

WATTISFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
VIRTUAL MEETING USING ZOOM PLATFORM
MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2020
7.30 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Geoff Wade (GW) (Chairman)
Councillor Michael Elflain (ME)
Councillor Ian Dobson (ID)
Councillor Cynthia Penn (CP)
Councillor Rick Meyer (RM)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Garman (Parish Clerk) (CG)
County Councillor Jessica Fleming (JF)

One member of public was present.

20/102 PUBLIC FORUM

Martyn Dove in the role as chairman of Wattisfield Community Centre and Recreation Ground spoke about recent developments with the village hall. He said that the hall should be COVID-19 safe soon and was hopeful of taking bookings again from October. Also, he talked about work needed to the play area which would cost approx. £5,000, how this could be funded and requested financial help from the Parish Council. Further he spoke about work to the gutters and facias costing £792 and again asked for financial assistance. Both RM and JF said that funds might be available from their locality budgets. There was a discussion on other sources of funding and the viability of the village hall building in the medium term. It was agreed that the village hall committee would move forward with setting up a joint working group with the Parish Council to look at the medium term options for the building.

20/103 REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

- a) JF's report had been previously circulated and the contents were noted. There was a discussion on the ability of SCC Highways to deliver and their lack of communication in respect of the posts or the SID.
- b) RM's report had been previously circulated and the contents were noted. RM expanded on the planning consultations and the approach at MSDC level.

20/104 APOLOGIES

Councillor Sarah Goodchild (SG) and the reason was accepted. It was also noted that Naomi Ambrose has now resigned as councillor.

20/105 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

20/106 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

20/107 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2020 had been previously circulated. There was a minor amendment to 20/110.

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

20/108 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

20/109 COVID-19 SITUATION

There was a discussion on the current levels of activity. RM report that he had spent £40 on top ups for the mobile phone.

It was resolved that RM should be reimbursed for this expense.

20/110 WATTISFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE AND RECREATION GROUND

- a) There was a discussion on about the request for finance to assist with the work to the surface of the play area which was becoming a priority issue. It was noted that there is no financial information available for the village hall for 2019 or for the current year. In principle, there was agreement to assist financially but it was difficult to assess the amount possibly needed without knowledge of the current financial situation of the village hall and their ability to seek funding from both district and county councillors' locality budgets. CG was asked to work with the village hall to possibly mould their request into an application for funding that can then be formally considered.
- b) There was a discussion on the work needed to the guttering and facias to the village hall and how the parish council could fund this project. However, as the work could be delayed to 2021, it was agreed that the initial outcomes from the new working group could assist on deciding if this work was good value for money bearing in mind the possible future thoughts for the building.
- c) The way forward with a working group to look at the medium term options with the village hall building was discussed. It was noted that Martyn Dove and Ann Telford would be willing to represent the village hall on such a group. CP said she would represent the Parish Council and RM said he would act as a link between the group and MSDC. GW said that it was important that this was a village hall working group but CG could facilitate the meeting if requested to do so.

20/111 HIGHWAYS, TREES AND CHURCHYARD

- a) There was an update in respect of the SID. It was reported that there is still no date set for the installation or adaption of the posts by SCC. It is hoped that this will happen by the end of September as agreed by SCC Highways.
- b) It was reported that another clock specialist has now carried out the inspection and has provided a report and quotation. The cost is substantially more at around £20,000 taking into account work on making the access safe and for an electrical supply. However, some of the work is not immediately needed which could reduce the cost. It was decided to still move forward and CG was asked to get estimates for the electrical supply and access works.
- c) There was a report on the progress with the dredging of the village pond. Unfortunately, whilst still a live project, the work will now have to be delayed until 2021. RM said he would make enquires as to where the spoil could be dumped.
- d) It was noted that SCC Highways would not allow signage for the defibrillator so other options were considered. It was agreed to pursue the purchase for two signs to be placed on the bus shelter and the village hall which would highlight the exact location of the defibrillator. ID will seek costings to be considered at the next meeting.

- e) It was agreed that it was appropriate to obtain a fresh report on the condition of the trees on the recreation ground, on the village green and in the churchyard. CG has received a quotation from Oakfield Arboricultural Services who did the previous report, for £350.
It was resolved to instruct Oakfield Arboricultural Services to undertake a report.
- f) The request for a seat at the cemetery as discussed. It was acknowledged that this was a reasonable request. However, in view of the number of other projects at the moment and resources available, it was decided to defer this and review it again in 2021.
- g) There was a discussion on the current situation with overgrowing hedges but acknowledged that the parish council had done all it could and hopefully now the hedge cutting season had started again, landowners will now take appropriate action.

20/112 ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

- a) The increase in the Parish Clerk's salary by 2.74% in line with NALC recommendations was considered.
It was resolved to increase the Parish Clerk's salary by 2.74%.
- b) The following cheques were considered for payment:
£903.64 to C Garman – Parish Clerk's salary for April – September 2020
£225.80 to HMRC – PAYE.
It was resolved that cheques could be issued for these payments.
- c) A draft website accessibility statement had been previously circulated and was considered.
It was resolved to approve this website accessibility statement and publish accordingly.

20/113 VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

It was decided that at the moment there are insufficient resources to undertake such a project. It was agreed to defer and review again in 2021.

20/114 PLANNING MATTERS

- a) The situation with existing applications in progress was noted.
- b) The planning application DC/20/03668 relating to Royal Oak House, The Street, Wattisfield, Diss, Suffolk IP22 1NS was considered.
It was resolved to advise MSDC that the Parish Council had no objections.
- c) The planning application DC/20/03251 relating to Henry Watsons Potteries, Pottery Hill, Wattisfield, Diss, Suffolk, IP22 1NH was considered.
It was resolved to advise MSDC that the Parish Council had no objections.
- d) The planning application DC/20/03943 relating to Dunhill Farm, Dunhill Lane, Wattisfield, Diss, IP22 2QB was considered.
It was resolved to advise MSDC that the Parish Council had no objections.
- e) A response to NALC in respect of the consultation on planning for the future and data on land control was considered. RM said he will consider a response and circulate.

20/115 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence had been previously circulated and was noted.

20/116 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

GW spoke about planned repairs to the noticeboard at Honeypot Lane.

20/117 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

The meeting closed at 21.55 pm.

Christopher Garman
Parish Clerk
28 September 2020