



Minutes of the West Dean Parish Council Meeting Monday 06 December 2021 7:00pm, King George's Hall

Councillors present: Harry Urquhart (HU) – Chair, Bill Seabrook (BS), Andy Francis (AF), Jane Higgins (JH), Ben Rowe (BR), Cllr Richard Britton (Wiltshire Council), and Cllr Deborah Hook (WTPC).

Others present: Melanie Camilleri (MC) – Clerk/RFO, PC Peter Yung, and three members of the public.

- 101/21** **Apologies for Absence:** None
- 102/21** **Declarations of interest:** None
- 103/21** **Minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on **Thursday 14 October 2021** were approved.
- 104/21** **Public Forum**
Actions arising: a member of the public made a suggestion for use of the decommissioned phone box – a community seed/plant swap. AF will explore costs for installing shelves. To be added to the next Agenda 17 Feb 2022
- 105/21** **Introduction from PC Peter Yung:** he'll be covering the West Dean region for the next 18 months and will attend as many PC meetings as he can. He works closely with Parish Councils, he has extensive experience of rural policing, and understands key issues the community face relates to agricultural crime. Our PCSO is John Todd.
- 106/21** **To receive a report from Cllr Richard Britton (Wiltshire Council)**
- Wiltshire Council will be facing a budget deficit at the end of the financial year of £45M due to financial pressures from COVID. They await the government settlement of council tax and social care.
 - Key meetings continue to be held in public
 - ECO/Green Agenda work underway in neighbouring parishes
 - Has the big responsibility of managing the local Government Pension Fund (£3B)
- 107/21** **Rec Ground/Play Area Safety Surface**
- i) Consider recommendations (including costs) to bring the safety surface up to the required BS standard (following RoSPA Inspection):
- JH presented findings following an onsite inspection and proposed that the bark in the low-risk fall areas is redistributed to the high-risk fall areas. In addition, 2 bags of bark chippings to be purchased (cost £240 each) to top-up levels to meet safety standards.
- This proposal was seconded by AF and unanimously agreed.
- 108/21** **Finance**
- i) The Cashflow report and payments were unanimously approved
- Bank balances**
Treasurers Account 23 Nov 2021: £6,076.69
Business Bank Instant 23 Nov 2021: £6,616.79

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
M Camilleri	Salary + offices expenses	730.90	S/O
Chris Mundy	Rec Grd Maintenance: Invoice 1	1,325.00	BACS
Farley PCC	Dun Valley News Publication	180.00	BACS
Andy Francis	Christmas Lights and River Clearance Refreshments	58.07	BACS
M Camilleri	Office Consumables	11.40	BACS
M Camilleri	Salary + offices expenses	730.90	S/O
RBL Poppy Appeal	Wreath	16.00	16.00
Chris Mundy	Rec Grd Maintenance: Invoice 2	1,325.00	BACS
Total debit		£4,377.27	

- ii) Consideration to quotes for grass cutting 2022/23: Two quotes were considered. It was unanimously agreed that the existing contractor Clive Francis be awarded the grass cutting/hedge cutting contract for 2022/23 (15 cuts). AF to let Clive know.
- iii) Consideration as to the continuation of funding delivery of the Dun Valley News publication to the West Dean community in 2022/23: It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council commit to funding £360 for a further year 2022/23. To be reviewed thereafter.
- iv) Budget 2021/22: MC presented the modified budget for 2022/23 and Precept options 1-4. AF proposed, seconded by BS and unanimously approved that the Precept requirement for 2022/23 be **£17,500**

109/21

Planning

- i) WDPC ratified its decision made under Scheme of Delegations for PL/2021/10134 40 West Dean: no objection
- ii) HU read out Cllr Britton's email reporting Wiltshire Council has been clearing their backlogs for validating Planning Applications.
- iii) Consideration to TVBC's Consultation on proposed revision of requirements for the validation of planning and related applications. Consultation period ends 28 December 2021.
The Councillors have a little more time to consider this consultation before the deadline date.
- iv) Consideration to the draft New Forest International Nature Conservation Designations: Recreational Mitigation Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The purpose of this document is to provide advice on how the need for mitigation in relation to recreational impacts on the New Forest international nature conservation designations is to be implemented (linked to Policy E5 of the adopted Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016)). Consultation period runs 12 Nov – 10 Dec.
The councillors wished to note the proposal.

110/21

River Dun Annual Vegetation Clearance Saturday 13 Nov

- i) Report from Cllr Rowe:-
This year's river clearance was a great success! We had around 20 volunteers turn up, with a great mix of faces old and new, young and... not as young. Upon initial inspection with local resident Kevin Harrington, we noticed that nature had for the most part looked after itself since our last clearance in November 2020. Whilst some vegetation was cleared from the channel itself, the majority of the work included tidying up the riverbanks and removing weeds and any dead vegetation. We made way for another route for the flowing water downstream from the footbridge, as beforehand, it was all being directed through a very narrow channel

on the left-hand side. We made sure to keep these islands of vegetation, however, as they filter the water and encourage the riverbed to remain a clean-gravel substrate for fish spawning, as opposed to the silty riverbed that you can see upstream from the footbridge, which other than attracting few invertebrate species doesn't attract much wildlife at all. The clean-gravel appearance of the riverbed downstream from the footbridge is what a chalk stream should look like. The value of the river and its banks as a wildlife habitat was at the heart of this activity, so we made sure to be sensitive to this when identifying areas to tidy up and cut back. I would like to thank Will Edwards for collecting and re-purposing the weed at Church Farm. Towards the end of the morning, I ventured downstream with Nick Hiddleston and Chris Lucas to a fallen tree just beyond the garden of Tower House, as pointed out by David Allen. As we approached it, the tree stretched right across the river and was holding up the water, making it several inches deeper there. Chairman Harry Urquart communicated this to Jim East of East Brothers Sawmill, and using Chris' chainsaw, we decided to make this job easier for them by cutting through big branches caught up on the riverbank to free the main part of the tree up. The following Saturday, East Bros removed the tree by attaching cables to it and dragging it out. Thanks to all the volunteers, the river is in the best condition it can be for any serious storms that may hit Dean this winter. I would also like to thank Village Hall committee chair, Jayne Francis, and all the ladies that catered tea, coffee and bacon sandwiches to reward our volunteers afterward.

On behalf of the Parish Council HU expressed his thanks to BR for all his hard work and to pass on thanks to all the other volunteers.

111/21

Carols on the Green Wed 22 Dec 2021

- i) Cllr Higgins confirmed the event will commence 6pm. She expressed her thanks to the Rowe family for providing wine, mince pies, and use of electrical supply for the tree lights.
AF confirmed the tree will be set-up this coming week. Busy Bees will be making the tree decorations

112/21

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration (Bank Holiday weekend 3-6 June 2022)

- i) After a short discussion on options, AF proposed to mark the event a commemorative Christmas Tree is planted (which will be used for future Christmases), a beacon is lit, and residents bring a picnic/drinks. To be added to the next Agenda 17 Feb 2022

113/21

Councillors' Reports

114/21

Correspondence, AOB, and urgent matters

- i) Through trains from London to Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon are being withdrawn next month. MC requested to write a letter
- ii) WDPC meeting dates and venue for 2022: 17 Feb 2022. MC to send out email of all other proposed dates and based upon Councillor and Village Hall's availability.
- iii) NDP update: Alan Bannister has reported that the Examiner has concluded. A fact check is now required by 20 Dec. He'll review the Examiner's conclusions, conduct the Fact Check, and communicate with the councillors accordingly.
- iv) MC reported that she has been invited to join a working group led by Perry Holmes, Director of Legal and Governance for Wiltshire Council, to design and deliver a *Good Councillor Conduct* campaign given the volume and impact of conduct related complaints they receive each year.

This piece follows the Model Code of Conduct consultation which closed 17 Aug 2021, developed primarily because of the increasing levels of intimidation by members of the public and toxicity created in local government.

The working group comprises six Clerks selected from Town/Parish Councils across Wiltshire. Our first meeting takes place over MS Teams on 10th Jan.

115/21

Date of next meeting

The date of the next **West Dean Parish Council** meeting will be held on **Thursday 17 February 2022 at 7:00pm** in the **King George's Hall**

Being no further business, HU closed the meeting at 8:50pm.