



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

Dave Kent
Clerk to the Council

Clive Hooper
Deputy Clerk

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COUNCIL MINUTES

PUBLIC FORUM

There was no Public Forum

1. Council formal business

Present:

WDPC COUNCILLORS: B Freshwater (BF), A Grant (AG), S Crick (SC), J Richmond (JR), A Moore (AM), M Costley (MC), P Dunford (PD), C Smith (CS), B Evans (BE), S Francis (SF), A Bruce (AB), J Dale (JD) and B Gayler (BG). D Kent (Clerk) was in attendance

1. COUNCIL FORMAL BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies were received from: Parish Councillors D Oliver and S Yeates

1.2 Chair's Announcement

The Chair welcomed new councillors A Bruce and J Dale.

He thanked volunteers, councillors and staff for their work in the current emergency.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

None received

1.4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – The minutes of the meeting on 25th March were accepted as a true record to be signed by the Chair as soon as is feasible.

1.5 Meeting Protocols

The proposed meeting protocol was considered.

It was agreed that the proposed maximum of 3 members of the public, who had indicated in advance that they wished to attend, would be allowed into Council meetings. This invitation should be advertised more widely, especially in social media, and written questions that members could consider in advice would be encouraged. Written reports only would be invited from County and District Councillors.

This protocol would be reviewed at each following meeting held under lock-down conditions.

2. Items for discussion and decision

2.1 Corona Virus Emergency

A comprehensive report on community and council action was presented by SC.

It was agreed that no action would be taken to remove restrictions on the use of the West Dean Centre and Council play parks until government restrictions had been lifted. If necessary, an extraordinary meeting of Council would be called. Reports were received on action in respect of Parish Council supported action to provide volunteer services to members of the Parish Council area residents during the current emergency.

633

It was decided that no action would be taken to re-open the West Dean Centre or its play parks until approved by a full Council meeting.

Any other emergency decisions would continue be delegated to a group consisting of the Chair and Deputy Chair, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, and Councillor S Crick.

During the current crisis, some non-urgent activities had not been carried out, but now it was necessary to resume normal council business.

The Chair and the Clerk would resume discussions with Greenways about the Multi Use Parkend to Lydney Track.

It was agreed that the summer grants would be awarded as usual, with closing date for applications around the end of May/early June, for consideration at Council 24th June 2020. These awards to be advertised as soon as possible.

Post meeting note: The optimum times for the process are applications in on or before Wednesday 3rd June, applications to be considered by Finance & Staffing Committee 11th June 2020, for presentation to Council 24th June 2020, followed immediately by the distribution of the awards to the successful applicants. Advertising to invite applications will begin immediately, with coverage on the Web site, Face Book page, Council notice boards, and the Forester newspaper.

It was noted that there was a need for the Council to expand its profile on social media, and CS offered her support to make the site more informative and accessible.

Post Meeting note: It was arranged on the day following the meeting that CS would take over management of the WDPC Face Book page and that all updates should go through her

2.2 Finance

2.2 i) It was noted that the EDGE financial system was in the process of being implemented, and members of staff had been provided with training.

The system would provide information for the annual audit return and VAT refunds.

2.2 ii) The schedule of accounts for payment was approved

It was agreed that payments to the advisory limit of £4.00 per week (2019-20 Financial Year) and £6.00 per week (2020-21) should be awarded to Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

2.2 iii) It was agreed that BG and JR would provide electronic signatures for April payments

2.2 iv) It was agreed that it would not be possible to conduct a bank reconciliation until the EDGE system had been fully implemented, and therefore the May financial inspection would be rolled over to the following month.

2.2 v) It was agreed that BF would be added to the bank signatories.

2.2 vi) The Financial Regulations, as Presented to Council, were approved.

2.2 vii) It was noted that recruitment for the Deputy Clerk position would be suspended until after the current emergency period.

2.2 viii) Similarly, it was noted that staff appraisals would also be deferred until after the current emergency period.

2.2 ix) It was agreed that on submission of a claim form, expenses would be paid to volunteers for any necessary out of pocket expenditure incurred in their volunteer services for such items as mileage (45p per mile), expenses breakages, etc. The Clerk was delegated with the power to approve minor payments.

The contribution that Pauline Nash and Calico had made in providing personal protection equipment was commended. It was agreed that on production of receipts for the purchase of supplies for the manufacture of such equipment Council would refund amounts paid to a maximum of £400.00. No payments would be made to cover salaries or other employee benefits.

2.3 Governance

2.3 i) Minutes of the Governance Committee held 12th March 2020 were received.

634

2.3 ii) It was agreed that the recommendations of the Committee that the following policies would be adopted.

Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Risk Assessment Schedule and Data Protection

2.4 Climate Emergency/Village Veg.

A written report was presented to Council.

It was agreed that a donation of £250.00 should be made for the development of each Village Veg garden created. A budget of £1,000.00 was provided, with £500 available immediately for the development of the first 2 gardens.

It was agreed that the project team should be supported in its bid to create a garden on Forestry England forest waste land at the Rudge, Yorkley. It was agreed that Council would support the group in planning and land ownership issues with the District Council and Forestry England respectively.

2.5 Chair's Items

Covered in item 1.5 above.

3.1 Forest Edge South NDP

No information available

3.2 Planning Committee

A schedule of responses prepared under delegated powers was received.

The Clerk would pursue matters of planning enforcement at sites in Yorkley and Pillowell, and the Yorkley Court Farm S106 moneys issue, with FODDC.

Council was asked to provide more members of the Planning Committee.

The shortage of staff at the FODDC Planning Department was noted.

3.3 Highways Issues Report

GCC had reported extra capacity to deal with potholes and more routine defects, and had invited the Council to identify highway faults to be fixed. A schedule of Council's response, with any action undertaken by GCC, was presented.

3.4 Clerk's Report

The report was received

3.5 Deputy Clerk's Report

It was agreed that a report on Forest of Dean Radio and the options for the repair of the fence at the Crow Ash Play Park would be presented at the next meeting. It was noted that a deep clean of the West Dean Centre would be required before it was made available to the public again.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.