

**P A R I S H O F W E S T O N I N G**

**MINUTES of the Meeting of**

**Westoning Parish Council**

**held on Wednesday 14th December 2022 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall, Westoning**

**PRESENT:** Cllr A Rayment (Chairman), Cllr E Russell, Cllr P Ellis, Cllr B Rogerson,

Cllr P Kelly, Cllr E Bhasin, Cllr C Luff, Cllr N McLoughlin, CBC Cllr J Jamieson

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs K Barker (Clerk), 1 member of the public was present

Agenda published on the noticeboard and on the website

**7733 Apologies for absence** – Cllr J Nethersole

7733.1 Cllr Vacancy

Nothing to report.

**7734 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2022 were approved. Cllr Rogerson proposed, seconded by Cllr Bhasin the approval of the minutes as a true record. All agreed by those present and the minutes were signed by the Chairman.

**7735 Declaration of interests**

Cllr Kelly - finance Point 7740.2

Cllr Bhasin - finance Point 7740.2

Cllr Ellis - finance Point 7740.2

**7736 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**7737 Chairman’s actions**

The Chairman said that he wrote to Network Rail regarding the registration of the strip of land adjacent to the School and is awaiting a reply. He also met with the Recreation Club regarding the issues raised at the last meeting and has received a reply.

**7738 Reports and representations**

CBC Cllr Jamieson said that Anglian Water are randomly digging up roads and they have been asked to attend a scrutiny committee. CBC Cllr Jamieson mentioned a piece of land owned by CBC which he suggested could possibly be used as a burial ground.

**7739 Public Participation**

A resident spoke about a recent project briefing meeting ‘Making Local Action of Climate Change Happen’ that she attended. The meeting was very interesting and it would be good to see Westoning developing a plan to help the village to work towards becoming carbon neutral.

Thermal imaging of all the buildings in the village would be a good project which could probably attract grant funding and there are unused plots of land in the parish on which trees could be planted. These are just some of the topics that could be considered to make a carbon neutral plan for the village.  The resident urged the Parish Council to consider the initiative and said that a Community Benefit group would need to be set up. The Parish Council agreed to express their interest and Cllr Ellis agreed to act as the Advisor to the Parish Council with Cllr Bhasin and Cllr Rogerson also assisting.

**7740 Finance**

7740.1 Bank balances and finance report:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Account** | **£** |
| TSB Community Account | 40,531.96 |
| TSB Instant Access Account | 66,811.92 |
| **TOTAL** | 107,343.88 |

7740.2 Cllr Rogerson proposed, seconded by Cllr Russell the approval of the following payments, agreed by all present:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Payment Method** | **Payee** | **£** |
| 000696 | Clerk – salary | 511.94 |
| 000696 | Clerk – expenses | 40.09 |
| 000697 | HMRC – Clerk tax | 4.20 |
| 000698 | Parish Warden – village tidying | 275.00 |
| 000699 | D J Granger – playing field Inv 023158 | 192.00 |
| 000700 | RBL – donation | 100.00 |
| 000701 | Anglian Water – cemetery | 12.16 |
| 000702 | E Bhasin – christmas event expenses | 29.50 |
| 000703 | Westoning Village Hall – hall hire | 19.50 |
| 000704 | P Kelly – Christmas expenses | 666.00 |
| 000705 | N Gates – potholes filling | 90.00 |
| 000706 | P Ellis – trophy engraving | 46.00 |
| 000707 | Mr Frith – planters | 175.94 |
| 000708 | Neil Gates – weed spraying | 80.00 |
|  | **TOTAL** | **2,242.33** |

7740.3 Other finance matters:

7740.3.1 Budget/Precept 2023/24

Cllr Rogerson proposed, seconded by Cllr Russell to approve regular expenditure of £50,971.00 and a precept of £43,923 for 2023/24, agreed by all present. This amounts to a 0% increase on the Parish Council element of the council tax bill for 2023/24. The Clerk to return the precept request form to Central Beds Council. The approved budget to be placed on the website and attached to the minutes. (**Action Clerk**)

**7741 Highways**

7741.1 Highways Issues

Nothing to report.

7741.2 Footpath Number 7

Nothing to report.

7741.3 Newlands Footpath

The work agreed at the last meeting has been done.

**7742 Recreation Ground**

7742.1 Recreation Club Licence

Nothing to report.

7742.2 Recreation Club bin collections cost

The Chairman said that he is still awaiting a copy of the bin collection invoice to ascertain the cost to the Recreation Club. The Clerk said that the school have responded that they definitely cannot allocate any room in their bin for the Parish Warden to use.

7742.3 Firework event report

The Chairman said that a report was received from the Recreation Club regarding the firework event. The Club are very strict on who frequents the club and all bar staff and committee members challenge the age of everyone if they look below 25 years. The Club did not apply for a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) for the firework event. The event has been a long-standing event held for all villagers whether members of the club or not for 20 plus years and at no time was a TEN ever requested. Plastic glasses and signs that no drinks are permitted outside the boundaries of the club are always put up. The Club checked with the Council and as the Club were not selling alcohol outside the club they advised it was not required. The allegation that 2 people had been hit by fireworks at the club event is incorrect. The club had 23 officials on duty that evening all visible with Hi-Vis jackets and torches and all spread out across the club grounds. Not one of those on duty had any reports from members of the public being hit by fireworks. There was one incident at the end of the fireworks display of someone fainting and the ambulance was called and the person was checked and released by the ambulance crew. The Firework night is open to all villagers with the majority not being members of the club as has always been the case. The Club is not a CIU affiliated club and not governed by their rules. The Club is a village recreational sport club which operates 12 closures a year for non member events, this event being one of them. The committee work extremely hard as volunteers every single day, 7 days a week to make the club a good place for all the village, arranging events, helping the local community, introducing regular weekend football with 2 Westoning club teams who are doing exceptionally well, a newly formed pool team who won the league in their first year, the list is endless. It would be good to have some positive comments about the club as opposed to negative comments. If the Club was to run just as a drinking club then that would go against the clubs purpose of supporting all residents of the village.

The Parish Council noted the response from the Recreation Club and agreed that they would like to see a copy of the Club’s public liability insurance and the Chairman and Cllr Nethersole to meet with the Recreation Club to discuss the way forward for future events.

7742.4 Bushes around football pitch

The Clerk read out an email received from the Football Club requesting that the bushes around the 11v11 football pitch are cut down to a height where the balls are retrievable. Since playing at the Recreation Ground they have lost around 10 match balls which are £25 a ball. As these balls are not able to be collected during match play they are finding that too many balls are lost. They are a completely new club which has brought so many of the locals together and it would be a shame if the Club could not run due to a lack of funds. The Chairman said that he will make contact with the Club to discuss it further.

(**Action Chairman**)

**7743 Village Matters**

7743.1 Christmas Event

The Chairman thanked Cllr Kelly and all those who organized the event which went very well. The Chequers Pub was thanked for providing the mulled wine for the last 2 years and it was agreed that the Parish Council provide funds for this in the future. A complaint was received that the tree did not have a star or angel at the top. The Parish Council to consider this for next year.

7743.1.1 Scaffolding Tower/Insurance

Cllr Ellis said that he arranged for some platform tower scaffolding from Jewsons in Flitwick to be delivered in order to put some Christmas lights on the clock tower. Jewsons generously agreed to provide this free of charge. It was delivered in sections and placed at the base of the tower to be assembled and erected in the afternoon. Upon returning to the tower with the electrician, the whole structure had been stolen. Cllr Ellis said that he informed Bedfordshire Police and obtained a crime reference No 40/67364/22. Jewsons have informed him that the Parish Council will have to pay them the purchase price of a new tower approximately £2,400 plus VAT.

The Clerk said that she has contacted the Parish Council insurers and is awaiting a response as to whether the Parish Council can claim under hirers liability.

7743.2 Rural Match Fund Scheme – kerb in Church Road

The Clerk said that CBC Cllr Jamieson is looking into it.

7743.3 Burial Ground

CBC Cllr Jamieson mentioned a piece of land owned by CBC next to the Recreation Ground which he suggested could possibly be used as a burial ground. The Chairman said there are three potential areas which may be suitable and need further discussion:

- piece of land partly owned by CBC next to the Recreation Ground near the bungalows in Ropkins Close. There would be enough space to last for about 30-40 years. Ownership of the piece of land containing the trees would need to be ascertained and obtaining the land may be a problem.

* land on the right of the allotments which could potentially be accessed through Highfield Court.
* Strip of land between Conolly Homes site and the railway.

7743.4 Grass cutting – schedule for next season

The Clerk said she will draw up a schedule/policy for grass cutting for the 2023 season for approval and distribution to the Contractor. (**Action Clerk**)

7743.5 Kings Coronation

Cllr Bhasin suggested a ticketed afternoon tea event for the over 70’s to be held in the Village Hall possibly on 8th May 2023 and hiring a band to play music. The Sub Group was agreed as Cllr Bhasin, Cllr Russell, Cllr Nethersole and Cllr Rogerson.

**7744 Play Area**

7744.1 Play Area inspections

The Parish Council confirmed that they require the annual inspection to be carried out as normal by Wicksteed plus three other inspections at £120 each. The Clerk to contact Wicksteed. (**Action Clerk**)

**7745 Planning**

7745.1 Planning Applications:

7745.1.1 CB/22/04469/LB - 1 Manor Court, Manor Gardens - listed Building: Removal of an existing single door and window. Form a new structural opening 2300 wide by 2100 high. The head of the door and window have recon stone cornice. Additional stone to the head of the larger opening will be installed to match same profile and colour. A new glazed door element consisting of a single door and three fixed fields will be installed to the new larger opening. The new glazed door element will be the "SMA Alitherm Heritage"

The Parish Council has no objection to the application.

7745.2 Other Planning Matters:

7745.2.1 Solar Farm

Nothing to report.

7745.2.2 Land Off Flitwick Road

Nothing to report.

7745.2.3 West View Farm, Park Road

Nothing to report.

**7746 Committees/Sub Groups/Representatives/Reports**

No reports were given

**7747 General correspondence:**

There was no correspondence.

**7748 Date of next meeting: Parish Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 11th January 2023 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall**

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Approved: ………………………………………………. Date: ……………………………………………………….