

WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 11th July 2019
in the Village Hall Reading Room which commenced at 8:00pm

PRESENT:

Chair: Councillor Tim Moody
Councillor Judith Evans
Councillor Steve Ludbrook
Councillor Claire Mason
Councillor Vicky Patmore
Councillor Alistair Schofield

IN ATTENDANCE: Lorraine Ellis (Clerk), Carol Lodge (Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust)
and one resident

2019/07/075 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors John Cherry (holiday) and Matthew Hale (other commitments).

2019/07/076 TO MEET WITH CAROL LODGE, HERTS & MIDDX WILDLIFE TRUST:

The Chairman welcomed Carol to the meeting.

Carol thanked the Council for the opportunity of meeting with them to update them on the recent survey undertaken by a team of volunteers who survey local wildlife sites; in order to meet the criteria for designation a site needs to have a selection of special plants (indicator species).

Although the report of the visit is currently only in draft form it could be noted that the Recreation Ground has 65 species with up to 70% being herbs. There is very little species-rich grassland left in Hertfordshire and Weston's wildlife meadow is a great example.

If any disturbance occurs to the orchids they would be lost. The community needs to be left alone and it will build up and thrive.

Carol complemented the Council on how well the site is managed; it cannot be recreated as its existence is to do with the geology and type of management it has received over decades.

It was suggested that consideration could be given to having a nature walk; perhaps Countryfile may wish to visit as part of one of their TV episodes.

As soon as the survey has been approved for publication the Council will be given a copy, this could then be included in WPNs; the website and Clerks & Councils Direct magazine.

Councillors thanked Carol for attending the meeting and she left at this juncture. (8:22pm). The resident also left at this time.

2019/07/077 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

2019/07/078 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT:

None.

2019/07/079 TO FILL ONE CASUAL COUNCILLOR VACANCY BY CO-OPTION:

The Chairman reported that he had today received an email from Wayne Dumpleton advising that he was no longer able to accept the Council's invitation to be co-opted as a Councillor.

It was **agreed** that the position should be re-advertised. The Clerk to action.

2019/07/080 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 13th JUNE 2019:

To take the minutes of the meetings as read and approve them as a true and accurate record. The minutes were then duly signed by the Chairman.

- 2019/07/081** **PLANNING:**
Applications:
Tower Cottage, Mill Lane, Weston – Single storey rear and side extension.
No objection.
3 Frays Cottage, Weston – Councillors considered the revised plans provided by the applicant for an extension. These are currently not displayed on the NHDC planning portal. **No objection on the understanding that no changes are made to these provisional plans.**
NHDC Decisions:
Leatherwells Cottage, Dane End Lane, Weston – Changes to the fenestration on ground and first floor; to include small paved area. **Agreed.**
Reservoir Cottage, Hatch Lane, Weston – Part two and part single storey side extension and addition of ebony stained featheredge timber cladding to all existing and proposed external elevations and ancillary works.
Conditional permission.
- 2019/07/082** **FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:**
a. Cheque signing and accounts for July 2019 - The accounts for July for £556.12 were duly approved. The Chairman reported that he had authorised the expenditure of £60 for emergency tree works to be undertaken.
b. Communications and Media – Councillor Patmore reported that additional articles were still required as this would attract more visitors to the site. It was agreed that information on the Weston Wildflower Meadow should be included.
c. Correspondence – Duly noted. The Clerk to advise the Maiden Street resident that the border between their property and Forge End will be undertaken in the autumn. At the same time the tree that is starting to overhang a Forge End property will be trimmed.
- 2019/07/083** **NEW HOUSING STRATEGY:**
The Chairman reported that District Councillor Steve Jarvis had advised that NHDC had received a letter from the Inspector stating that he intends to hold further hearing sessions on the Local Plan on some specific issues. One of these relates to the calculation of housing need and another relates to the review of the green belt. He also states in his letter that he has yet to finish considering all the representations made in response to the proposed modifications so his final ‘sign off’ of the plan will not be anytime soon.
- 2019/07/084** **VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT including FOOTPATHS and MAINTENANCE:**
Traffic management plan update: In Councillor Hale’s absence the Chairman reported that at the second meeting of the group each sub-group reported their ideas for the roads they had studied.
Maiden Street the main problem was parking and congestion caused by the parking particularly on the curve by the cottages. A proposal was made to create some parking spaces on the grass areas to the left and right of the entrance to Forge End. This proposal took account of the gas tanks. It was agreed that this could spoil the rural aspect of Maiden Street and access to the spaces may cause a problem.
Damask Green Road it was agreed that pedestrian safety is severely compromised by having no footpaths by Frays, Frays Cottages and from Juniper Cottage to Park Drive. It was agreed that as this road will be most affected by the housing developments in Great Ashby a solution here should be a high priority.
Fore Street the two areas of most concern was traffic speed from both ends and pedestrian safety where no footpath exists in the middle section of the road. Pinch points and a line designated path were considered.

Mill Lane the main issue was traffic speed and the damage to banks from wide vehicles. It was noted that there are plans in place for limited kerbing at the lower end opposite Mill Ground.

Hitchin Road the perennial problem of no footpath at the top end was discussed. County Councillor Jarvis has reported that he has asked HCC Highways for a possible solution with costings but this will take some months to complete. It was noted that for the majority of residents in Friars Road and all residents in The Snipe a suitable alternative safe footpath exists. The group reminded itself that it was agreed at the first meeting that pedestrian safety should be the first priority when considering solutions. It was agreed that recommended solutions should be prioritised and that proposals should maintain the rural nature of Weston and display a degree of uniformity. The group favoured the use of contrasting road surfaces to accentuate the priority being given to pedestrian safety.

The Council endorsed the Group's determination that pedestrian safety be the over-riding priority.

Cutting vegetation in School Lane – Councillor Evans reported that she had liaised with the contractor to undertake the cutting back of the vegetation in School Lane. Unfortunately the work has not yet been carried out; Councillor Evans agreed to contact the contractor again to agree a date for the work.

2019/07/085

RECREATION GROUNDS and SPORTS FACILITIES:

Jackson's Lane car parking – The Chairman reported that the marking out of the car parking spaces had not yet been carried out.

Following complaints from users of the hall it was **agreed** that the Chairman should request that Weston Park Farm instructs their tenants to park their vehicles beyond the tree to resolve the car parking issue. Councillor Schofield and the Chairman to weed spray the area.

Update on recreation ground storage – Councillor Schofield reported that he had received a quotation of £750 to undertake the groundwork preparation and that this work will be undertaken at the beginning of August. The tree works still need to be carried out, as soon as this has taken place the storage unit will be ordered.

Rugby Club agreement – Councillor Schofield reported that the agreement for usage of the changing rooms was currently with Weston Rugby Club waiting for their acceptance of the agreement between themselves and the Council.

2019/07/086

HIGHWAYS & LIGHTING:

None.

2019/07/087

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

a.It was reported that Weston Football Club are hosting a rounders fund raising event on Sunday 18th August. Councillor Evans reported that WFC had not yet removed the grass cuttings. Councillor Schofield will advise the club that this needs to be resolved.

b.Councillor Schofield reported that NHDC had advised that Assets of Community Value only remain on the register for 5 years. It was **agreed** that he should complete the relevant documentation to re-register the village shop, the Cricketers and the Rising Sun.

c.It was **agreed** that Councillor Evans should request that Councillor Cherry undertakes the cutting and baling as usual.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The meeting then closed at 9:32pm with the next meeting being held on Thursday 8th August 2019 at 8:00pm in the Village Hall Reading Room. The agenda will be displayed on the noticeboard three days prior to the meetings.

Signed..... Chairman

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