

**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 8th December 2021 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall, Westoning**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs A Rayment (Chairman), E Bhasin, P Ellis, P Kelly, E Leftly,

C Luff, J Nethersole, B Rogerson, E Russell, CBC Cllr J Jamieson

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs K Barker (Clerk), no members of the public were present

Agenda published on the noticeboard and on the website

**7549 Apologies for absence** – Cllr R Botterell

**7550 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2021 were amended and approved. Cllr Bhasin proposed, seconded by Cllr Leftly the approval of the minutes as a true record. All agreed by those present and the minutes signed by the Chairman.

**7551 Declaration of interests**

Cllr Rayment – finance point 7556.2

Cllr Leftly - finance point 7556.2

**7552 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**7553 Chairman’s actions**

There were no Chairman’s actions.

**7554 Reports and representations**

7554.1 Central Beds Councillor J Jamieson

CBC Cllr Jamieson spoke about the proposed development on the land off Flitwick Road.and the letter that was sent to the Parish Council. He said that he will be following up on some points raised in the letter. (See Land off Flitwick Road Point 7562.2.2 for further information).

**7555 Public Participation**

There were no comments from members of the public.

**7556 Finance**

7556.1 Bank balances and finance report:

The Clerk supplied a finance report prior to the meeting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Account** | **£** |
| TSB Community Account | 40,536.40 |
| TSB Instant Access Account | 66,551.64 |
| **TOTAL** | 107,088.04 |

7556.2 Cllr Nethersole proposed, seconded by Cllr Rogerson the approval of the following payments, agreed by all present.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Payment Method** | **Payee** | **£** |
| 000524 | Clerk – salary | 492.93 |
| 000524 | Clerk – expenses | 53.95 |
| 000525 | HMRC – Clerk tax | 2.40 |
| 000526 | Parish Warden – village tidying | 275.00 |
| 000527 | Signs of the Times – sign refurbishment | 791.62 |
| 000528 | E.on – electricity bill | 58.91 |
| 000529 | E Leftly – bauble competition presents | 45.00 |
| 000530 | R Botterell – Christmas event lights | 111.25 |
| 000531 | A Rayment – hosepipe | 59.66 |
| 000332 | Stonebridges – printing | 318.00 |
| 000333 | Westoning Village Hall – hall hire | 18.00 |
|  | **TOTAL** | **2,226.72** |

7556.3 Other finance matters:

7556.3.1 Budget/Precept 2022/23

Cllr Bhasin proposed, seconded by Cllr Ellis to approve regular expenditure of £41,798.62 and a precept of £43,923 for 2022/23, agreed by all present. This amounts to a 2.5% increase on the Parish Council element of the council tax bill for 2022/23. 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**)

The Parish Council agreed to include the Recreation Ground driveway as a major project in 2022/23. The Chairman agreed to obtain a quote for consideration at the February meeting.

**7557 Highways**

7557.1 Highways Issues reported to CBC - update

The Clerk said that CBC require a photo of the metal post in the grass for the ‘No through road’ sign in Church Road. Cllr Bhasin agreed to send a photo to the Clerk to pass on.

(**Action Cllr Bhasin**)

The cracks in Sampshill Road have been reported and CBC will assess the area.

**7558 Recreation Ground**

Nothing to report.

**7559 Village Matters**

7559.1 Christmas Event

The Chairman said that the event went very well and it even snowed. The PTA collected circa £1,000. There was lots of positive feedback. CBC Cllr Jamieson and Reverend Nigel Washington will be judging the Westlights competition. There have been mixed views regarding the new Christmas tree with some preferring a traditional tree and others preferring the modern look. The tree has to be taken down temporarily when it is windy.

7559.2 Tree for the Platinum Jubilee

The Parish Council resolved to accept the watering cost of circa £250. A protective fence to be put up as previously discussed.

7559.3 Festival of Britain sign

The Chairman said that the sign has been refurbished and will be put back up shortly.

7559.4 Westoning On Sunday

The Chairman said that a hard copy Newsletter has been printed and he asked Cllrs to distribute it around the village. The Clerk said that a copy has been placed on the website.

7559.5 Tree planting – Westoning School

The Clerk read out an email from Westoning School asking whether the two trees that the school has to re-plant can be planted at the back of the recreation field at the bottom of the hill. Over time they would mature and offer some shade to parents watching sports day or football. Cllrs agreed to the request but asked that they be planted 4m in from the fence so the grass can be cut around them. The Clerk to respond. (**Action Clerk**)

7559.6 Playground area – letter to School

The Parish Council agreed for a letter to be sent to the school confirming that there will be no rent increase for the playground next year and to remind them that the playground lease is term time only during school core hours (9am - 3.30pm) and that the gates may be locked only whilst the area is in use by the school within the core hours.  Should they wish to use it outside of term time and school hours they should contact the Parish Council for permission.

(**Action Clerk**)

7559.7 Lights – Ropkins Close

Cllr Nethersole proposed, seconded by Cllr Leftly to accept the quote of £280 plus VAT from Andy Muskett to straighten the two lighting columns in Ropkins Close, agreed by all present.

**7560 Play Area**

7560.1 Litter Bins – play area

The Chairman to look at the options for an order to be placed. (**Action Chairman**)

**7561 Planning**

7561.1 Planning Applications:

7561.1.1 CB/21/04927/FULL - 17 Lovett Green, Sharpenhoe - two storey front and rear extension. The Parish Council has no objection to the application.

7561.1.2 CB/21/05022/FULL - 4 Park Road - dropped kerb and highway crossover

An email of objection was received by a resident, this was noted. The Parish Council object to the application with the following comments:

* The access proposed would result in vehicles reversing into or out of the property from the A5120 causing conflict with oncoming traffic;
* The properties in this line of houses were built over 45 years ago and are served from Home Farm Way where a perfectly serviceable and adequate access is available;
* The visibility requirements to the south of the proposed location cannot be met due to the large conifer hedges fronting numers 6, 8 and 10 Park Road;
* The proposed development would result in exposing the neighbouring properties to increased noise from passing traffic if the trees in front of the property are removed;
* Allowing this application may result in other houses on Park Road seeking to do the same with further interruption of the smooth flow of traffic on the A5120;
* The proposed development will result in a substantial loss of privacy to the neighbouring property from the public road and public pavement**,** which is currently afforded by the hedge screen;

With over 200 new houses planned in the village through the recently adopted Local Plan, it is essential that the A5120 carries its current and future traffic volume without interruption or delay. This proposal, if allowed, would cause delay and even accidents.

7561.1.3 CB/21/05236/FULL - 35 Tythe Barn Close - single storey rear extension.

The Parish Council has no objection to the application.

7561.2 Other Planning Matters:

7561.2.1 Solar Farm

Nothing to report.

7561.2.2 Land East of A5120

The Chairman said that he had a meeting with MPC on behalf of Countryside Homes and has since received a letter with the following content:

*Onsite provision of burial ground or junior football pitch*

*This was something that members of the Parish Council were particularly keen to see provided onsite. Following the meeting, Countryside raised this with Officers at Central Bedfordshire Council. Officers confirmed that they do not see a case for any onsite provision of either a burial ground or junior football pitch with associated parking and changing facilities on the site. It should be noted that the draft heads of terms for the Section 106 Agreement to be negotiated as part of the planning application do include a contribution to off-site sports pitches.*

*Access via the existing mini-roundabout:*

*The option for accessing the site off the existing roundabout was explored in initial conversations with Officers. After conducting the necessary analysis, it was clear that any such access would require the enlargement of the mini-roundabout to a point at which it would no longer be in keeping with the village character of Westoning and require the removal of offsite trees. It was therefore deemed that the most sensible option was for the main new access to be off the High Street with a right hand turn lane, which is wholly a technically suitable access solution for the site as has been demonstrated in the Transport Assessment prepared to support the planning application.*

*Enhancing connections to Flitwick:*

*The possibility of enhancing connections to Flitwick, principally in terms of encouraging pedestrian and cycle links to the town have been looked at. Countryside have engaged with Officers at Central Bedfordshire Council, who are seeking clarification from Sustainable Transport Officers. This includes whether a contribution could be made towards cycleway improvements where they previously expressed a preference for this to go to bus services. The Parish Council will be updated with how this discussion progresses.*

*Housing mix:*

*Members of the Parish Council had questions about the mix of houses onsite and expressed a desire to see smaller and medium sized properties where possible, in order to allow residents to stay local. At the time of the meeting, the final mix was still to be agreed. A full breakdown is:*

*1 beds affordable 4*

*2 beds affordable 28, market 12*

*3 beds affordable 10, market 36*

*4 beds affordable 2, market 36*

*5 beds affordable 0, market 5*

*This shows that there will be a broad mix of dwellings provided as part of the scheme including smaller 1, 2- and 3-bedroom properties.*

*Additional footpath:*

*As this is outside the red line area and outside the control of Countryside, this is not something the site can deliver.*

*Purchasing additional land:*

*Members asked Countryside to consider purchasing additional land to the north of the site as a means of providing the burial ground or junior football pitch. Given the conversations with Officers in terms of provision in this locality, and the fact that this land is in the Green Belt and not allocated for these uses in Central Bedfordshire’s Local Plan, Countryside cannot pursue this option further as it would sit outside of the planning application.*

*Solar panels:*

*The application is supported by a Sustainability Statement that sets out the range of measures to reduce carbon emissions, mitigating the effects of climate change, and adaptation measures to ensure the long-term resilience of the development to the effects of climate change which include:*

*• Buildings designed to achieve the interim Future Home Standard through the use of a Fabric First approach and highly energy efficient energy strategy, incorporating Solar PV.*

*• Specification of water efficient fittings to reduce water consumption to 110 litres per person per day.*

*• Homes designed to take into account increasing annual temperatures set out in the UKCP18 climate projections to minimise the risk of overheating.*

*Drainage:*

*The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 and the risk of fluvial flooding is low. The scheme has been designed to account for surface water flood risk and the Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy for the scheme demonstrate that the proposed infiltration devices are designed to accommodate storm events up to and including 1in100 year events + 40% allowance for climate change, which will safeguard against flooding and mitigate against the effects of future climate change*

The contents of the letter were noted by the Parish Council. The Chairman said that the current mini roundabout should be rebuilt as it is not safe to have additional T Junctions coming onto the A5120. CBC Cllr Jamieson suggested undertaking an informal traffic survey.

The Chairman said that the Parish Council wrote to CBC in 2017 confirming the need for certain community benefits which has been ignored with the current proposals. He said that he would like recognition from CBC of Westoning’s local needs including a football pitch and burial ground which CBC have been aware of since 2017. He asked CBC Cllr Jamieson to arrange for a senior planning officer to attend the January Parish Council meeting.

**7562 Committees/Sub Groups/Representatives/Reports**

Nothing to report.

**7563 General correspondence:**

There was no correspondence

**7564 Date of next meeting: Parish Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 12th January 2022 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall**

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

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