



## WESTBURY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at Westbury Village Hall at 8.00 pm

#### Questions/comments from the public

None received

#### 111/16 Members present

Cllr James Stone (JS), Cllr Vicky Webb (VW), Cllr Robin Bone (RB), Cllr Graeme Cook (GC), Cllr Jeremy Banks (JB), Cathy Knott (Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

Councillor Robin Stuchbury and Paul Hodson (Area Manager, BCC) also attended for the beginning of the meeting.

**Apologies received** from: Cllr Franco Capella (FC) and Cllr Sue Barrett (SB).

#### 112/16 To receive declarations of interest

Councillors to declare any non-registered pecuniary or personal interests relating to the Agenda

- JB & JS declared an interest in item 118/16 for Beachborough planning.

**113/16 Approve the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October. It was resolved to sign the minutes as a true record.**

#### 114/16 BCC representative invited to discuss proposals for streamlining local government in Buckinghamshire

Two representatives from Bucks County Council (BCC), Paul Hodson and Cllr Robin Stuchbury thanked the parish council for inviting them to attend the meeting to inform members of BCC's proposals to streamline local government in Buckinghamshire.

BCC have submitted a proposal to change local government from 5 councils/authorities to create one unitary authority in the county.

The final business case has now been published online, along with an executive summary and the full options appraisal which considered alternative models, which can be found online at: <http://futurebucks.co.uk/business-case/>.

BCC also agreed to submit the business case to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for a decision, which they hope to be in January 2017.

Mr Hodson explained that there are no proposals to alter or review the structure of town and parish councils. However the business case does propose that a unitary council would offer further devolved services to those town and parish councils that wished to take them on, and details proposals for a new council's approach to community boards and hubs which would provide town and parish councillors with increased opportunities to influence the work of the new council.

Currently, devolved services offer a set budget for each council with no flexibility. In the future (with one unitary authority) each independent council would be offered a case by case negotiation to suit, offering a much better service.

Other options BCC has considered are:

- to abolish the 5 councils and create 2 unitary councils
- to abolish the 5 councils and create 3 unitary councils
- to abolish the 5 councils and create 3 unitary councils with combined authority to deliver services for childcare, transport and social care.

Although the option of one unitary authority (which BCC has proposed) is the most costly, it will also save the most money in the long run. At the moment there are lots of different departments within each authority making it very unclear and difficult to access. With one unitary authority it will simplify matters for organisations such as the police and it will give a stronger voice within the government.

Cllr Robin Stuchbury advised that it will be a very long process and there will be problems along the way but it will have a very positive outcome for constituents. He added that we are wasting a lot of money at the moment. Mr Hodson asked if the parish council could discuss BCC's proposal and write to the Minister with our views.

**Action: All**

### **115/16 Matters arising**

It was agreed to postpone the date for jobs around the village and at the hall until the shed has been erected in the New Year.

SB has contacted the owners of the Old Post Office. The hedge has now been trimmed back.

The footpath map is on the website and notice board and copies are now available at the shop.

RB has met with the Valuation Officer to carry out a survey of the hall.

FC has contacted the Bursar at Beachborough regarding planting up the sports hall wall.

The Site Manager at Lodge Park has left but JS has a new contact who he has been in touch with regarding the planting on the new housing development, Mill Lane. CK has received information from AVDC regarding costings for a new dog waste bin at the bottom of Mill Lane.

It was agreed to look into mobile spotlights for the village hall rather than having them installed on the roof.

**Action: RB**

JS has spoken with Cllr Robin Stuchbury regarding signs to help control speeding traffic along Biddlesden Road and Mill Lane.

### **116/16 Financial matters**

CK requested to change the bank mandate and standing orders in order to set up payments online with councillors authorising each payment. **Councillors unanimously agreed and approved.**

**(a) It was resolved that the following invoices be approved and were signed for payment from the current account:**

09.11.16	C Knott (October Salary)	£448.50
09.11.16	C Knott (Expenses)	£37.11
09.11.16	Engrave Bricks Ltd	£62.10
09.11.16	Withy King (Charity Solicitors)	£1081.20
09.11.16	Robin Bone (payment in part for VH shed)	£335.23

#### **From the lottery account:**

09.11.16	Robin Bone (payment in part for VH shed)	£36672.33
----------	--	-----------

This brings the lottery (build project) account balance to £0.00 and will now be closed.

**(b) Record the receipts:** none to record

**Cllr JB left the meeting at 9:00 pm.**

#### **(c) Approval of Budget & Precept**

JS reported that he, CK, SB and RB had met to discuss the budget and precept. CK circulated the figures and JS talked through the variances. JS advised that there was a 1.8% increase from last year's precept but this would be offset by the new properties recently built in Westbury, so we are actually looking at a reduction to the precept this year.

A discussion followed on streetlights and village hall maintenance.

**Councillors unanimously agreed and approved the precept figure of £17,138.50 for year 2017/18.**

### **117/16 To accept the terms & conditions of the lease between the Parish Council & Westbury Parish Hall Charity**

JS circulated the lease prior to the meeting and **councillors unanimously agreed and approved to sign the lease.**

#### **Out of Council**

May Gallagher very kindly witnessed the signatories.

#### **Back in Council**

## 118/16 Planning Applications

Application no.	Address	Details	Parish Council decision
16/03819/APP	Beachborough School Mill Lane Westbury	Single storey extension to existing dining room (part retrospective)	

As FC was unable to attend the meeting, it was agreed to postpone a decision on the above application.

**Action: CK/FC**

## 119/16 Reports

### Playground

JS continues to monitor equipment and litter.

### Utilities

GC reported that all street lights are working in the village. He and JS will arrange to meet to discuss the way forward regarding LED replacements, prioritising those lights still on the replacement programme. GC asked if we get a discount from our electricity supplier when we change to LED fittings. CK will follow this up. **Action: CK/JS/GC**

### Highways

Nothing to report at this time.

### Footpaths

VW has completed marking out the public footpath routes on maps and will ask the shop to put them out for people to take. Copies are on the notice boards and website.

### WVHA

VW reported that the association have had their six monthly review and have looked in depth at where they are. They celebrated with cheese and wine. VW will send the report to Westbury Parish Hall Charity.

## 120/16 Receive Correspondence

A letter has been received from Bucks County Council Transport Economy Environment regarding the recent cessation in the manufacture of low pressure sodium street lamps and the expected increase in electricity prices. They would welcome a discussion with the PC on how to keep costs to a minimum. GC will contact them. **Action: GC**

## 121/16 Items for the December/January Link

Meeting dates and date & details of the Christmas switch on.

Jobs around the village have been postponed until the New Year.

Christmas & New Year wishes.

Information on Film afternoons (VW).

Thank you to all who have volunteered, contributed and participated in the village hall project.

## 122/16 Items of urgent business

RB & CK proposed we purchase a root ball Christmas Tree to put up outside the village hall. CK has looked into costings from local suppliers. It was agreed to purchase one but not to plant it this year as a good location needs to be established. GC can supply a large pot.

**It was unanimously agreed and approved** to purchase a tree up to a budget of £100.00 and lights & decorations up to a budget of £300.00. Monies will come out of the events budget. **Action: CK/SB**

**The meeting closed at 9:30 pm**

**The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 8.30 pm at Westbury Village Hall**