

WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Weston Parish Council held via zoom video conferencing on THURSDAY 6th MAY 2021 which commenced at 7:40pm

PRESENT: Alistair Schofield (Chairman) John Cherry (Vice-Chairman) Judith Evans
Matt Hale Steve Ludbrook Claire Mason
Tim Moody Rob Noble Vicky Patmore

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public

2021/05/056 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2021/05/057 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr. Moody proposed Cllr. Schofield, this was seconded by Cllr. Ludbrook, the Council **unanimously agreed** to Cllr. Schofield being elected as Chairman.

2021/05/058 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr. Hale proposed Cllr. Cherry, this was seconded by Cllr. Mason. The Council **unanimously agreed** to Cllr. Cherry continuing as Vice-Chairman.

2021/05/059 TO AGREE COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Village Hall Representatives** – Council agreed that Suzie Lucas and Mick Wall would continue to be their representatives. Council noted that Alison Cormack had decided to stand down and thanked her for her service.
- **School Governor** – Councillor Moody
- **Planning** – Councillors Ludbrook and Hale
- **Finance** – Councillor Ludbrook
- **Village Environment including Footpaths and Maintenance** – Councillors Evans and Cherry
- **Recreation Grounds & Sports facilities** – Councillors Schofield and Mason
- **Highways & Lighting** – Councillors Hale and Patmore
- **Communications and Media** – Councillor Patmore

2021/05/060 TO AGREE DATES AND START TIMES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Dates of meetings will remain 2nd Thursday of each month commencing at 7:30pm. It was noted that meeting dates may need to be reviewed to accommodate the recruitment of a new Clerk, with Thursdays being the preferred day.

2021/05/061 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

2021/05/062 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

None

2021/05/063 MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON 8th, 23rd & 28th April 2021

Minutes of all 3 meetings were approved and duly authorised by the Chairman.

2021/05/064 PLANNING
Applications:



- **Glebe Cottage, Church Lane, Weston (21/01263/FPH)** - Single storey rear extension and single storey side link extension to proposed two storey side/rear extension. **No objection.**

NHDC Decisions:

- **Highgate, Mill Lane, Weston (21/00029/FPH)** - Two storey front and part two storey and part first floor rear extensions to create two storey dwelling, following demolition of existing front conservatory. **Permission granted.**

2021/05/065 FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

- a. Cheque signing and accounts for May 2021 – Expenditure totalling £1,597.97 was approved.
- b. Barclays Bank mandate – It was decided to defer updating the signatories until a new Clerk is appointed.
- c. Weston Voices Project. It was decided that the Chairman should contact the person responsible to request a progress report and/or the return of the equipment. Cllr. Moody to supply contact details.
- d. Financial Year-end Procedures – The Chairman reported that the year-end accounts had been sent to the accountants for checking.
- e. Communications and Media – Nothing to report.
- f. Clerical Services to the Council. In recognition of the difficult work situation the Clerk experienced during lockdown Councillors approved an ex-gratia payment equivalent to 1 months' pay by 6 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.
It was also agreed that the preferred contractual arrangement for a new Clerk is that they should be self-employed rather than becoming an employee of the Council. Council decided that Councillors Schofield, Moody and Mason should work together to progress the recruitment process with a view to recommending a suitable candidate, contractual terms and job description to a future meeting.
- g. Update on the Weston Walkabout project. Cllr. Moody said that lots of siting suggestions had been received and permission is now being sought from the various land owners to confirm their suitability.
It was confirmed that the benches will remain the property of the Council.
Council approved a suggestion by Cllr. Patmore that daffodil bulbs be planted at each site.
Cllr. Moody requested that we seek volunteers to assist with the installation of the benches, that are expected to arrive around mid to late June.
- h. Celebration of Normality. Councillors Patmore, Mason and Moody presented the suggestion of a village event to celebrate the lifting of Covid restrictions with Sat 28th Aug being the suggested date. Cllr. Patmore to take the lead on assembling volunteers to help organise and run the event.
- i. Community Wood Proposal. Cllr. Schofield told Council that there is likely to be an opportunity to purchase a parcel of land equating to roughly 2.5 acres on the outskirts of the village. Council had discussed the possibility of creating a community orchard in the past, but had been unable to progress the idea due to the lack of a suitable site. Council were in favour of the idea in principle and agreed that work towards a fully costed proposal should be progressed. Council would then be in a position to consult with the wider community.
- j. Covid-19 Grant. Cllr Schofield reported that the charity Community Development Action Hertfordshire had donated £100 towards the Weston Foodbank collections. Cllr. Moody took the action to determine the best way of getting the money to the Foodbank.
- k. June PC Meeting. It is believed that it is now legal for the Council to meet in person in Covid-secure premises. The next meeting will therefore take place in Weston Village Hall on Thursday 10th June commencing at 7:30pm.



- I. Correspondence. A letter was received from a resident expressing concern that the siting of a picnic bench and litter bin near to the Church car park may result in the problems of litter and anti-social behaviour worsening. Agreed that Cllr. Schofield should reply. Other correspondence had been circulated and was duly noted. Cllr. Schofield reported that he had received a quotation for that annual insurance from Zurich and suggested we reduce the insured sums for the Pavilion and Changing Room buildings to £25k each and that the wording relating to cover for the 'surfaces' be changed from 'other surfaces' to 'playground surfaces' to avoid issues that could otherwise occur as a result of the insurance principle of 'average'. It was further agreed that we should contract for a 5-year term to obtain the maximum discount. Cllr. Evans agreed to follow up on correspondence from NHDC regarding support for public footpath maintenance/repairs.

2021/05/066 NEW HOUSING STRATEGY

NHDC Local Plan - Nothing to report.

2021/05/067 VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT including FOOTPATHS and MAINTENANCE

- a. Traffic management plan update (2019/04/043) – Item deferred to June meeting.
- b. Footpath Maintenance and working parties. Cllr. Moody reported that work on the path from the Church to the Rec was being delayed until the bird nesting season was over.
- c. Dog fouling strategy. Cllr Mason confirmed that she is now in possession of most of the equipment needed and will begin using the stencil and eco-friendly paint around the village.
- d. Street litter bins and litter in Damask Green Road. Cllr. Schofield reported that he had met with Settle and they had agreed to arrange the removal of the litter in the ditch between Woodlands Meade and Marlborough Court.
- e. Verge Damage. Cllr. Schofield reported that the Herts Highways contractors had returned to make good the damaged they had previously caused. In most cases the repairs were somewhat inadequate, so Cllr. Schofield had spread some grass seed himself.

2021/05/068 RECREATION GROUNDS and SPORTS FACILITIES

- a. Play equipment proposals (2021/03/031c). Cllr. Schofield reported that he is yet to order the replacement swings.
- b. Picnic bench request. A request had been received for 2 additional picnic tables to be sited in the play area at the Rec. Council thought it a good idea and agreed that Cllr. Moody should place an order for suitable tables.

2021/05/069 HIGHWAYS and LIGHTING

- a. Friars Road Parking (2020/10/080a). Line painting still awaited.
- b. Post Office Row Lighting Issue. The no entry sign lights are now working.

2021/05/70 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Vacant property at The Snipe (2020/12/101a). Item now closed.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting at 9:18pm with the next meeting being held on Thursday 10th June 2021 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. Agendas will be displayed on the Parish Noticeboard 3 clear days prior to meetings.

Signed.......... Chairman

Date: 10th June 2021