

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 19th February 2020 at 7.00pm in the War Memorial Hall, Tutshill.

Present: Councillors: Drew, Edwards, Hartford-Beynon, Koning, Molyneux, O'Toole, Powell, Swambo, Tullett and Wall

Officers: Carol Hinton (Clerk), David Stevens (Clerk's Assistant)
Police Inspector Nick Cook, Sgt Austin Parry and PCSO Tracy Garcia-Cote
County Councillor - Patrick Molyneux.

1. ATTENDANCE

- a) **Resolved to receive** apologies for absence from those Councillors unable to attend from Councillor Bollen.
- b) **Resolved to accept** those apologies received with reasons for absence from Councillor Bollen.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) **To receive Declarations of Interest** in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers and in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members.

Interests may be declared at any time during the meeting should they become apparent.

- b) **To consider any Dispensation Requests** received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.
None received

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- a) **Resolved to approve** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2020.
- b) **To consider** any questions arising from those minutes.
There were none.

4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

To receive and consider any questions from the Public, which may be answered but not debated.
County Councillor Patrick Molyneux informed Councillors that during the upcoming road works in Sedbury, Glos CC Highways have insisted that the contractor operates the traffic lights manually at peak times and continually monitors the traffic.

A recent Police and Crime survey for the Sedbury area has not shown any surprise results – generally crime involves anti-social behaviour and the CC will be pushing youth provision.

Whilst the A48 Severn Bridge had been shut recently for a few days, traffic flow around the High Beech roundabout had been much better. Monmouthshire have been asked to consider traffic lights on the roundabout and they are also looking at a possible additional roundabout by St Pierre to ease the traffic.

Councillor Tullett asked for an update on the Wyedean School places – Councillor Patrick Molyneux reported that complicated formulae are used to calculate future requirements which may have been done a long while before developments have begun to be built. The formulae have recently been changed to reflect a change in habits.

Councillor Swambo commented that it is the volume of traffic from the Forest causing congestion which Councillor Patrick Molyneux agreed with, but he feels that this is exacerbated by the flow around the High Beech roundabout.

Councillor Tullett reported that traffic lights on the roundabout had been dismissed some years ago and that white lines suggested for the roundabout last year had not been implemented. Councillor Patrick Molyneux reported that Glos CC is now contributing some money towards the traffic feasibility study.

Councillor Edwards asked if the traffic light sequencing that holds traffic back on the Gloucestershire side of the A48 is the cause of the congestion. Councillor Patrick Molyneux agreed that this contributes to the congestion and Chepstow does have air quality issues, but feels that it is the bottle neck at the roundabout that stops the traffic flow that is the main issue.

5. COMMITTEES

Resolved to receive reports, minutes and recommendations from committees.

- 1) Planning, Development Control and Highways Committee meeting held on 22nd January 2020.
There were no questions to Councillor Koning, Chair of the Committee.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**Resolved to receive and note:**

The Chairman and Councillor Wall had attended an event where all local Councils were represented at Beachley Old Boys Association museum, hosted by Chris Ricketts, on Thursday 13th February. The purpose of the event was to showcase the new museum and highlight the importance of maintaining it for the future. The event will feature in the local free press. The museum is also looking for active support including advertising. School visits are to be arranged. Networking with other local Councillors had been interesting and it would be useful to look at ways to work together. District Councillor Nick Evans was at the event in his capacity as Councillor for Armed Forces – it was suggested to invite him to a future Parish Council meeting to find out what this entails. Councillor Wall added that the museum is very much worth a visit and that what has been achieved is impressive.

7. POLICING IN THE PARISH

Police Inspector Nick Cook introduced himself, Sgt Austin Parry and PCSO Tracy Garcia-Cote. Councillor Koning asked why some crimes seem to be under investigation for some time (according to the statistics downloaded each month). Sgt Parry explained that some investigations are necessarily lengthy, particularly for more serious crimes where detailed background information and records need to be checked. There is also currently a 4 week delay once cases reach the Crown Prosecution Service.

Councillor Koning asked if it is possible to identify the proportion of young people committing crimes, particularly where anti-social behaviour is concerned. Inspector Cook had looked at the statistics for the past 3-4 months and has noted that violent crimes had crept up. The age ranges of victims were mostly within the 46-55 and 10-17 year old age groups. He reported that the Police are working with school staff trying to address some issues occurring around Wydean School after school hours.

Councillor Edwards asked why some crimes were shown as being unable to prosecute. Sgt Parry gave several instances where it may be unable to prosecute including the mental health of the perpetrator, in which case help may be sought instead of prosecution. Where the victim has died or moved away from the area a prosecution may not be possible.

Councillor Molyneux asked if investigations into both the perpetrator and victim were carried out – Sgt Parry confirmed this does happen in order to stop prosecutions from collapsing.

Councillor Molyneux asked if 'Violence and Sexual Offences' included domestic violence – Sgt Parry confirmed this may be so.

Councillor Swambo asked if there were outside influences on drug use, for example 'county lines'. Insp Cook reported that he was not aware of this in the Forest of Dean area and that smaller local issues which could not be discussed were being tackled. He reported that it is difficult to accurately record if drug problems have gone up or down and that drug dealers are focused on.

Councillor Drew asked if prosecutions for burglaries / shoplifting were easier with more CCTV coverage available. Sgt Parry informed Councillors that burglary is very difficult to prove even if the perpetrators are known but that the Police do try to identify them.

Inspector Cook thanked Councillors for inviting them to the meeting and hoped closer links with the local force would be forged. Councillors are welcome to ask for advice and assistance where possible.

Councillor Koning thanked Inspector Cook and his team for their contribution.

a) **Resolved to note** report for December 2019 downloaded by the Clerk.

b) **To note** that PCSO Tracy Garcia-Cote has reported that 'she has continued to do her patrols around the Mopla road area of Tutshill in response to reports of the drug dealing that was going on. She has been told by many of the locals that things have very much improved since she has been carrying them out'. Tracy has asked if Councillors have noticed any difference.

This item to be added to March agenda

c) **To note** the Community bus will be visiting on the following dates: 22nd March, 6th April, 6th May and 8th June 2020. I have been informed that the bus will be parked up in Tutshill at the usual place from 9am till 3pm and have asked why the bus will not be visiting Sedbury as it used to.

This item to be added to March agenda

8. PARISH CLERK'S REPORT

Resolved to receive and note the Parish Clerk's Report.

The Clerk reported that since preparing the Report, Plug in Solar had offered a refund of £250 (including VAT) plus the cost of postage for the now removed solar panelled system from the Beachley bus stop defibrillator installation. Councillors agreed to accept this.

9. FINANCE

a) **Resolved to approve payments** according to the Financial Statement for January 2020

b) **Resolved to receive and approve the Financial Statement** for January 2020

10. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR BAYLISS

Resolved to note resignation of Anita Bayliss on 23rd January 2020. Clerk to write to Anita thanking her for her contribution as an enthusiastic and positive member of the Council.

11. SARA AND WYEDEAN SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

a) **Resolved to appoint** Councillor O'Toole as Parish Council Representative to SARA

b) **Resolved to appoint** Councillor Tullett as Parish Council representative to Wyedean School Student Council

12. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

a) **Resolved to note** report from the meeting of the Youth Engagement Working Group on 23rd January 2020

b) **Resolved to adopt** Youth Engagement Working Group Terms of Reference

c) **Resolved to appoint** Councillors Drew, Koning, Swambo and Tullett to the Youth Engagement Working Group

13. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Resolved to note the District Monitoring Officer has confirmed that paragraph 7 in the adopted Complaints Procedure giving guidance on how complaints about a Councillor should be made is acceptable.

14. PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

Resolved to note Councillors Koning, Molyneux and Wall and the Clerk and Clerk's Assistant had met with Clive Reynolds on Tuesday 18th February. The Chairman informed Councillors the meeting had been detailed and useful and that a report on what was discussed would be circulated to all members.

15. SEDBURY SPACE ONE STOP CAFE

Resolved to approve extending the Grant awarded to Sedbury Space in June 2018 for £708 to enable an additional session at the Memory Café so that the remaining unused amount of £252 from the original grant may be used for a worker from Crossroads Care with Dementia expertise to attend the One Stop Cafe once a month.

16. PARISH COUNCIL EMAIL ADDRESSES

Resolved to approve payment of annual subscription charge for the Parish Council email addresses at a cost of £90 plus VAT (total cost £108.00)

17. PARISH ONLINE

Resolved to approve renewal of subscription to Parish Online at a cost of £216.00 (no VAT)

18. GIGACLEAR WAYLEAVE AGREEMENT

Resolved to note Wayleave Agreement proposed by Gigaclear Ltd for land on the west side of Wyebank Road owned by the Parish Council. Clerk to ask the Legal team at FoDDC for advice on the contract.

19. FUTURE MAJOR ROADWORKS – SEDBURY

Resolved to note email and associated plans from John Ambrey (Roadspace Co-ordinator, Glos CC Highways) for major roadworks in Sedbury at the Beachley Road roundabout (Barratt Homes) and the whole of Sedbury for the replacement of gas mains and services by Wales and West Utilities.

20. VIREMENT OF FUNDS FROM GENERAL RESERVES

Resolved to approve virement of funds from General Reserves of £15,000 to Staff Budget to cover increased staffing costs over the original budget during the 2019/2020 year.

21. PLANNING MEETING 22ND JANUARY 2020

Resolved to note email from the Monitoring Officer regarding the incorrect assertion by Councillor Powell at the Planning and Highways Committee meeting on 22nd January 2020 that i) Councillor Koning should leave the meeting whilst the agenda item regarding the Rising Sun Pub planning application was being considered and that ii) the Clerk's advice to Councillor Koning was incorrect. The Monitoring Officer supports the Clerk's original advice that Councillor Koning's pledge to the Rising Sun Community Pub Project is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and as such did not preclude him from participating in the debate or vote during this agenda item.

22. STAFF LAPTOP COMPUTERS

Resolved to note reduction of overall cost of replacement laptop computers of around £250

23. CORRESPONDENCE

To receive and consider any other correspondence as detailed in the Clerk's Report. Also received:

- letter from Mr and Mrs Civil requesting a mirror be placed opposite the entrance to their driveway to help give a better view of oncoming traffic. Clerk to reply that this is a matter for The War Memorial Hall Trust (mirror would be placed on their land) and Glos CC Highways and to forward the original letter to both parties.
- FoDDC Councillor Chris McFarling had contacted the Clerk and will be objecting to the removal of the BT telephone boxes in King Alfred's Road, Sedbury and Coleford Road, Tutshill.
- Notification of a resident's meeting at Chepstow Racecourse on 4th March 2020.

24. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Resolved to receive and note any matters which councillors wish to raise and where appropriate add to the agenda for the following meeting or meetings of committees:

Councillor Molyneux – reported that Age Concern in the Forest of Dean will be closing at the end of February. They have no funds and have struggled to find volunteers as trustees, running lunch clubs and delivering the meals service. The charity shops will remain open to hopefully fund the 'befriending service'. This was announced with short notice in January. Concerns are that the private company Apetito that will now deliver meals will be unable to spend time with those who have relied on the extra time and care that has been given by Age Concern.

Councillor Wall – attended a meeting of the War Memorial Hall Trust. The Trust is re-drawing its constitution. Cara Moulton is stepping down as Chairman and 2 other trustees are stepping down. Councillor Koning suggested that the Council should review the existing Agreement between the Parish Council and the Trust and have this item on the March agenda.

Councillor Swambo – suggested Councillors consider the introduction of Parish Clinics which. Feedback from Councillors from around the County he met during his recent training was that where clinics have been introduced they have been of great value in terms of community engagement.

Councillor Drew – a recent Daily Telegraph article regarding the charging of criminals, in particular for crimes of theft, includes Gloucestershire in a list of counties which appear to have stopped charging criminals for such crimes. Clerk to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner for comment.

25. FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved to note the dates of future council and committee meetings:

Wednesday 26th February 2020 - Planning, Development Control and Highways Committee

Wednesday 4th March 2020 – Finance and Probity Committee

Wednesday 4th March 2020 - Mopla Cottages Committee

Wednesday 11th March 2020 – Amenities Committee

Wednesday 18th March 2020 – Full Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 20.54hrs