

Weston under Wetherley Parish Council

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 24th January 2013

Weston under Wetherley Parish Church 7 pm

Present: Cllr Miss B Roberts

Cllr Mrs S Chambers

Cllr Mr P Haine

Cllr Mrs T McAllan

Mrs M Norman (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Also present: Cllr J Hammon, Cllr N Pratt and 12 members of the public

Before the meeting began, the Clerk read an email (see Appendix A attached) which she had received from Cllr Mobbs. In relation to the first point raised – the question of insufficient notice having been given, the Clerk informed the Council that she had received a copy of a reply sent by Alison Hodge, County Secretary of WALC, to Cllr Mobbs, in which the Secretary had stated that the notice advising of the Parish Council meeting should, according to s243 LGA 1972, have been posted on Saturday rather than on Sunday as it had been. The Clerk had then telephoned the Secretary and they had both discussed this point at length, following which the Secretary had sent Cllr Mobbs a further email, in which she stated that she “could not state as a legal certainty that the notice should have been posted on a Saturday.”

Where Cllr Mobbs’s second point was concerned, that the meeting had been improperly convened, the Clerk said that as she had only fifteen minutes notice of this objection, she had had no time to verify the statement. She explained to the Council that Cllr Mobbs had cancelled the village hall booking for the 16th January, making it necessary to reschedule the Parish Council meeting at a time when the co-opted Councillors from the District Council were free to attend and the earliest date possible was the 24th January. Cllr Mobbs had objected to the church as a venue, and had suggested postponing the meeting to a later date, but the Clerk felt that as the meeting date had been changed so often, it would be advisable to adhere to the date fixed. Cllr Hammon confirmed that had the 24th January not been chosen, it would have been impossible to obtain a quorate council. He felt it a pity that so little notice had been given of the objection, making it impossible for the Council to obtain legal advice on the point. Cllr Pratt, agreeing, said that during an earlier meeting with the Monitoring Officer, no indication had been given that the meeting was improperly convened.

After due discussion, the Council decided to proceed with the meeting.

Election of Chairman

Cllr Peter Haine nominated Cllr Beth Roberts as Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Sue Chambers. Cllr Roberts was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Parish Council and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Cllr L Mobbs, Cllr A Coles and Cllr M Doody all sent apologies for absence.</p>	
3	<p>Dispensations</p> <p>Cllrs Roberts, Haine, Chambers and McAllan had previously submitted a written request to the Clerk for dispensation to discuss the precept. All councillors voted unanimously to grant dispensations to enable them to do so.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of previous meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 3rd October 2012 and the minutes of the meeting of 5th December 2012 were unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5	<p>Precept and finance</p> <p>The Council discussed the draft precept prepared earlier by Cllr Roberts and the Clerk. Where changes to the draft budget as proposed were concerned, the Council felt that £50 was an appropriate sum for councillor expenses. No expenditure was expected on bus shelter repairs or pathways during 2013-2014. The Council felt that a new bus shelter was not needed on Sabin Drive, therefore £1000 will not be allocated to the specific reserve in 2013-2014. Postage, leaflet printing and stationery were estimated to be the same as the previous year and £50 was deemed adequate for sundries. The Council agreed that the insurance amount of £420 was adequate. Grants to the church were agreed to be £400 after it was confirmed by Mr. Stephen Evans that the Council had contributed £400 last year.</p> <p>Courses and training was added as a new line in the budget and costs were estimated to be £490, to cover one course per councillor and two for the clerk, together with the cost of £250 for CiLCA training.</p> <p>The Council agreed that £300 in the budget should be used for a website, and it was hoped that the initial capital cost would be funded in the main by a community grant. It was also brought to the Council's attention that the Parish Plan Committee was proposing to apply for a grant in the very near future for this purpose.</p> <p>The changes to the original budget resulted in a reduction from £7,335 to £6,985. It was resolved that the clerk should request the sum of £6,985 from the District Council as precept. Clerk to action.</p> <p>Finance: The Clerk presented the financial report (payments and summary schedule attached) and the finance sheet was approved and signed. No payments were authorised as none were outstanding. Cllr Pratt reminded the Council that a fresh bank mandate needed to be applied for to enable the new councillors to become signatories on the bank account. Clerk to action.</p>	
6	<p>Traffic calming measures</p>	

7	<p>Cllr Hammon, in the absence of Cllr Doody, explained the result of the meeting between Mr. Simon Prescott (County Highways Engineer) and Mr Stephen Evans, Chairman of the Parish Plan Steering Committee. Cllr Coles had not attended the meeting. The results of the Parish plan survey showed that the majority of residents were not in favour of a chicane. Mr Prescott had confirmed that funds were available for two illuminated signs, chevrons and clearly visible dotted lines to indicate the sharp bend. Detailed plans were shown to the Council illustrating the proposed measures, and these have been placed on the Parish Council notice boards for the public to inspect. (see Appendix B attached)</p> <p>The Council expressed its gratitude to Mr Prescott and unanimously resolved to ask him to proceed with the work. Clerk to action.</p> <p>The Council will agree on a report to be published in the newsletter concerning the above. Chairman to action.</p> <p>The Chairman also thanked Cllr Doody for making the plans available and Cllr Haine thanked Mr Chris Garden for printing them.</p> <p>Cllrs Hammon and Pratt left the meeting at 7.45</p>	
8	<p>Parish plan: an update</p> <p>Mr Stephen Evans reported that the Committee had been very pleasantly surprised by the high volume of replies to their questionnaire – 109 responses out of 140, a percentage of about 78% with over 150 people contributing to these responses. He had been told that other local villages only managed between 30% and 40% returns. With very few exceptions, comments have been positive and there is no doubt that most people love living in Weston.</p> <p>The Committee is busy analysing the questionnaire returns, which in view of the huge amount of input, is a time consuming task. Nevertheless they will be presenting a detailed summary of the results at a Public Meeting to be held on Saturday 2nd March at 10.00am in the Village Hall.</p> <p>Mr. Evans said that if as many people arrive as did for the previous consultation, he would be delighted, but it showed that the village does turn up trumps, whether for a Jubilee party or an opportunity to air their views to improve Weston. He added that the main purpose of the Public Meeting was to gain feedback on the results and begin prioritising the many proposed actions arising from them, as it is clear that not everything can be achieved given the current economic climate.</p> <p>Update on street lights/road conditions/flooding points</p> <p>Numerous street lights in the village are not working. The Clerk advised that she had previously informed the District Council about the streetlights and had been told it would be helpful if the numbers on the malfunctioning lights were available. Cllr Haine said that numbers 11 and 15 were two of the streetlights which were not working. The Clerk was requested to inform the District Council of this again.</p> <p>The Clerk was also asked to report to the County Council again about the potholes in the village. A member of the public drew the attention of the Council to the County Council website which he said was a useful forum for members of the public and he felt it important</p>	

9	<p>that the public were aware of the portals open to them. The Chairman thanked him for his contribution.</p> <p>The flooding on the road beside Wetherle Manor was also discussed. The County Council had disclaimed responsibility for this as it was the landowner's responsibility to maintain the culverts and ditches. The clerk was asked to write to Mr. Moreton concerning this point.</p> <p>Planning application</p> <p>No response was sent to the proposed application for Wetherle Manor. The Council was inquorate during the notice period.</p>	
10	<p>Business from members of the public</p> <p>The Clerk had received a request from Mr Chris Garden to consider providing grit bins for use in the village. Cllr Haine reported that, although the County Council would provide the grit, it was unclear whether the Parish Council had to supply the bins themselves, or whether the County Council would bill the Parish Council for the cost. The clerk was asked to investigate. Cllr Haine also said that the location of the bins needed to be approved by the County Council. The Clerk was asked to write to the County Council asking for permission to install a grit bin at the stop of Sabin Drive opposite Alderman Way, and another half way up Sabin Drive near the Village Hall.</p> <p>The Clerk had also received a request from Mr Stephen Hay for an informal discussion with the Parish Council concerning housing policy options and relevant issues. The Council agreed that they would welcome a meeting with Mr. Hay and the clerk was asked to arrange a date.</p>	
11	<p>Correspondence not dealt with in other items: received and noted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) WALC: important message for Councils and Councillors ii) Planning application: Wetherle Manor Farm Ref W/12/1550 iii) WALC: newsletter iv) Letter: Jenny Clayton: Parish & Town Council Tax Bases 2013-2014 v) General Fund base budget report 2013-2014 vi) Warwick district tax bases vii) Warwick District Council: Minutes viii) WALC: Requirements of 2013 audit ix) WALC: Disciplinary & grievance arrangements x) Community Forum Grant 	
12	<p>Clerk's review</p> <p>The Chairman said that this item had been requested by Cllr Mobbs who was not present to explain what she had in mind. If, as the Chairman believed, Cllr Mobbs was proposing some form of staff appraisal, a Parish Council meeting was not an appropriate venue and she did not propose to discuss it further. This was unanimously agreed to.</p> <p>A member of the public stated that having attended five previous Council meetings, he would like to commend the Clerk for her professionalism during some very difficult meetings. The Council assenting, Cllr Haine requested that Mr. Atkinson's comments should be minuted. This was agreed to. The clerk expressed her thanks to both.</p>	

	The meeting closed at 8.30	
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