

# **WEST WYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

### **Present**

Councillors; Mr S. Cope (Chair), Mr N. Harris (Vice Chair), Mrs V. Smith, Mrs K. Cheshire, Mr J. Carstensen.

In attendance: The Clerk, Mr S Marshall, Cllr D. Hayday, Cllr O. Hayday and Mrs A. Wright.

### **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Copley and Cllr Rowland.

### **Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **Minutes of previous meetings for approval**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 9 May 2024, the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 9 May 2024 and the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 23 May 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.

### **318.18 Matters arising from the minutes**

318.11 – Saturday 22 June 2024 had been set as a date by the Chair and the Vice Chair to undertake minor repairs to the playground equipment identified recently in the inspection report.

318.14 – The new Pedestal Playing Field lease had been signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

The Clerk confirmed that Mr Spratt had been provided with an order to proceed with repair work to the ‘kissing gate’ on the A40 and gates (2) to the Pedestrian Playing Field as previously proposed and seconded by Cllr Rowland and Cllr Smith.

### **318.19 Highways issues**

Discussion ensued about the traffic control measures being introduced by the National Trust on the High Steet from Monday 8 July 2024 until Monday 2 September 2024. Councillors concluded that it was unfortunately inevitable that such measures needed to redecorate the external elevations of some properties would impact detrimentally on some local businesses.

### **318.20 Planning applications & decisions**

- Raising of existing ridge by 750mm to create loft conversion

Objection lodged with regard to the planning application based on the detrimental impact to the current 'street scene' and overbearing physicality on adjoining properties.

23/06551/FUL – 46 Copperfields, High Wycombe

- Formation of habitable room in roof space

The appeal decision for the planning application had been dismissed.

### **318.21 Reports;**

#### **a. Buckinghamshire Council Councillors**

Cllr D Hayday reported on the reduced frequency of grass cutting which was proving to be problematic in certain areas. The clearing of pavements along Bradenham Road had been successful but the contractor had dumped mud into the adjacent ditch which would potentially impact on winter flooding and therefore instructions to remove the mud had been given.

Both Cllr Darren Hayday and Cllr Orsolya Hayday had undertaken litter picking on the A40 between Piddington and West Wycombe for which the Chair expressed his sincere appreciation.

#### **b. Chair of the Parish Council's verbatim report**

"This year's Annual Parish Meeting was very well attended, as it was also a special occasion; after almost 30 years of service our previous Parish Clerk, Sharon Henson, was retiring, and it was good to see a large turnout of residents and others who had worked with Sharon during her time in office. She was presented with a range of gifts, including a framed print of West Wycombe Park in the 18th Century from Sir Edward & Lady Lucinda Dashwood.

Thanks must go to everyone involved in organising what Sharon herself described as a perfect event; in particular to Cllrs Vicki Smith and Kate Cheshire who oversaw the planning of the event.

June 6th saw another well-attended local event, the D-Day Commemoration bonfire on West Wycombe Hill. I will leave Cllrs Neil Harris and Kate Cheshire to report to the meeting on this, but again our thanks must go to them for all their hard work on a very successful evening, and thanks also to Ian Wright for providing the D-Day flag to be flown on the village High Street.

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I understand that a letter from the National Trust has been delivered to residents and businesses on West Wycombe High Street about parking restrictions to be put in place between July and September in order to allow for external decoration work to take place - I expect that Cllr Vicki Smith will say more on this in her report.

The next meeting of NW Chilterns Community Board has been moved from Thursday 27th June to Thursday 26th September 2024 due to the election.

As per the minutes of our May meeting, we have been given a new lease on the Pedestal Playing Field which I have signed on behalf of the Parish Council, this runs to 2034.

Cllrs will be aware that an application for a premises licence variation at The Walled Garden has been submitted to Bucks Council. It is worth pointing out that this is different from the previous application for an extension to the hours and circumstances when alcohol could be sold at The Hellfire Caves; this application is for an off licence. Having heard from the Council's Licensing Officer the limited range of reasons for which a licence application can be refused, I think it highly unlikely that this present application won't be permitted.

I would like us to discuss how we manage the PC's noticeboards and get posters etc into them now that our Clerk is no longer also a resident in the parish. Whilst Steven understandably wishes to ensure that formal notices such as the agenda for our next meeting are posted in a timely fashion by doing so himself, it seems unnecessary for him to have to travel here to deal with those notices which we are asked to display from time to time, for example posters advertising the WWCC's upcoming concert. I propose that we divide up responsibilities for our noticeboards amongst Cllrs, so that each of us can take ownership of a board - posters etc can then be sent to us via email, for us to print and display.

Finally, as I said in a recent email to Cllrs, my view is that the Community Library is not an ideal venue for our meetings, both from the point of view of public access and ease of discussion. The Village Hall is a better option, with the advantages of space, accessibility, parking, toilets, and wifi. As the Hall is hired regularly on a Thursday evening, we would need to change the day of the week on which we meet in order to be able to use it. I understand that the Hall is available for hire on Wednesdays, so I would like to propose that from September we change our regular meeting day from the second Thursday of the month to the second Wednesday. I am of course aware that the WWCC rehearses on a Wednesday, but having looked at their autumn term schedule I note that Cllrs who are also choir members - myself included - would only need to miss two of the 12 rehearsals planned.”

Councillors agreed to the Chair's proposal to move the day of the Parish Council meeting dependent upon the availability of the Village Hall which the Clerk would confirm with Emma Copley.\*

The Chair asked the Clerk to obtain a quote for cutting back trees overhanging the pavement on the West Wycombe Road between the railway bridge and 'Rent A Van'. \*

The Chair asked the Clerk to enquire with the Chiltern Society as to what work had been carried out on the path over the railway bridge as there was evidence of work having been undertaken which included the cutting down of saplings and bushes. \*

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### **c. Councillors of the Parish Council**

Cllr Harris reported on the successful D-Day event that had been held on the 6 June 2024 and informed the meeting of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE – Day on 8 May 2025. Cllr Harris would be informing the PCC of the presence of hogweed in the grounds of St Paul's church and its inherent dangers if not dealt with professionally.

Cllr Carstensen reported on a presentation entitled 'Can we really afford Net Zero?' by Lord Deben, a leading climate expert, which had been held at West Wycombe School earlier in the evening.

Cllr Carstensen further reported on a 'waste event' being organised by the Buckinghamshire Waste Busters Community Organisation for Saturday 28 September 2024 in West Wycombe Village Hall. Cllr Carstensen asked for subject areas to be considered for the event which would include food waste and garden waste. The Chair asked to be kept updated with regard to the agenda for the event to which he may be able to contribute.

Cllr Smith raised the question of setting a date for the next litter pick and the Chair agreed to consult with the Village Hall for an appropriate date in September /October. \*

#### **d. Clerk to the Parish Council**

The Clerk had requested a quotation from Sparkx for the installation of Christmas lights for the two village trees. The quotation was for £1360 net which represented an 28% increase in the cost compared to last year's cost. The Clerk would confirm that the cost would cover the required rental period which was confirmed to be from Friday 22 November 2024 until Monday 6 January 2025. \* The Chair proposed the acceptance of the quotation which was seconded by Cllr Cheshire.

The Clerk had requested a quotation from R J Stallwood & Co. for the repair to significant potholes in the Pedestal Playing Field car park. The quotation included the hire of heavy equipment and a quantity of planings for a total cost of £970 net. The Chair proposed the acceptance of the quotation which was seconded by Cllr Harris.

The Clerk expressed a concern about the playground equipment not being regularly checked between annual inspections and suggested approaching a contractor to undertake the regular inspections. The proposal would attract an annual retainer for the appointed contractor after the appropriate training had taken place. Training designed specifically to identify faults and potential health and safety issues in playground equipment. Councillors agreed for the Clerk to proceed to a consultation stage of the proposal with a preferred contractor. \*

### **318.22 Recess**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

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### **318.23 Proposed Schedule of Fees for 2024/2025**

The Clerk had previously circulated a Fees Schedule of current fees and proposed fees for the burial ground, the allotments and the Pedestal playing field. After some discussion, Councillors agreed to the fee proposals for 2024/2025 according to the following Fees Schedule being proposed by Cllr Carstensen and seconded by Cllr Smith.;

<b>Proposed Burial Fees Schedule</b>		
	<b>Current 2023</b>	<b>Proposed 2024</b>
'Grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial' for 99 years	£50.00	£75.00
Plot for a grave	£300.00	£350.00
Plot for cremated remains	£175.00	£250.00
Re-opening of a grave	£190.00	£250.00
Re-opening of a cremated remains plot	£135.00	£200.00
Erection of a memorial for a grave or cremated remains	£90.00	£150.00
Additional inscription on a memorial	£35.00	£75.00
Memorial plaque under an existing tree	£90.00	£150.00
<b>Proposed Allotments Fees Schedule</b>		
	<b>Current 2023</b>	<b>Proposed 2024</b>
Full plot per year	£30.00	£40.00
Half plot per year	£15.00	£20.00
<b>Proposed Pedestal Playing Field Fees Schedule</b>		
	<b>Current 2023</b>	<b>Proposed 2024</b>
Downley Dynamos per year	£320.00	£380.00

### 318.24 Financial Quarterly Review

The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Quarterly Review for the first quarter period of the new financial year. The Clerk explained that the format was a different way of communicating the financial situation of the Parish Council at specific intervals throughout the financial year by comparing performance against the agreed projected outturn of the budget and as well as having the context of comparing performance (Income versus Expenditure) against the performance of the previous year's budget.

### 318.25 Accounts for approval and payment

Cheques:

Mr S Marshall - Clerk's salary & expenses – April – June 2024 - £2780.90

HM Revenue & Customs – Tax & NICs - £703.64

TBS Hygiene Ltd – Dog waste collections - £154.80

Acorn Landscaping – Maintenance of burial ground, playing field & highways verges - £839.37

Parish Council Website – Supply & installation of Synology NAS & data transfer - £400.00

Direct Debit/Card payments:

SSE Energy Solutions – Electricity consumption - £230.00

Royal Mail – Redirection of mail - £261.00

Castle Water – Allotment and burial ground - £10.00

Giffgaff – Mobile telephone monthly charge - £6.00

Smart Numbers – Mobile telephone service charge - £23.99

### **318.26 Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 11 July 2024 in the Community Library, West Wycombe.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.26pm.

\* Denotes an action point