Weston under Wetherley Parish Council

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 10th September2014
Weston under Wetherley Village Hall 7 pm

Present: Cllr Miss B Roberts (Chairman)
Cllr Mr P Haine (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Mrs S Chambers
Mrs M Norman (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Also present: Cllr Norman Pratt, Cllr John Hammon and 2 members of the public

1	**Apologies** Apologies were received from Cllr B Boardman, Cllr A Coles and Cllr L Mobbs	
2	**Declarations of interest** There were no declarations of interest.	
3	**Minutes of the previous meeting of the Council on the 2nd July 2014** The minutes of the meeting on the 2nd July 2014 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.	
4	**Progress reports**: a) Clerk: The clerk reported that the cheapest dog litter bins available cost £84.00 excluding VAT. The bins would not be emptied by the District Council, so arrangements for doing so would have to be undertaken by the Parish Council. Permission would also need to be obtained from the relevant authority to place the bins on the suggested sites. Cllr Hammon advised that these sites – at the beginning of footpaths in the village – were likely to be County Council land. b) **Cllr Boardman:** In the absence of Cllr Boardman, Cllr Haine submitted her report on the Open Dialogue Event on the 14th July. Cllr Boardman had advised that the document circulated to all councillors (see Appendix A attached) summarised the issues discussed at the meeting. She had, however, been disturbed by the negative tone of the meeting which had prevented any positive discussion on resolving the problem of budgetary constraints. She had forwarded Weston's Parish Plan to the organisers of the meeting as an illustration of Weston's response to village needs, and had received a most gratifying response.	
5	**Dog waste bins:** It was resolved to defer considering purchasing the bins to enable time for a definitive response from the District and County Councils regarding their siting and costs involved in emptying them.	
6	**Contribution to defibrillator:**	

	The Council resolved to contribute to the cost of a defibrillator but agreed to wait until a specific sum had been requested by the Village Hall Committee.
7	**Parish Council newsletter**:
	It was resolved to allocate the sum of £50 annually to defray the cost of printing the Parish Council newsletter.
8	**Notification to the District Planning Officer:**
	This motion was withdrawn as the Council were informed that work had begun on removing the building waste behind the private residences affected. The clerk was asked to write to the landowner concerned, thanking him for his co-operation in this matter.
9	**Planning co-ordinators:**
	It was proposed that two planning co-ordinators be appointed to assist the council in dealing with any planning applications requiring a response before a full Council meeting could take place to discuss them. It was agreed that the planning co-ordinators would, if possible, visit the sites and provide a report to the Council enabling Councillors to make a more informed judgement on the application than would otherwise be possible. It was resolved that Cllrs Peter Haine and Bren Boardman would undertake this role.
10	**Website policy:**
	The Council discussed the Policy document and agreed that paragraph 3 was the only point in the document which was within the Council's remit. The Chairman, Cllr Roberts, proposed the following amendment to this paragraph which was seconded by Cllr Chambers: *"The Parish Council section is managed by the Parish Clerk, in accordance with national guidelines."* It was unanimously resolved to accept this amendment to the website policy document (see Appendix B attached).
11	**Parish Plan:**
	The Council was informed that the Countryside Agency suggested that updates on parish plans should take place yearly. The Council agreed that it would be appropriate to revisit the Parish Plan and ask residents if there were any changes they would like to incorporate. It was hoped that more volunteers would come forward to assist in implementing the plan. It was agreed that the Parish Plan Steering Committee be asked to consider reviewing the Plan. It was also suggested that a Parish Meeting could take place in December to canvass residents' views.
12	**Finance:**
	a) The clerk presented the financial report (payments and summary schedule attached). Listed payments were authorised and approved. The Chairman and Cllr Chambers were authorised to sign the finance sheets and supporting documentation.
13	**Planning applications:**
	W/14/0965; 16 Alderman Way. The Parish Council supported the proposed application. **W/14/1311;** 15 Alderman Way. The Parish Council supported the proposed application.
14	**Business from members of the public:**

	There was no business from members of the public.
15	**Councillors' reports and items for future agenda:** Costs of dog waste bins and the defibrillator would be considered at the next meeting. Cllr Chambers suggested requesting advice from the police to discuss speed enforcement in the village.
16	**Correspondence not noted in other items** 　i)　　Bubbenhall Liaison Committee Meeting – minutes 　ii)　　Draft Minutes Annual Parish Meeting 28th May 2014 　iii)　　WALC: Minutes of meeting 14th May 2014 　iv)　　WALC: Agenda for meeting 17th September 2014 　v)　　Flood Resilience Workshop 　vi)　　WALC: newsletter 　vii)　　Parish Council Summit Notes 14th July 2014 　viii)　　Warwick District Council: Standards Committee Report 　ix)　　Planning Application: W/14/1311 15 Alderman Way 　x)　　Planning Application: W/14/0965 16 Alderman Way 　xi)　　Weston Website Policy Document
17	**Signing of cheques and payment list:** The Chairman and Cllr Chambers were authorised to sign the cheques and other supporting documentation. The meeting closed at 8.25 pm. **The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Wednesday 29th October 2014.**

Appendix A

WCC/ Parish Council Summit

Dunchurch Village Hall
14 July 2014

PRESENT:　　Representatives from the following Parish and Town Councils
Alcester TC, Beaudesert and Henley in Arden JPC, Bidford on Avon, Brinklow, Budbrooke, Burton Green, Cawston, Cubbington, Dunchurch, Harbury, Hatton, Kineton, Little Compton, Long Compton, Long Itchington, Mancetter, Middleton, Monks Kirby, Newbold Pace and Ashorne, Radford Semele, Rowington, Royal Leamington Spa TC, Ryton on Dunsmore, Shilton and Barnacle, Shotteswell, Shrewley, Southam TC, Stockton, Studley, Thurlaston, Ufton, Wellesbourne, Whitnash TC, Willoughby, Withybrook, Wolvey, Wotton Wawen

APOLOGIES: Aston Cantlow, Bearley, Barford Sherbourne and Wasperton JPC, Curdworth, Great Alne, Shipston on Stour TC, Stratford upon Avon TC, Warwick TC and Chairman of WALC Cllr E Knibb.

WCC: Phil Evans (Head of Localities and Community Safety) Jim Graham (Chief Executive), Dan Green (Localities and Partnerships Manager), Monica Fogarty (Strategic Director), Cllr Izzi Seccombe (Leader of the Council), Cllr Jeff

Clarke (Portfolio Holder for Environment), Louise Boffey (Localities and Communities Officer)

WALC: Alison Hodge (County Officer), Cllr Vaughan Owen (Vice-Chairman)
Len Gale (Vice-President)

1. **Introduction – Vaughan Owen (WALC)**

Vaughan Owen welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the speakers from WCC.

2. **WCC Perspective - Jim Graham (WCC)**

Jim Graham provided an overview of the current challenges facing WCC.

In the past few years WCC has looked at all of the services it provides to consider whether they are fit for purpose. The Organisation has downsized considerably with posts at all levels being reduced.   Current pressures mean that the council needs to save a further £92m by 2018 – this represents 26% of the Council's revenue budget. This has and will continue to impact on service delivery.

WCC expects austerity measures to continue beyond the current parliament and into the next decade. This may result in a reduced number of public sector organisations (local authorities, police, fire and rescue, hospitals) who will deliver services in a significantly different manner.

In light of the challenges which the Council is facing, WCC is looking at alternative ways of delivering services, including staff mutuals, social enterprises, working with the Voluntary and Community Sector and working with Town and Parish Councils.

The Council is currently exploring the possibility of the creation of one or more unitary authorities for Warwickshire. If this happened then WCC and the District and Borough Councils would cease to exist and a new authority/ authorities would be formed. The numbers of councillors and officers would be significantly reduced.

Throughout these challenges, WCC is keen to maintain an open dialogue with Town and Parish Councils and explore the future relationship between them and principal authorities in designing and delivering services.

3. **Working with Town and Parish Councils - Phil Evans (WCC)**

Phil Evans introduced his role as Head of Localities and Community Safety, explaining his intention to develop and maintain open dialogue with local communities about the next round of WCC budget savings – in particular, how community action can help to mitigate the impact of savings.

WCC is at the start of the process of engaging with Town and Parish Councils to explore new ways of doing things and is keen to capture community knowledge, insight and innovation. The Council is keen to 'work with the willing' and develop the capacity which exists within communities to co-design and co-deliver services in the future

The WCC website has a detailed list of savings to be made, however the following are examples of services which offer opportunities for communities to play a more significant role:

- Reablement and Homecare - focused on helping the vulnerable remain independent at home
- Transport Provision for vulnerable persons - focused on community based schemes of local assistance

- Information signposting and guidance - using communities to signpost and provide information
- Libraries – building on the success of Community Managed Libraries
- Waste reduction and recycling
- Community Managed Buildings and Facilities including Country Parks
- Some elements of Public Health
- Elements of highways and drainage maintenance including grounds work.

4. Lengthsman Scheme - Dan Green (WCC)/ Dan Essex (Shilton & Baranacle PC)

Examples of how Town and Parish councils are currently playing a greater role include the Pathfinder Plus Community Resilience Project, Community Managed Libraries, management of former Couth Centres and the Highways Lengthsman Pilot Project.

Following interest from a number of Parish Councils, the lengthsman pilot has been implemented in seven Parishes in Rugby Borough. Parish Councils taking part in the pilot are Binley Woods, Church Lawford, Pailton, Shilton & Barnacle, Thurlaston, Wolvey and Wolston.

Under the pilot scheme, they will each be given £2,000 in year one and £1,500 in year two to engage contractors to deal with small, low level highway maintenance issues. This will include vegetation clearance, cleaning of street signs, clearing gullies, litter picking, etc. Parish Councils will identify what work is needed, authorise it and claim the cost back from WCC. They will either appoint a contractor or use their own parish handyman.

An evaluation will be undertaken at the end of the two year period to assess its success or otherwise, with recommendations as to how any future scheme can be taken forward. An overview of a similar scheme in Worcestershire can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOMeyO0hJxE.

5. Plenary

Bidford on Avon reported a problem with an overgrown footpath and a willingness within the Parish to play a greater role in Rights of Way maintenance. The problem in taking this forward had been reluctance from WCC Officers. In response Monica Fogarty said that the Rights of Way service had been reduced but there were still 30 volunteer schemes across the county that work with a total of 300 volunteers. It was agreed that WCC would investigate the specific issue and liaise with the Parish Council to develop a solution.

Ufton Parish Council asked whether surplus equipment from WCC could be made available to Town and Parish Councils to support local action. Monica Fogarty agreed that this would make sense and agreed to investigate.

Cllr Gittus noted that there are numerous examples of Parish Councils taking action locally, for example through befriending schemes, but said they need funding. Attendees were reminded that each County Councillor has a £5,000 grant and Parish councils could engage with them about supporting local projects.

A representative from Middleton Parish Council said that they had contacted WCC and North Warwickshire Borough Council to ask if they could undertake work on their behalf but had not had a response. He hoped that the meeting would the start of opening up channels of communication. He noted that their County Councillor does not always attend their meetings. It was agreed that in some cases the interface between County Councillors and Town and Parish Councils needs to be developed.

A representative from Welford on Avon Parish Council questioned whether schemes such as the lengthsman project are savings or whether they just displace costs was raised. Overall they could lead to higher costs being

incurred. He went on to suggest that there is no strategic highway plan for South Warwickshire.

Monica closed the meeting by saying that the WCC budget is finite but there is an opportunity and a commitment to do things differently. WCC will work with Town and Parish Councils to develop innovative solutions and is keen to here both ideas and barriers to progress. Officers would consider feedback from the summit and come back to Town and Parish Councils with plans for progressing the agenda.

6. **Next Steps**

- WCC to provide a more detailed list of services in which communities **could** play a greater role.
- Individual Parish Councils to contact Phil Evans/Dan Green to discsuss potential involvement.
- Phil Evans/ Dan Green to enter into initial dialogue with individual Parish Councils
- Hold a further meeting with Parish Councils (potentially in Clusters) to develop more detailed plans
- WCC to begin similar dialogue with VCS Organisations (given the connectivity of agendas)

WCC/WALC continue to strengthen co-operation and communication arrangements.

Appendix B

Weston Website Policy Document

The website, has been designed as a community website for villagers, with specialist sections to meet the needs of the Parish Council and St. Michael's Church and also Weston Village Hall.

A sub-committee of the Weston Parish Plan Steering Committee, "The Web Team", manages the day to day operation of the site and sets overall policy for the non-specialist sections of the site.

The Parish Council section is managed by the Parish Clerk, in accordance with national guidelines: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/308185/ Local_Government_Transparency_Code_2014_Final.pdf
The St. Michael's Church section is the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council, administered by their nominee who is a member of the Web Team.

The Village Hall section is the responsibility of the Village Hall Committee, administered by their nominee who is a member of the Web Team.

The remaining sections of the site are managed by the Web Team in accordance with policy they agree with the Parish Plan Steering Committee, with an overall aim of minimal interference from the Steering Committee.

The Web Team aims to make the site as informative, relevant and up to the minute as possible, and welcomes input from residents. The Team, however, uses its judgement as to what content is included in the sections for which it has responsibility, and has the final say on content.

The Web Team reserves the right to publish information about public events, including photographs. Any objection received about any information or photographs that are published will be given prompt attention by the Web Team and the site adjusted if felt necessary.

The Web Team September 2014

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