahead, it would be better to begin a new lease rather than try to add to the old one. Cllr Dunbar applied for £5000 from 'places like home' funding but has yet to hear back.

E/ New communications initiatives include a two-page spread in every issue of the Woodchester Word and a plan to upgrade the Parish Council website soon. The Parish Council will have a stand in the Village Dog Show on 11th Sept. Cllr Noon suggested that there is a section in the Word 'You asked; We did' describing how Parish Council has responded to residents' concerns.

2021/119 To consider branding for Woodchester and agree a way forward

Cllr Dunbar has designed a new logo for the Village, but is keen to make sure Councillors are happy with the design and not rush it through. He will do a banner with it on for the Village Dog Show and see how it is received. Cllr Dunbar circulated the logo prior to the meeting, it is copied below (page 8).

2021/120 To receive an update from the Rights of Way and Cycle Path, Education and Young People representative (Liz Hasinski)

Cllr Noon reported that the path near Little Britain where there has been drainage work has almost disappeared. Julian Foxxon (Cotswold Voluntary Warden) has been in touch with the landlord about it.

2021/121 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.

A resident mentioned that there are creepers growing around the railings at the bottom of Selsley Hill which are blocking the view.

Action: Clerk to ask maintenance contractor to cut this back (meeting with Cllr Dunbar on site)

Action: Cllr Dunbar to contact BPE solicitors (<http://www.bpe.co.uk/>) about the legal status of the parking and how it relates to the Community Asset.

John Willoughby will be asked to provide a summary of events so far.

2021/122 To note next meeting at 7pm on 4th November 2021 at the new venue of Woodchester Village Hall.

The Meeting Closed at 9.30pm

Chair..... Date

Initials.....

Woodchester Village Logo Proposal circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

To help increase the impact of all our communications channels, we might choose to implement a brand which would (amongst other things) include a logo device which would become recognisable within the community and connect various communications elements with the Parish Council. The logo would, in time, become a point of identification, a symbol that our community recognises as representing the Parish Council. As such it must be visually and aesthetically pleasing, communicating specific positive messages about the organisation, and triggering positive recall.

Below is a logo suggestion:



This includes a number of visual elements including:

- a stylised 'W' to represent the word Woodchester
- the arch of the 'W' is intended to depict a roman arch, suggesting our historical connections
- the addition of the second colour dots is intended to represent people, with linked hands (suggesting cooperation) in a positive celebratory gesture
- the typeface is intended to be classical, again reflecting our long history