

North Wootton Parish Council



Clerk to the Parish

Hazel Brinton PSLCC

35, Hannah Drive, Locking, Locking Parklands, North Somerset BS24 7JS

Tel: 07341 977235 Email: northwoottonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of North Wootton Parish Council held in the Village Hall, North Wootton on Tuesday 19th November 2019.

PRESENT: Cllr S Shimmin (Chairman), Cllr A Bovey, Cllr K Bissett, Cllr M Hoddinott and Cllr M Smith.

Some 60 members of the public were also present together with the District Cllr Nigel Hewitt-Cooper.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 19.30.

1. Apologies for absence

County Cllr Graham Noel due to purdah and PCSO Guy Dury who had sent a report.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meetings held on Tuesday 17th September and 22nd October 2019 were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Update on Pilton bypass and Public Participation

Standing orders were suspended.

The Chairman gave an update on the matter as follows:

- The parish council had only heard about the plans second hand after the presentation to Pilton Parish Council
- At the Mendip District Council Cabinet meeting of 4th November members of the public had raised questions even though the item was not on the agenda. No answers were provided on the night and the clerk and Chairman understood that MDC was drafting a Question and Answer paper. The paper was in the final stages and needed to be signed off by Somerset County Council and the Peninsula Transport Board. The clerk and Chairman had been told at a meeting that day with Julie Sullivan-Reader from MDC that publication of the paper on MDC's website was imminent
- The proposals appeared to be extremely preliminary and took no account of topography or cost; they were just lines on a map. No work had been done on either of the schemes on the ground. The proposals would be going to the Department for Transport in December and they will decide if they have merit

- There were six proposals in the £20m-£50m cost bracket but this was not necessarily a cap. The DfT would take a view on whether a scheme was viable. Funds for the schemes have to be committed by 2025
- There were other available options which would cost less money and have a less damaging impact. North Wootton parish councillors are clear that they do not support any of the schemes. The Chairman explained that councillors were seeking a mandate from parishioners to maintain this view
- The joint position of the Peninsula Transport Board, MDC and SCC would emerge from the publication of the Q&A paper

District Cllr Hewitt-Cooper informed the meeting that he was not aware of the presentation that had been given to Pilton parish council. MDC had committed to consultation regardless of money being made available for the scheme. They would consult because infrastructure was needed. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper felt that the premature release of the information had scared people unnecessarily.

Cllr Bovey asked whether it could be assumed that all the schemes would go ahead. The Chairman replied that this assumption could not be made. Cllr Smith suggested that the scheme would bisect a village that did not have a traffic problem. Cllr Bissett asked whether other schemes between Glastonbury and Pilton had been considered. The Chairman replied that it was clear that extra work needed to be done and more schemes needed to be considered over and above those in the public domain.

A member of the public noted that the scheme across the Festival site had been removed. The Chairman replied that he understood all schemes would be part of the formal consultation. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper said that he had seen other schemes that crossed the Festival site. A member of the public asked whether the district councillor could obtain details of the other schemes if they had not been published. Cllr Hewitt-Cooper responded that he would try.

A member of the public noted that the schemes were due to be part-funded by housing but they were going through a rural site with little possibility for housing development. The Chairman replied that property development income was clearly of interest to MDC and that the government is putting pressure on councils to build houses. Two thousand houses had been mentioned by the MDC officer. A member of the public noted that 1780 had been mentioned in the Strategic Business Plan. The Chairman replied that it was clear that the strategic driver is to improve transport links from the M5 to rural Somerset.

A member of the public asked if North Wootton parish council had sent a letter objecting to the schemes to MDC. The Chairman replied that he was seeking a mandate from the meeting for council to send such a letter. A member of the public felt that it was more sensible to oppose the schemes as outlined but to propose alternatives rather than just send a letter opposing the plans.

The Chairman added that in respect of property searches, MDC was not legally obliged to give information unless a scheme is actually out for public consultation and only then if the centre line of the proposed route came within 200m of a property.

The majority of those present at the meeting and all councillors agreed that the parish council should submit a more formal view to MDC opposing the schemes.

Standing orders were reinstated. It was agreed unanimously that the Chairman would circulate the proposed text to councillors before sending to MDC and other parties.

Chairman's signature.....

5. Reports from county and district councillors and the police

No report had been received from County Cllr Graham Noel due to purdah rules. The police report had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

6. Matters arising

The Chairman reported that the 60+ driving event would take place on 7th July 2020 at the Village Hall.

7. Planning Matters

- **2019/2529/FUL Proposal – Conversion of existing barn to dwelling and erection of detached garage/store outbuilding at Land at 354128 141088 New Road, Launcherley for Mr John Wilkins**

Standing Orders were suspended to allow members of the public to speak.

The Chairman noted that the application had been granted a Prior Approval Application by MDC already. A member of the public suggested that the barn was too dilapidated to actually convert. It appeared the applicant was going for full planning permission and they could then build anything since if this was gained, they could go back to the planning authority for something else.

Standing Orders were reinstated. Councillors debated the application at some length. It was resolved by a majority of three to two to oppose the application as it would result in a dwelling being built in open countryside.

The Chairman noted that the application for The Forge was going to the Planning Board as the MDC officer had recommended refusal. The applicant wished the parish council to speak on their behalf which had been agreed.

8. Finance Matters

i.

a) The clerk's salary for October and November 2019 and her expenses of £94.00 for October and November 2019 were unanimously approved.

b) It was resolved to pay £167.44 for the council's yearly insurance with Zurich.

c) It was resolved to pay a further £500 to the Village Hall to bring the total amount to £1500 as budgeted by the council for the year.

ii. The clerk had produced a draft budget which had been circulated to councillors before the meeting. This covered the basic costs for the forthcoming year and councillors were asked to consider what, if any projects, they may wish to carry out. It was resolved to carry out further repairs to finger posts within the parish for an additional £5k.

It was unanimously resolved to set the precept and the budget at £7784 for 2020-21.

9. Highways matters

Cllr Bovey reported that there had been no resolution on the Pilton Road parking issue by SCC. He was also waiting an update from SCC on the repairs required to the Stocks Lane bridge. He would endeavour to report back in January on both matters.

10. Footpath matters

Cllr Hoddinott said there were no matters to report.

11. Moor and Levels matters

Cllr Smith said there were no matters to report.

Chairman's signature.....

12. Date of next Meeting – 7th January 2020

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.05.

Chairman's signature.....