

**P A R I S H O F W E S T O N I N G**

**MINUTES of the Meeting of**

**Westoning Parish Council**

**held on Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall, Westoning**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs A Rayment (Chairman), P Ellis, P Kelly, E Leftly,

C Luff, J Nethersole, B Rogerson, E Russell, CBC Cllr Jamieson

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs K Barker (Clerk), 6 members of the public were present

Agenda published on the noticeboard and on the website

**7581 Apologies for absence** – Cllr E Bhasin, Cllr R Botterell

**7582 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2022 were approved. Cllr Nethersole proposed, seconded by Cllr Kelly the approval of the minutes as a true record. All agreed by those present and the minutes signed by the Chairman.

**7583 Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**7584 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**7585 Chairman’s actions**

* Arranged with the Recreation Club for the two new litter bins to be installed.

**7586 Reports and representations**

7586.1 Central Beds Councillor J Jamieson

* The S106 provision document proposals have been released. CBC Cllr Jamieson said that he will ask for more flexibility in the proposals.
* CBC have marked out the areas for the yellow road lines in the village and a system of enforcement will be set up once they are in place.

**7587 Public Participation**

Some members of the public spoke about the planning application CB/21/05411/FULL - Land off Flitwick Road. They support the letter of objection drafted by the Parish Council and are primarily concerned about the roundabout and light pollution from it due to the proposal to raise the level of the roundabout. A roundabout would need to ingress into the new development rather than the other side of the road. A number of mature trees will be removed and they would like to mitigate the loss of view.

**7588 Finance**

7588.1 Bank balances and finance report:

The Clerk supplied a finance report prior to the meeting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Account** | **£** |
| TSB Community Account | 41,571.04 |
| TSB Instant Access Account | 66,584.97 |
| **TOTAL** | 108,156.01 |

7588.2 Cllr Ellis proposed, seconded by Cllr Rogerson the approval of the following payments, agreed by all present:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Payment Method** | **Payee** | **£** |
| 000603 | Clerk – salary | 492.93 |
| 000603 | Clerk – expenses | 38.61 |
| 000604 | HMRC – Clerk tax | 2.40 |
| 00605 | Parish Warden – village tidying | 275.00 |
| 000606 | D J Granger – playing field | 192.00 |
| 000607 | Anglian Water | 39.58 |
| 000608 | Westoning Village Hall – hall hire | 18.00 |
|  | **TOTAL** | **1,058.52** |

7588.3 Other finance matters:

7588.3.1 D J Granger grass cutting etc – increase in charges

The Clerk reported a small increase for 2022 of £345 to £365 to cut the village grass, play area and cemetery and £158 to £160 to cut the playing field. This increase was noted by the Parish Council.

7588.3.2 Anesco Solar Farm payment £3,283.79

The Clerk said that she will shortly be sending an invoice to Anesco.

(**Action Clerk**)

**7589 Highways**

7589.1 Highways Issues reported to CBC - update

The Clerk read out an update received from CBC Cllr Jamieson

* Westoning – Greenfield – This is being pre-patched this financial year in readiness for surface dressing in the summer, when the whole length of almost 2km will be done.
* Pulloxhill – resurfacing of Flitton Road from the High Street to the 30mph limit approximately 200m. The pre-start walk was done last Friday with the works currently planned to take place in March.
* Tingrith – High St – major patching and repairs/improvements to the culvert.  Pre-surface dressing patching and the culvert repairs are a combined package of work that are expected to start in February and be completed in this financial year.
* Greenfield/Flitton main road, patching where carriageway has deteriorated.  An update is awaited and will be chased up.

**7590 Recreation Ground**

7590.1 Recreation Ground driveway – quote

The Chairman said that the quote he obtained last month did in fact include digging out the surface. Cllr Rogerson proposed, seconded by Cllr Kelly to accept the quote of £17,345 plus VAT and go ahead with the works, agreed by all present.

7590.2 Recreation Club licence

The Parish Council agreed that they should retain the right to take control of the Recreation Club if there were difficulties with the running of the club and noted that a licence would allow the Parish Council to do this. The Chairman said that the Parish Council need to find a Solicitor to draw up a licence which then needs approval. This is likely to be finalised in 2023. Cllr Russell proposed, seconded by Cllr Nethersole for the Chairman to contact Solicitors and ascertain the costs involved.

**7591 Village Matters**

7591.1 Christmas Event

Nothing to report.

7591.2 Jubilee event

Cllr Nethersole said that the Recreation Club are planning to hold an event on Sunday 5th June and there are a number of street parties also taking place on that day. The Parish Council agreed not to organise an event due to the other events taking place. The Parish Council agreed to purchase decorations for the village and consider purchasing a commemorative item for every child in the village. They spoke about possible financial support to the school for a tea party and a commemorative bench to go on the triangle.

An edition of Westoning on Sunday will be drawn up by the end of March to publicise the village events.

7591.3 Rural Match Fund Scheme

The Parish Council discussed possible schemes including putting in kerbing opposite the Church and pavement improvements in Church Road.

7591.4 Defibrillator

Cllr Ellis said that the defibrillator is now working but a new stainless steel cabinet is needed. Cllr Nethersole proposed, seconded by Cllr Leftly to purchase a new cabinet at a cost of £450 with a new battery at £35 and pads at £69 for a child and £95 for an adult, agreed by all present. The Clerk said that there would be money left over in some budgets at the financial year end that can be used for this expense.

7591.5 Flower Planters

The Chairman suggested that some more planters should be positioned and planted out in April.

7591.6 Network Rail – land to the rear of Westoning Lower School/lease 00227260

The Clerk said that she had spoken to Network Rail regarding the outstanding invoice for rent of a small strip of land to the rear of Westoning Lower School. An agreement was made in 1930 between the British Railways Board and Westoning Parish Council for the use of land to the rear of Westoning Lower School for recreational purposes. Network Rail cannot find any signed proof of the agreement and have therefore decided that they would not contest it if the Parish Council were to claim adverse possession of the land. It is unclear why Network Rail have suddenly started invoicing the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to respond to Network Rail that the Parish Council are happy to take possession of the land and if they need access to it the Parish Council would be happy to facilitate it.

7591.7 Bryson Close – shrubs and fence

The Chairman said that the Property Management Company in Bryson Close have said that the shrubs are overgrown and causing damage to the fence on their site. The Parish Council agreed that this needs to be dealt with. The Chairman agreed to obtain a quote for their removal. (**Action Chairman**)

**7592 Play Area**

7592.1 Litter Bins – play area

Thanks to the Recreation Club who installed the bins at no cost.

**7593 Planning**

7593.1 Planning Applications:

7593.1.1 CB/21/05411/FULL - Land off Flitwick Road, Westoning - Hybrid Planning Application: comprising: (i) Full application for 133 dwellings (class C3), including affordable homes, plus associated accesses, landscaping, open space, associated infrastructure and works; and (ii) An outline application, with all matters reserved except access, for 15 plots for self-build or custom build homes

The Chairman said that he has received correspondence from residents with concerns about the roundabout. CBC Cllr Jamieson said that CBC highways will have to demonstrate that any roundabout/entrance is adequate. He has requested that an assessment be done of the Greenfield Road roundabout. He said that CBC’s safety audit is accurate.

The letter of objection was approved, summary:

*Westoning Parish Council wishes to make the following objections to the planning application on the following grounds. The council has sought to engage with the agent and the applicant to gain improvements to the proposed scheme but has not received an acceptable response.*

*In February 2017 the Parish Council responded to the site submission exercise setting out what the parish needed in the form of Community Benefit if any sites were identified in the village. That letter was not responded to by Central Bedfordshire. It is understood that the position of the planning department now is that the development is not large enough to include any football pitches or burial ground.*

*While the council accepts that the site has been identified within the Local Plan for residential development, that should not mean that any proposal put forward should be accepted and approved. The Parish Council urge the Development Management Committee to ensure that the Parish Council’s views on this application are considered carefully and used to improve the development.*

***Highways and Vehicle Access***

*The proposed access to the site through two junctions onto Flitwick Road either side of the mini roundabout is unacceptable to the Parish Council and is contrary to the guidance given to the developers. The existing mini roundabout should be enlarged and should be the single point of access to and egress from the development. Having two T junctions so close to the mini roundabout will result in unnecessary delay and congestion when traffic enters and leaves the site from the A5120 and will increase the likelihood of accidents. The mini roundabout should have robust planting in the center to give protection to the residents living in Old Flitwick Road from the headlights of vehicles leaving the site.*

***Cycle and Pedestrian access to Flitwick***

*The pathway to Flitwick is very narrow with a dangerous crossing point over the A5120 at the Flitt Vale Nursery. To provide safer and more useable pathway for cyclists and pedestrians this application should provide the funds to cover the cost of this work to widen this footpath throughout its length.*

***Burial Ground***

*While the council feels that a part of this site would offer an ideal location for a new burial ground for the village, if CBC is unwilling to make this a condition of any consent, there must be a financial contribution to the acquisition and development of a new burial ground to serve the village. The Parish Council would welcome CBC’s view of the size of the contribution that will be applied to any planning approval granted on this application. The current village burial ground has space for only 2 or 3 additional burials so the need for a new cemetery is now most urgent.*

***Junior Football Pitches***

*Audits of existing recreational facilities in our village conducted by MBDC over 20 years ago identified a significant shortfall in capacity The council will have to provide two junior football pitches and implement a drainage scheme over the current recreation ground to enable the pitches on it to be used throughout the wet winter months. At the moment, the pitches have been declared as unplayable for half of December and the whole of January 2022 due to the standing water covering large areas of the recreation ground. The Parish Council requests that if new junior football pitches cannot be located on this development it would welcome CBC’s view of the size of the contribution for these facilities that will be applied to any planning approval granted on this application.*

***Mix of House Types***

*The Parish Council feels that the proposed mix of house types is inappropriate to the needs of the village and will result in an unnecessary and unwanted level of short-term ownership or tenancy as they will not be large enough to house a family. The Parish Council would like to see a reduction in the number of 4 and 5 bedroom houses and an increase in the number of 3 bedroom houses. This will allow occupiers and owners to remain in the village as their families grow and also participate more in the activities available in the village. It is unfortunate that no bungalows have been proposed in a village where many older people own large houses who may want to move to a single floor residence.*

***Self Build Houses***

*The Parish Council feels that the space reserved for 15 self build houses will result in the individual plots being too small to provide a sustainable location for a home, garden and parking space. This form of development, although it may meet planning requirements, is not appropriate in this location. The council feels that self build houses should be removed from the proposed scheme and replaced with a smaller number of 3 bedroom semi detached houses. If self build housing is permitted. the main developer of the site should be required to maintain and keep fully operational during all construction on the site, a system for washing the wheels and undersides of all vehicles before exiting the site.*

***Maximum Number of Dwellings***

*The design capacity of this site in the Local Plan is 135 dwellings. The Parish Council requests that the total number of dwellings should not exceed 135 and that the proposer of this application should be required to re-design the development to that number.*

***Pedestrian Access to the Development***

*Westoning Parish Council requests that a pedestrian access be provided to Greenfield Road alongside the boundary of number 45 Greenfield Road and the barn and land in the ownership of the owner of the application site. This will offer a shorter route to the Recreation Ground, the Recreation Club and the Baptist Chapel on Greenfield Road thus reducing the number of car journeys that will need to be made.*

***Traffic Management During Construction***

*In order to avoid obstruction and danger to other road users, all vehicles associated directly or indirectly with the development must be required to park within the site and not on the A5120, Greenfield Road, Bell Close, Bryson Close, Flitwick Road and Highfields. The main developer of the site must at all times ensure that adequate parking is available for use and that good access to and from the parking area(s) is available.*

***Preparation of Local Plan***

*In the four and a half years or more that it took to produce the Local Plan, the Parish Council is very disappointed with the total lack of communication between the local plan team and the Parish Council. The Parish Council tried to be constructive in their correspondence with planners but their letter was neither acknowledged nor responded to. The experience of dealing with CBC in this respect is similar to the distanced way that small communities like Westoning experienced from Bedfordshire County Council.*

7593.1.2 CB/21/05591/FULL - 2 Chestnut Close - alterations to fenestration and cladding materials on front elevation, pitch roof over bay windows, merging of first floor dormers. New front boundary treatment. The Parish Council has no objection to the application.

7593.2 Other Planning Matters:

7593.2.1 Solar Farm

The developer has been advised to withdraw their application.

7593.2.2 Land East of A5120

See above planning application.

7593.2.3 West View Farm, Park Road – pre-application

The Chairman said that the Clerk has requested some dates for a meeting to discuss the application.

**7594 Parish Council administration**

7594.1Review of Policies

The Clerk to circulate the policies prior to the next meeting. (**Action Clerk**)

**7595 Committees/Sub Groups/Representatives/Reports**

Cllr Ellis said that the Charity vouchers were distributed and £930 was given out this year.

**7596 General correspondence:**

There was no correspondence

**7597 Date of next meeting: Parish Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 9th March 2022 at 7.30pm**

**In the Village Hall**

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Approved: ………………………………………………. Date: ……………………………………………………….