



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk to the Council

Clive Hooper
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COUNCIL MINUTES

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Meeting Date: 27th January 2021 Location: Video Conference

Present:

WDPC COUNCILLORS: B Freshwater (BF), A Grant (AG), A Moore (AM), P Dunford (PD), B Evans (BE), S Yeates (SY), A Bruce (AB), B Gayler (BG), S Francis (SF), D Oliver (DO), S Crick (SC), M Costley (MC), J Richmond (JR) and J Dale (JD).

District and County Councillor R Boyles

District Councillor P Hiett

Members of the Public E Highfield and S Freeman

D Kent (Clerk) and C Hooper (Deputy Clerk) were in attendance

PUBLIC FORUM

District Councillor P Hiett and County Councillor R Boyles presented reports from their Councils
S Freeman thanked council for the S106 grant award to Yorkley Community Centre, especially the contributions of BF and AG in making the grants possible.

E Highfield drew attention to the timeliness of information on the Council web site. It was agreed that this matter would be an agenda item for the next Council meeting.

COUNCIL FORMAL BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies were received from:

A Sumners (AS) (WDPC) and T Gwilliam (FODDC).

1.2 Declarations of Interest

None received

1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – The minutes of the meeting of 25th November 2020 were accepted as a true record to be signed by the Chair as soon as is feasible.

1.4 Council Meetings in the Current Emergency period.

This matter would be considered later in the meeting.

2. Items for discussion and decision

2.1 Corona Virus Emergency

Similarly, this matter would be considered later in the meeting.

2.2 Finance & Staffing

i) The electronic payments for January 2021 as presented were approved.

ii) The payments made by delegated powers in December 2020 were noted

iii) BF and JR were appointed to provide the electronic authorisations for January 2021 bank payments.

AG would be added to the schedule of signatories to the council bank account.

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iv) and v) It was noted that a financial inspection had not been possible in January. It was agreed that the inspection would be carried by AS and AB, and then the February inspection would be carried out by DO and SC.

vi) It was agreed that a committee consisting of DO, AG, SC and SF would be set up to manage the process of recruiting a Deputy Clerk to take over from Clive Hooper, whose retirement had been noted. The Clerk would set up a meeting.

vii) It was agreed that the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councillors would be appointed as the Council's internal auditors for the 2020-21 financial year.

2.3 Climate Emergency/Village Veg

Climate Emergency and FOD Climate Action reports were presented.

It was agreed that consideration would be given to providing information card inserts into the next newsletter. The climate emergency content of the next newsletter was also discussed in agenda item 2.7 below.

It was agreed that a budget of £3,000 would be allocated for the design and erection of informative billboards around the parish. The Clerk would investigate any possible planning regulations applying.

Members were invited to join the Forest Parish and Town Council Climate Emergency group.

2.4 Grant Award Process: Yorkley Court Farm S106 Funds Group

A full report had already been presented during the Public Forum.

2.5 Planning.

2.5 i) Marians Walk, Berry Hill, proposed development.

The response submitted by the Planning Committee following a public meeting by Zoom technology on 12th January 2021 under delegated powers, was presented. The response requested further information in respect of ecology, mining stability and draining issues, among others. The Council's role in assisting in the development of the application was noted, and the Council's support for affordable housing and the sympathetic development of Rural Exception Sites was reaffirmed.

2.2 ii) District Council 2020-41 Plan.

The Council response submitted under delegated powers was received and endorsed.

2.6 Crossing Cottage, Pillowell

It was reported that Forestry England had not yet responded to a request for information, and the District Council legal officer had advised that the matter was not one for that Council to consider.

2.7 Newsletter

i) Content

One page would be allocated for Bream businesses, and 4 centre pages for Climate Emergency information.

ii) Distribution

AB and other Councillors would advise the Clerk about distribution volunteers. The Clerk would prepare street maps. It was reported that Public Health England had advised that mail drops were not a Covid hazard.

iii) Progress

It was reported that the process of setting up the templates for the March edition had already begun.

2.8 Bream Youth Report

No report was presented. SC would discuss youth provision with the Deputy Clerk during February.

2.9 Gentian Grant Awards

In the absence of any response to the request for nominees for the grant award group from the Bream Community, it was decided that Bream ward Councillors SC and AS would join the group. A meeting would be convened.

2.10 Deputy Clerk: Matters for Decision

i) Hybrid Parish Council Meetings

It was decided that Council would procure the equipment with the large screen, as demonstrated to Chair, Clerk and Deputy Clerk, and as submitted to the meeting by the Deputy Clerk, at a cost of £4,300 plus VAT.

It was advised that the equipment would be insured, and would be available for meetings held in the Eales/Gosling Room at the West Dean Centre, and would be available for Centre users.

ii) Provision and Maintenance of Grit/Salt Bins.

It was decided that budgets of £1,500 pa (filling of bins) and £500 pa (provision of additional grit/litter bins) would be provided. If possible, a Council badge would be attached to council-provided bins. Consideration would be given to seeking business sponsorship for salt and litter bins. An appeal would be made in the Parish newsletter for volunteers to act as snow wardens.

At this point, Council agreed to extend the length of the meeting by 30 minutes

iii) Parish Notice Boards

The tender to be issued for the repair of Parish noticeboards would include the repair of selected other parish amenities including benches.

An audit of bus shelters in the Parish area would be conducted, to enable the identification of maintenance requirements and possible relocation of bus shelters now no longer in use.

iv) Bream Cenotaph

The Deputy Clerk presented quotation for repair works required. As the work is specialist, only 3 quotes from suitable contractors were received. It was agreed that the lowest quote would be accepted to enable the submission of requests for grant funding for the repair work.

2.11 Sheep Waste Disposal: District Council Proposal for a Joint Project

Council considered a proposal for a joint project to deal with sheep waste in the Parish area. The proposal was rejected by Council, on the casting vote of the Chair.

2.12 Chair's Report

There was no Chair's report.

3.1 Neighbourhood Development Plan

A report was presented. It was noted that consultants DLP had been appointed, and that a bid for funding of £7,000 had been made to Groundworks.

3.2 Dean Forest Greenway

PD presented a report.

It was agreed that AG and AM would be appointed to the project steering committee.

The role of the steering committee was considered, and it was agreed that policy and finance decisions made should be referred to the Parish Council for determination.

At this point, Council agreed to extend the meeting by a further 15 minutes

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It was noted that the following issues were unresolved and required clarification, as the Greenway lay in the Lydney Town Council area as well as the Parish Council area:

- i) Ownership of the track
- ii) Insurance
- iii) Maintenance

It was agreed that the county association (GAPTC) would be consulted to seek reassurance on legal matters relating to the concerns above, as well as the status and powers of the steering group.

At this point, the meeting was closed, with no discussion on agenda items 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5, which were matters to be noted only.

The meeting closed at 10.17 pm

The next meeting would be held under agreed Council protocols, at 7.00 pm, Wednesday 24th February 2021.