

North Wootton Parish Council



Clerk to the Parish

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of North Wootton Parish Council held in the North Wootton Village Hall on Tuesday 15th May 2018

PRESENT Cllr A Bovey (Chairman until minute 1), Cllr A Townend, Cllr M Hoddinott, Cllr S Shimmin (Chairman from minute 2 onwards) and Cllr M Smith

Some 21 members of the public were present.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 19.30

- 1. To elect a Chairman** – Cllr Smith proposed and Cllr Hoddinott seconded that Cllr Shimmin be elected Chairman for 2018-19. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Shimmin be elected as Chairman. Cllr Shimmin accepted the election and took the Chair. He thanked Cllr Bovey for all of his hard work over the previous years as Chairman.
- 2. To receive a Statutory Declaration of Office from the Chairman** – Cllr Shimmin signed the Declaration in the presence of the clerk.
- 3. To elect a Vice Chairman** – Cllr Smith proposed and Cllr Bovey seconded that Cllr Townend be asked to continue to serve as Vice Chairman. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Townend be elected Vice Chairman for the year 2018-19.
- 4. To receive any apologies for absence** – No apologies for absence were received.
- 5. To receive any declarations of interest** – The Chairman explained in detail the concept of declarations of interest to the members of the public present and the connection with the Council's Code of Conduct including the option of applying for a dispensation to speak and vote on a matter. Both he and Cllr Bovey had applied for a dispensation prior to the meeting from the Proper Officer of the Council, who is the clerk, to speak and vote on item 15 (i), the development on land south west of the Crossways Inn. Cllr Townend explained that he also wished to apply for a dispensation to speak as he had a personal connection with a party involved in the development. The clerk asked for more details on the connection which she then felt were personal but not prejudicial and therefore Cllr Townend could speak and vote on the matter.
- 6. To receive comments and questions from members of the public – there were no comments or questions.**
- 7. To review and re-adopt the Council's Financial Regulations** – it was unanimously resolved to re-adopt the council's current Financial Regulations.
- 8. To review and re-adopt the Council's Standing Orders** – the clerk explained that she had updated the Standing Orders for council approval to include changes from 2018 legislation. It was unanimously agreed to adopt the revised Standing Orders as suggested by the clerk.

Chairman's signature.....

9. **To review and re-adopt the Council's Code of Conduct** – The Chairman explained that the parish council currently works to Mendip District Council's code but that the parish council had also looked at the SALC (Somerset Association of Local Councils) Model as this was simpler and shorter with the ability to have more discretion over declaring of interests. Cllr Bovey proposed and Cllr Townend seconded that the SALC Model Code of Conduct be adopted. This was unanimously agreed.
10. **To receive the Council's financial statements for the year ending 31st March 2018**
 - I. The members certified that the council was exempt from a limited assurance review by the external auditors by virtue of meeting the criteria for self-exemption. The certificate was signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.
 - II. Council agreed and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31st March 2018. The statement was signed on behalf of the council by the Chairman and the Clerk.
 - III. Council agreed and approved the Annual Accounts as presented and signed by the clerk for the year ending 31st March 2018. The Chairman signed the accounts on behalf of the council.
11. **To confirm that summons, notices and other such documentation may be sent to parish councillors by email** – it was unanimously agreed to do so.
12. **To agree that Tony Bradfield remain as the Council's Internal Auditor for the next financial year** – it was unanimously agreed that Mr Bradfield remain as council's internal auditor.
13. **To approve the minutes of the parish council meetings held on Tuesday 6th March 2018 and Tuesday 20th March 2018** – the minutes were unanimously agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman
14. **Finance Matters:**
 - I. It was unanimously resolved to pay the items of expenditure as presented.
15. **Planning Matters –**
 - I. **To consider the council's response to application 2018/0626/FUL.** Standing orders were suspended to allow Mr Wright, agent for the applicant to speak in support of the application after which two members of the public spoke in opposition to the application. Standing orders were reinstated.

Councillors debated the issue at some length and requested further information from Mr Wright to clarify their understanding of details. Councillors resolved to object to the application by four votes to one abstention. The reasons cited for their objection as debated were:

- o Issues with the design of the lodges - a development of this nature is out of keeping with this part of the village and is not in accordance with the development principles described in the Village Design Statement adopted on 2011 and recognised by MDC
- o The detailing and materials of the proposed pre-fabricated lodges are inappropriate in its highly visible setting so close to the rest of the village which is generally characterised by buildings of traditional stone and brick construction
- o Negative effects on the amenity for the immediate neighbours and the community as a whole due to:
 - o noise and disturbance from lodge users particularly as each lodge is to have a spa pool mostly located outside of the lodge
 - o overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring properties along Stocks Lane
 - o the impact on the village's current practice of minimising light pollution by avoiding street lighting. The requirement for lighting for presumably at the very least Health and Safety reasons would impact significantly on the dark skies for the village
 - o the proximity to one of the village's best used public footpaths.

Chairman's signature.....

Whilst not a planning consideration, members noted that no mention had been made of the previous planning permission granted for 14 houses.

- II. **To consider the council's response to the placing of three mobile homes and an agricultural building on land near the junction of Barrow Lane/Long Drove.**
Councillors asked that the clerk inquire of MDC as to the situation with the mobile homes and building.

- 16. Footpaths – to consider the council's response to the application to divert part of public footpath WS7/17.** Cllr Hoddinott informed members that the planning officer at MDC had suggested the footpath be re-routed to the applicant. Members resolved that whilst they had no strong view on the issue, they noted that Manor Farm has asked for it to be moved further away from the boundary with the farm. The clerk was asked to communicate this to the SCC Rights of Way Officer dealing with the matter.
- 17. Ciderthon –** Members noted that the stewarding and road closures were not well handled. The clerk was asked to contact Nick Cater at Somerset Waste Partnership and ask that the parish council be made aware if the event is held again so that it can be consulted and that better stewarding is provided.
- 18. To receive a report from Cllr Shimmin on Highways matters –** The Chairman reported that there were no additional issues that members were not already aware of and continued to urge residents to report problems and let him have the issue number so he could chase it up with SCC.
- 19. To receive a report from Cllr Hoddinott on Footpaths matters –** there was nothing further to report
- 20. To receive a report from Cllr Smith on Moors and Levels matters –** there was nothing to report
- 21. Other business referred to the clerk –** members noted the posting of the Notice of Audit 2018 to cover the inspection period 4th June to 13th July.
- 22. To confirm the dates for next year's council meetings –** it was agreed meetings would be on 17th July; 18th September; 20th November; 15th January 2019 and 19th March 2019.
- 23. It was resolved that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda item by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**
- 24. Clerk's rate of pay –** the clerk left the room whilst members debated the issue. It was resolved to increase the clerk's hourly rate in line with the recommended pay scale from SALC.
- 25. Date of next Meeting – 17th July**

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.25

Chairman's signature.....