



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

Kim Carpenter

Clerk to the Council

Deputy Clerk

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COUNCIL MINUTES

690

Meeting Date: 25th August 2021 Location: West Dean Centre

Present: WDPC COUNCILLORS: S Crick (SC) (Chair), A Moore (AM), P Dunford (PD), B Evans (BE), A Bruce (AB) (via Zoom), S Francis (SF), J Richmond (JR), and S Dunford (SD).

Members of the Public: Paul Hiett (FODDC Cllr), Bob Freshwater, Sara Rickard, Andrew Darke

Kim Carpenter (KC) (Clerk) was in attendance

PUBLIC FORUM

Sara Rickards spoke about the 'Arts Jab' festival being organised to take place on 2nd October 2021 at the West Dean Centre and parts of the village. She offered her thanks to WDPC for their support of this event and asked that they continued to do so by advertising the event and volunteering to assist on the day. She also spoke about the future for this arts festival and Canopy's intention to hold festivals across the forest towns on a biannual basis. SC asked about the road closure orders that are required, with Sara responding that they were in process.

Andrew Darke spoke about Yorkley Court and the current enforcement notice and any potential actions that would follow the notice. He did request WDPC assistance in ensuring that the conservation advisor for the District Council was involved and that any reports from the visits were shared. His other concern was about the public right of way across the land at Yorkley Court not being maintained and required the PROW officer from GCC to push for the paths to be kept open. He requested WDPC's help with both these issues, it was proposed by PD and seconded by JR that the council write to both the PROW officer and the Conservation Advisor on the issues raised.

FODDC Cllr Paul Hiett presented a detailed verbal report of plans, programmes, actions and issues being discussed at the District Council, documented in Appendix 1. There was some further discussion following the verbal report about the status of Berry Hill Memorial Institute and the working being done by its steering committee, who had recently discovered it will be celebrating its centenary in 2022. BE also thank Paul for his work on behalf of residents regarding a planning application but also wanted further information about the potential public protection order to prevent sheep entering the village. Paul confirmed that this was being discussed at the authority and would provide further updates as this developed. AM also offered his thanks for bringing the climate emergency strategy to the council's attention.

Bob Freshwater wanted to bring to the council's attention several concerns, these being:

- i. The Tack Store, Lydney Road Yorkley and its discussion and subsequent refusal at FODDC full planning committee. He thanked PD for speaking at this meeting on behalf of residents.
- ii. Crossing Cottage and the current position with the solicitor engaged by WDPC on this footpath issue, KC confirmed this was in hand but there had been no update at present.
- iii. The Dean Forest Greenway, he gave a brief history of this project having been involved since its inception, he wanted to make the council aware of certain issues and information flows

- iv. that he felt were not communicated fully to the council about the project and its progress. This led to a more detailed discussion about the route, potential options for alternatives and extensions, the involvement of Lydney Town Council in the project and the need for a steering committee meeting to be scheduled and monthly project reports to be presented to council.

COUNCIL FORMAL BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies were received from:

Parish Councillors: S Yeates, M Costley, B Garside, J Dale and A Grant

1.2 Declarations of Interest

None received

1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – The minutes of the meeting of 28th July 2021 were accepted and signed by the Chair with the following notes being added.

JR wanted it noted that the report presented during the public forum should be an appendix to the minutes. SD wanted it noted that the sentence at the top of page 687 did not reflect the tenor of the conversation nor include the comment about the transparency of documents being available on time. This led to a discussion about exempt items being on the agenda and the need to be very clear about the publication of documents on the parish website and what should remain confidential, this also include the need for all documents to be a pdf version for publication. JR wanted a line struck from the record for section 2.5 which related to speed surveys in a neighbouring parish.

2.1 Corona Virus Emergency

There were no further updates currently.

2.2 Finance & Staffing

- i) The schedule of electronic payments for August 2021, as presented to the meeting, were approved. The clerk wanted noted that an additional payment had been added for approval due to an unpaid invoice from June 2021.
- ii) D Oliver and B Gayler were appointed to make the electronic authorisations for August 2021 bank payments.
- iii) It was noted that SF had conducted a financial inspection of documents and bank statements for the previous month but there were some issues and concerns which required further investigation.
- iv) The September financial inspection would be conducted by SF and either BG or SC. There was still a question about a previous inspection being signed off by SF and SD – Clerk to track paperwork for this.
- v) The minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee were discussed 'In Camera'.*
- vi) This item was also discussed 'In Camera' a separate document of this exempt section will be made available to councillors.*
- vii) It was noted that the new Caretaker/Janitor Mr Paul Sims will commence work for WDPC on Monday 6th September. The documentation for logging of time, mileage, leave and sickness absences was being prepared, BE recommended that a pack of policies and procedures also be given to him at the commencement of his employment.
- viii) It was noted that an appeal would be made at 'Bream Fest' for this position and the clerk would research the current rate for this type of works to enable a review of the pay structure to be brought to Full Council.
- ix) This expenditure was agreed.

2.3 Dean Forest Greenway

There was no update available for this project as the Steering Committee had not met since March 2021.

There was some detailed discussion about this project and the work being undertaken by the steering committee to progress the project. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be scheduled and regular reports on the project will be provided by the Chair to Full Council.

2.4 Climate Emergency/Village Veg

Am proposed and seconded by DO, that The Terms of Reference for this Committee were these were agreed by Full Council at the meeting, the vote was carried.

AM proposed that the paper submitted to WDPC about the cleansing of sheep fouling by FODDC be revisited and discussed at Full Council.

2.5 Highways & Road Traffic Issues

The meeting noted the minutes of the Highways & footpaths Committee on 19th August 2021.

JR proposed and it was seconded by SD that the Terms of Reference for the committee be agreed by Full Council at the meeting, the vote was carried.

2.6 Yorkley Court Farm

No additional report was made further to that discussed during the public forum.

2.7. Governance

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 3rd August 2021 were approved.

Several documents were presented for approval by Full Council,

- SF proposed and was seconded by BE that the Health & Safety Policy be approved, the vote was carried.
- SF proposed and was seconded by SD that the Code of Conduct be approved, the vote was carried.
- SF proposed and was seconded by BG that the Declaration of Interest be approved which included the addition of a Part B detailing all policies and procedures, the vote was carried.
- SF discussed the Draft Standing Orders which would be presented as a final version when all other policies and procedures were in place as they were being referenced within this overarching document.

The next Governance Committee meeting will be held on 14th September 2021 where the following documents would be reviewed and amended:

Communication Policy
Data Protection Policy
Equalities & Diversity Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Grievance & Disciplinary Policy

There was also an action on the Clerk to ensure that BG received the Declaration of Interest form to complete and that these would be renewed annually at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

2.8 Planning

The minutes of meetings held on 3rd and 17th August were received.

There were no further updates.

2.9 Youth Provision

This committee had not met during August so there was no report available.

2.10 Web/Social Media

It was noted that a further meeting of the project team undertaking the review of the website needed to be arranged. A short brief had been sent into the Clerk, but this need to be shared with the group for discussion and thoughts. There was some discussion about the potential for the newsletter to be added to the website in a page turning format, which had been discussed with the web designer.

2.11 Welcome Back Fund

SD advised the meeting that the Welcome Back Event at Yorkley on 19th September was getting a good response but there was still potential for other businesses and village halls to have stalls to advertise themselves and their activities.

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Gazebo's were on order for various village halls that had been included within the funding bid.

2.12 Marians Walk, Berry Hill

JR proposed and was seconded by SF that electoral registration at FODDC be approached to purchase address labels for the Berry Hill ward to facilitate the consultation with residents about a few potential projects in the area, these being:

- the amenity land at Marians Walk
- the addition of a youth shelter at Crowash Playing field
- the potential for a further play area at Kell's Meend

2.13 Training for Councillors and Officers

It was agreed that training should be approved for the Acting Clerk and that all Councillors should identify their training requirements so that GAPTC could be approached about providing training at the West Dean Centre. This could also be offered to the wider parish council network in the Forest of Dean.

2.14 Newsletter

SF informed the meeting that the Autumn Awards were fast approaching and there was a need to get the advert out for groups to submit bids during early September. All bids needed to be submitted for review by the end of September before being agreed for awarding at the October Full Council meeting. This would enable the awards to be announced within the November newsletter, this timeline is tight but can be achieved as the advert is prepared for publishing.

This raised the question about the current production of the newsletter and whether this would continue, the Clerk advised that this was still under consideration, and she would advise as soon as possible on the outcome.

2.15 Chair's Items

Nothing to be presented

3.1 Forest Edge South Neighbourhood Development Plan

There were no further reports on this at present.

3.2 Clerk's Report

No report was presented.

3.3 Deputy Clerk Report

The deputy clerks report will be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 22.05 hrs.

4. Forthcoming Dates and Meetings.

Noted.

The next Council Meeting would be held as a physical meeting, under protocols in place at the time, at the West Dean Centre, at 7.00 pm, Wednesday 25th August 2021, *with consideration given to streaming the meeting to external observers.*