

WATTISFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
WATTISFIELD VILLAGE HALL
MONDAY 21 JUNE 2021
7.30 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Geoff Wade (Chairman) (GW)
Councillor Ian Dobson (ID)
Councillor Michael Elflain (ME)
Councillor Rick Meyer (RM)
Councillor Caragh Pell (CPI)
Councillor Cynthia Penn (CPn)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Garman (Parish Clerk) (CG)

One member of public present.

GW welcomed all to the meeting.

21/078 PUBLIC FORUM

Martyn Dove (MD) of Wattisfield Community Centre and Recreation Ground (WCCRG) spoke about the concerns with the village hall building and the need for repairs to various parts of the structure. Previously, he had sent a briefing paper for councillors to consider. The situation is that the trustees of WCCRG feel they cannot meet the requirements of the lease to maintain the building and need the help of the Parish Council. MD advised that they currently held funds of £24,000 but this was needed to rebuild the lettings after Covid-19 and for the business-as-usual expenses. There was a discussion on how to approach these challenges. It was noted that the burden faced by WCCRG was too much for the three trustees and assistance was needed. It was agreed that the Annual General Meeting of WCCRG needed to be arranged to seek new trustees to bring the number to at least six. The plan is to have this meeting in September which will allow time to prepare for and advertise the meeting. As had previously been discussed, it was agreed both the Parish Council and WCCRG would form a development committee with focus on the options for the repairs needed or a new build.

21/079 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- a) JF's report had been previously circulated and was noted.
- b) RM's report had been previously circulated and was noted.

21/080 APOLOGIES

Councillor Sarah Goodchild (SG) and the reason was accepted. County Councillor Fleming had also offered her apologies.

21/081 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

21/082 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

21/083 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2021 had been previously circulated. Some minor amendments were needed.

It was resolved that these were an accurate record of the meeting.

21/084 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was a discussion on the planting of wildflowers around the village and the need to have a plan of action.

21/085 WATTISFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE AND RECREATION GROUND

There was further discussion on possible immediate actions that the Parish Council should take. It was agreed that RM would explore the options for a surveyor of the building's structure with MSDC. It was also agreed that councillors would approach residents that it was felt might join the development committee to work with councillors and WCCRG to explore the options.

21/086 WATTISFIELD TOWN ESTATE

The nomination of a trustee to the charity was considered.

It was resolved to ask Colin Buckmaster to become a trustee.

21/087 HIGHWAYS, TREES AND CHURCHYARD

a) CG gave an update on the church clock project and challenges with Merlin Penn doing the repair work on the access route in the church tower as a volunteer. There were concerns raised by the PCC and Diocese about the use of a volunteer for such work and the lack of insurance cover. This is a regrettable situation which is delaying the project. It was agreed to ask Merlin Penn to quote for the work as a contractor and to arrange the necessary insurance cover.

b) ME gave a report on the Speed Indicative Device, recent locations and statistics. There was concern about the number of speeders on the A143 at around 50% and it was agreed to ask the police for additional presence with the speed camera van. It was noted that two volunteers had offered their time but a couple more were needed to form a team to ensure the SID's possibilities are maximised. Another request will be put in the Wattisfield Warbler.

c) The feedback from the consultation on the proposed designation of lanes for the Quiet Lanes Suffolk project was considered. It was noted that the Parish Council's contribution to the costs would be £100.

It was resolved to formally proceed with the Quiet Lanes Suffolk project with the designation of Chapel Road, Bobby Hill and Honeypot Lane.

d) The consideration of the street lighting report and the options for the future will be deferred to the next meeting. However, in the meantime, the situation will be reported in the Wattisfield Warbler and residents will be asked for their views on street lighting.

e) RM reported that he was continually chasing MSDC to ensure that the dredging of the pond did happen this summer. There are plans to again test the water for contaminants. The report from Suffolk Wildlife Trust was noted and an action plan will be developed once the pond has been dredged.

f) The situation with various hedges needing attention was noted.

g) The situation with potholes was noted acknowledging that many had already been reported to SCC Highways.

h) There was discussion about the need to refurbish the bus shelter. This was added to the next meeting agenda for consideration.

21/088 FIANANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

a) The following cheques were considered for payment:
£85.00 to Malcolm Saunders – internal audit fee

£350.05 to MSDC – emptying of waste bins

It was resolved to confirm the issue of these cheques.

- b) The audited Annual Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021 was considered.

It was resolved to approve the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021.

- c) The Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 (section 1 of the Annual Return 2020/2021) was considered.

It was resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021.

- d) The Annual Accounting Statement for 2020/2021 (section 2 of the Annual Return 2020/2021) was considered.

It was resolved to approve the Annual Accounting Statement for 2020/2021.

- e) The Certificate of Exemption dispensing with the need for an external audit was considered.

It was resolved to dispense with an external audit and to complete the Certificate of Exemption.

- f) The re-appointment of the Responsible Financial Officer was considered.

It was resolved to re-appoint Christopher Garman as Responsible Financial Officer.

- g) The Asset Register was considered.

It was resolved to approve the Asset Register.

21/089 PLANNING MATTERS

- a) The situation with pending and decided applications were noted.
b) It was noted that there had been no recent update of the planning enforcement issues at Elm Tree Place and land adjacent to Meadowside both in Walsham Road.
c) It was noted that a caravan situated on land adjacent to the A143 opposite Pottery Hill was regularly being used. It was suggested that this should be reported to MSDC Planning Enforcement for consideration.

21/090 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence had been previously circulated and no further discussion was needed.

21/091 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

None.

21/092 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday 19 July 2020 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Christopher Garman
Parish Clerk
22 June 2020