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Minutes of the meeting of Woodchester Parish Council on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs. Lead, Hamilton, Hasinski, Dunbar, Noon.

In attendance: The Clerk and five members of the public.

**2022/69 To receive apologies for absence.**

Cllr Baynham-Honri, Cllr McNealey, Cllr Robinson (County Cllr)

**2022/70 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.**

There were no declarations of interest

**2022/71 To offer a half hour open forum for discussions and questions.**

A resident asked about the road safety initiative (agenda item 2022/81). The Chairman decided to bring this item forward. Cllr Dunbar described two proposals: 1/ to provide advisory speed limits of 20mph on a sign within a green circle. These are advisory, but similar in appearance to enforceable signage. However GCC have indicated that their use would qualify as a speed limit change and hence would need a TRO, however they could be used if printed on corrugated plastic signage similar to the 'twenty is plenty' signage used previously. 2/ The Council could invest in a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) that can flash up a different message and image when a vehicle passes at different speeds. This could be placed in a variety of locations in Woodchester as required (an application to GCC is required for each location) The VAS can also collect data even when turned off allowing evidence to be collected before and after any intervention. Data collected is anonymous (no problems with GDPR) and there can be no enforcement of cars found speeding. However if the VAS were to identify an area where there was persistent problem with speeding then this could be reported to the police who may be able to allocate a speed enforcement officer to the location. So the main purpose of the VAS would be data collection and to encourage slower, safer driving. GCC is offering Community speed watch funding and Cllr Robinson would be in support of Woodchester making an application. However this will take a long time as the first tranche of requests will probably not be processed until September. Cllr Dunbar was chair of the Stroud Road Safety Group for a number of years and has had good experience with Vario VAS signage which currently costs £3865. One resident in attendance agreed to work with Cllr Dunbar on the project. The advisory speed limits (on corrugated plastic signage) may be added into the project at a later stage. Cllr Lead proposed the Parish Council buy a VAS and apply for funding retrospectively. This was passed unanimously. **Cllr Dunbar/Clerk to organise purchase of VAS.**

One member of the public left the meeting.

**2022/72 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2022.**

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

**2022/73 To review actions from the Parish Council Meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2022.**

- These were all completed
- 2022/74 To receive County and District Councillor reports**  
 There were no reports from County or District Councillors. However Cllr Robinson has informed the clerk that a vehicle has again struck the bridge at Frogmarsh, GCC has erected temporary fencing.
- 2022/75 To receive the Clerk's report.**  
 This was received.  
 The Chairman thanked Cllr Noon for all her work for the Jubilee celebrations. This included a food bank collection, a Jubilee tea for Lunch with Friends, lots of homemade/recycled bunting around the village, the Village Trail of Jubilee related items (organised by Woodchester School) and a street party and exhibition with games /races for the children in Oakley House (attended by around 300 residents). Cllr Noon thanked the large team of volunteers involved (including George from the events committee) and special thanks to Mr Mumford at Oakley House for the use of his grounds and Steve Mitchel for proving deck chairs and banners through his events business.  
 Cllr Dunbar updated everyone on progress with the play area. Renishaw have committed £2000 to the project and some other applications are still outstanding. The major grant from National Lottery will be considered on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June. He is still waiting on GCC contractors for the removal of the trees.  
 Cllr Lead stated that a new lease from GCC needs to be signed for the play area. This new lease will also cover the MTB trail area and will supersede what was held before. The new lease is on identical terms for the whole area as the previous one for the MTB trail and is for the remaining 18 year term. There are no guarantees it will be renewed after that time, although at the current time there are no obvious or foreseeable objections to it being renewed. Cllr Lead, who has considerable experience in the property sector, proposed that this lease should be signed without being taken to solicitor, this would be to reduce costs. This was unanimously agreed.
- 2022/76 To note the latest financial statements.**  
 These were noted
- 2022/77 To note planning applications, decisions and appeals from SDC as per annex.**  
 These were noted. Cllr Lead added that since the clerks reported was written, the applicant has been given planning permission for three additional houses at Hillgrove House. He also updated the Council that Applegarth in South Woodchester who withdrew their application some time ago, now plan to reapply for commercial use, however this is taking a great deal of time. SDC have not taken any enforcement action.
- 2022/78 To note and agree renewal of Parish Council subscriptions as per annex.**  
 These were agreed.
- 2022/79 To approve expenditure and approve cheques as per annex.**  
 These were agreed.
- 2022/80 To consider a proposal to improve storage of the Village Archive**  
 The archives are currently being looked after by a volunteer (DW). She has expressed concerns about the storage in which they are kept and residents of Woodchester have indicated they would donate more items if the storage were better. DW has no professional training as an archivist, however she has been looking into the options. The basic requirements for storage are that they should be safe from fire, flood and theft. None of these criteria are currently met. DW has looked into costing; suitable items for storage are expensive (e.g. £10 for a single metal map tube, £500 for metal locking boxes). DW is happy

to help with the project but would need assistance. Decisions would need to be made about what items to keep etc. Questions were asked about what is the purpose of having the archive in the village? Would the items be better stored elsewhere (keeping them safe but reducing access)? Ownership of the archive was also raised. The current oak storage cabinet was provided by donations in 2005, it is owned by the Village Hall. The items in the archive are owned by the community and therefore fall under the responsibility of the Parish Council. Possibilities raised included the provision of new storage containers and a dehumidifier in the current room, storage in the Church or storage in the old St Dominic's School building should this become available for community use in the future. A local resident suggested the Parish Council discuss the issues with contacts she has both at Stroud Museum and the History Department at University of Gloucestershire where a PhD student or similar may take an interest. **Cllr Lead to make contact.**

**2022/81 To discuss and agree a new road safety initiative in Woodchester**

This was discussed and agreed in public forum earlier in the meeting.

**2022/82 To consider and agree funding for any grant applications received**

The only grant received was for further funding for the Events Committee. However it has been proposed that the events committee comes back under direct Parish Council responsibility, in which case funding would be part of the wider Parish Council budget and no longer require a grant. This item was therefore deferred.

**2022/83 To consider and agree funding of two new benches in the Parish**

Cllr Lead reported that there is agreement in principle to put a bench on the Village Green by the wall. Cllr Lead has met with the resident most effected by the proposed site. They are happy for the bench to be put in. However they asked Cllr Lead to reiterate to the Church concerns they have raised about the large tree owned by the Church alongside their boundary and also the noise generated by cars parked on the Village Green slamming their doors particularly at both ends of the school day. Cllr Lead has passed these concerns on to the Church. The second bench will be sited at the top of Berryfield where there is currently a broken bench that no one claims. The cost will be about £400/ bench (plus fitting?). Final funding to be agreed at a future date.

**2022/84 To consider a proposal to take a one year agreement on the old football field for general recreational use**

The football club has had to close and has handed back the lease of the field to the land owner, who considers that the field is for community use. Cllr Lead has proposed that the landowner offer the Parish Council a one year agreement (licence or lease). The Parish Council will be responsible for grass cutting and general maintenance (including of the fencing) and will improve access to the site with two pushchair/disabled access gates between the Selsley Road and the field. The site will also need a bin and a notice board. The current clubhouse is not on the land covered by the agreement. The site will be for general recreation, but nothing can be fixed into the ground (although the current football goals may remain). The Parish Council were unanimous in their support of this project moving forward. **Cllr Lead to progress.**

**2022/85 To discuss the possibility of twinning with a Ukrainian Village**

Cllr Dunbar reported that he has been in touch with a Ukrainian School badly damaged in the war. In a personal capacity he has set up a 'just giving' page and raised over £4000 for the school. He reported that the village (Novyi Biyktiv) is very similar to Woodchester, being made up of two areas separated by a stream and of a similar size. The Clerk has been in touch with GAPTC for guidance about the possibility of twinning. They said that the Clerk

would need to be CiLCA qualified and to have 'general power of competence' to do this, so it is not an option. They directed the Parish Council to <http://twinning.org/> for further information. The Clerk also raised the issue that the Council cannot spend any amount of the precept outside of the Parish. Cllr Dunbar reported that the school is also keen to make connections and that the Church might also like to get involved, and he highlighted the value of this to the community in Woodchester generally. He proposed that Woodchester Parish Council form a 'link' with this village. **Cllr Dunbar to pass on the contact details of the Village Elder for Cllr Lead to make contact.**

- 2022/86 To note the dates of public rights as follows: 13<sup>th</sup> June to 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022**  
These were noted. **Clerk to add details to Parish notice boards and the website**
- 2022/87 To receive comments from members of the public on items discussed at this meeting.**  
There were no comments.
- 2022/88 To note date of next meeting: Thursday July 7<sup>th</sup> at Woodchester Village Hall.**

The Meeting Closed at 9.15 pm

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

Initials.....