

North Wootton Parish Council



Clerk to the Parish

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of North Wootton Parish Council held in the North Wootton Village Hall on Tuesday 20th November 2018.

PRESENT Cllr S Shimmin (Chairman), Cllr A Bovey, Cllr A Townend, Cllr M Hoddinott and Cllr M Smith

Five members of the public were present.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 19.30

1. **To receive any apologies for absence** – Apologies were received from County Councillor Graham Noel and the police.
2. **To resolve to approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on Tuesday 18th September 2018** – it was unanimously resolved to adopt the minutes as a correct record of both meetings with a minor amendment to item 11. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.
3. **To receive any declarations of interest** – Cllr Townend declared an interest in 2015/0527/OTA if reserved matters pertaining to the scheme were discussed in the meeting.
4. **To receive comments and questions from the public** – issues relating to fly tipping and additional defibrillator training were highlighted. Cllr Bovey offered to organise the training and advertise it in the North Wootton News.
5. **To receive reports from district and county councillors and the police.**

District and County Cllr Hewitt-Cooper reported on the following matters:

- Mendip District Council was in a comfortable financial position with a potential underspend at the end of the year. Investments by the district council were working well.
- Fly tipping – prosecution of fly tippers is reasonably assured with fixed penalty notices if the culprits are found. There are three collectors at MDC.
- Planning – there is an issue with staffing nationally. Two new senior planning officers had been recruited which meant that MDC now had a full complement of planning staff for the first time in seven years. Somerset County Council cannot take on any backlog as it was a different type of planning.
- MDC has bought the derelict Saxonvale site in Frome. It has been cleared up and there is interest from a potential buyer.
- Libraries – Shepton Mallet library is safe but Street and Castle Cary will close unless taken on by the community. At the time of the meeting, all but two of the libraries due for closure will remain as community projects. The Chairman noted that it was the mobile library that was most used in North Wootton.

- Homelessness – the district had received £80k to tackle rough sleepers of which there was an estimate of 24 in Mendip DC’s area.

Cllr Bovey asked Cllr Hewitt-Cooper about the parking issue outside of Pilton Road which was on MDC land. Cllr Bovey had received no response from Gavin Fear on the issue. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper offered to chase up a response. It was noted that bollards were not the appropriate answer to the problem.

The Chairman asked for an update on the planning application relating to the lodges at the Crossways Inn. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper said that the application was still ongoing. The planning officer was still talking to the applicant to try and “iron out the creases”. The Chairman reminded Cllr Hewitt-Cooper that there were strong feelings in the village about this application. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper said that if the officer disagrees with the parish comments, it would come to him as ward councillor and he may refer the application to the Planning Board. Cllr Townend noted that the only way now to get information on negotiations between officers and applicants is to do a Freedom of Information request as the file cannot be seen when it is with the planning officer.

Both the County Councillor and the police had sent reports which the clerk had circulated to members before the meeting.

6. **Matters arising (for report only)** – there were no matters arising.

7. **Planning Matters** –

- 2015/0527/OTA – still being considered by MDC
- 20181672/FUL – Barrow Farm, Barrow Lane. It was noted that as the parish council had recommended approval and the MDC officer had recommended refusal, the matter had gone to the Planning Board. The officer had considered that development in open countryside was outside of MDC policy and that it would lead to an increase in traffic. All members had received and read the statement to be read out at the Planning Board as drawn up by the Chairman. Cllr Townend asked that mention be made in the statement that the parish council submission to MDC at consultation stage noted that a building of similar size, style and barn-like when completed was the basis on which the parish council was recommending approval. The statement as amended was unanimously agreed by members and that the Chairman attends the Planning Board on behalf of the parish council.

8. **Finance Matters-**

I. **The items of expenditure as presented by the clerk were unanimously resolved to be paid.**

II. The Chairman explained that the parish council was considering an increase in the precept on the basis of taking on services from district or county that would no longer be provided. He highlighted that as the current councillors were coming to the end of their tenure in May 2019, it may not be appropriate to pursue this as the new council may not have an appetite to take on services.

III. Budget and precept – members debated a number of items for consideration to be included in the budget for 2019-20 including the restoration of fingerposts in the village of which there were 12. Members agreed to include a grant for 2019-20 to the Village Hall of £1500. Cllr Bovey offered to investigate the cost of repairing the damaged highways edges in the village and the cost of the fingerpost restoration. The setting of the budget and precept for 2019-20 was deferred to the January 2019 meeting.

IV. Insurance quotations – members unanimously resolved to accept the quotation from Zurich for £167.44.

9. **To receive a report from Cllr Bovey on Highways matters** – Cllr Bovey reported that the work on Middle Lane had been completed to a good standard. Tanyard Lane would be closed the following week to allow Bristol Water to complete works. He informed members

Chairman’s signature.....

that Somerset County Council has indicated that it would repaint existing road markings but that there were a number of new lines and signs that the village required. The clerk reminded members that SCC had recently sent out a communique informing parish and town councils that they would not consider ad hoc requests for new lines and signs and that any new ones would have to be part of an area wide review of requirements. Cllr Bovey would alert SCC to those signs and lines that had not been done.

10. **To receive a report from Cllr Hoddinott on Footpaths matters** – Cllr Hoddinott reported that the footbridge over the river in front of Higher Farm should have been repaired by SCC by now. The work to re-open the bridleway was ongoing.
11. **To receive a report from Cllr Smith on Moors and Levels matters** – Cllr Smith had nothing to report.
12. It was noted that there were forthcoming elections for district and the parish council in May 2019 and that packs for prospective councillors would be available shortly.
13. **Date of next Meeting – 22nd January 2019 unless a planning meeting was required before this date.**

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.00.

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