**Westcott Parish Council**

**Amanda Ludlow – Clerk**

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**www.westcottparishcouncil.gov.uk**

**Meeting Minutes**

**12th November 2024 1930hrs at Westcott Cricket Club**

**Attendees**

**Parish Councillors**

Cllr Sue Pusey Chair SP Cllr Jo Hooper JH

Cllr Grahame Pusey GP Cllr Tony Wilkinson TW

Cllr Sue Lacey SL

**Ward Councillors**

Cllr Ashley Waite AW

**Officer of the Council**

Amanda Ludlow AL

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| Agenda Point |  | Person /s to action |
|  | **Part One** Meeting opened at 1930hrs |  |
| 90. | **Apologies for Absence**  Cllr Kevin Ready (KR) who has resigned this morning 12.11.24 due to ongoing poor health. Formal resignation letter yet to be received  Elizabeth Atkinson (EA) |  |
| 91. | **Open Forum**  SP read an update from Rev Caroline as she was unable to attend the meeting. See attached to minutes.  AL to contact Rev Caroline Wainman and offer our support of the Church to fund a meeting at the cricket club to raise awareness of the crisis at the church. Public meeting to be advertised in the Waddesdon magazine and on various Facebook pages. Westcott Village does does not have a Whats App group to the councils knowledge.  All present felt that the Annual Carol Service was the most attended service in the village and could also be used as the public meeting before or after.  AL to feedback at the next meeting | AL  AL |
| 92. | **Declarations of Interest**  None |  |
| 93. | **Minutes Approval**  Approved the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st October 2024.  SP signed final filed copy |  |
| 94. | **Ashley Waite – Bucks Councillor feedback**  Advised the Council of the current themes of Buck CC for Helping hands carers strategy, pension surgeries etc. All shared previously with the Council and on the Village notice Boards.  AW advised further roadworks continuing. Station Road Bridge to be closed for up to 12 months. Waddesdon Hill link road hoped to be completed by the end of the year. Signage discussed as many lorries still diverting through Westcott Village as they are going to Waddesdon Hill and not the new road to the A41  Westcott School – BCC has no policy on ‘guardianship’ in place. There has been no request for change of use applied for.  Green signs – AW is pushing forwards with concerns. ‘Not suitable for HGVs’ signs to be proposed.  SL raised that workmen were seen weed spraying the kerbs last week – concerns discussed regarding the time of the year and the effectiveness of spraying. AW explained that all works are significantly behind, and they are playing catch up.  TW complimented BCC on the road repairs and the quality of the work. AW advised that due to winter pressures road repairs will return to the previous accelerated repairs and not be of as good quality. |  |
| 95. | **Appointment of New Clerk**  Due to the resignation of Barry Malki and temporary appointment of Adele Broughton which lasted 4 hours; a new clerk has been recruited and appointed. All welcomed Amanda Ludlow (known as Mandy) who commenced on the 24th of October 24. AL is not a trained clerk but has run a business and is a good communicator and has already signed up to relevant training.  Many outstanding issues remain and absence of key documentation such as burial record books and electronic data not on the Parish Council laptop. The Millenium book has also been returned damaged and damp although is recoverable.  All attempts have been made to gain the missing documents and information, and Barry had said he would attend tonight’s meeting to give all records. Unfortunately, he was not in attendance. SP to follow up. | SP |
| 96. | **Annual Governance Audit Return (AGAR)**  This return should have been completed in May, unfortunately due to an overpayment of fees from BCC, non-submission of information by the previous Clerk and chasing of the internal auditor to complete works this has only been completed and received on the 10th November and is now required to go to the external auditor. The Council have also incurred additional fees due to its lateness and will probably be required to have an external audit next year due to the issues from this year.  Bucks CC have stated they will refund fees associated with their error – i.e. external auditor fees but will not be liable for the costs incurred due to late submission. AL to follow up.  SP read out the following:   * Completed Annual Internal Auditor Report Statement * Internal Auditor report * Internal Audit observations Report   All present considered all above and agreed with the report. Actions and observations will be actioned and evidenced in the future minutes of this meeting. All agreed the actions will be completed by the end of this financial year if not earlier.  Actions stated:   * HIGH PRIORITY Notice for exercise of Public Rights to be uploaded to the PC website * HIGH PRIORITY The minutes must show the start date and end date of the period of inspection for the exercise of Public Rights * MEDIUM PRIORITY The minute approving the setting of the Precept should show the resulting Band D council tax * HIGH PRIORITY The Council to note the publication requirements in respect of Members Allowances and to ensure that details of allowances paid are published on the website in accordance with the Regulations * HIGH PRIORITY All internal reports must be considered by the Parish Council meeting as soon as possible after completion and any recommendations / observations actioned. * HIGH PRIORITY It is recommended that the VAT is reclaimed as soon as possible after the 31March each year. The VAT for 2022/23 (£1863) and 2023 / 24 (£1286) should be reclaimed immediately from HMRC   AL to contact external Auditors and commence the next stage and advise the council of the progress and outcome  Notice for Exercise of Public rights to be placed on website and notice board on the 14th November for the period covering the 15th November to the 30th December 2024.  Section 2 Accounting Statements 2023 / 24 for Westcott Parish Council shared with all members and approved | AL  JH  AL  AL  AL  ALL  AL  AL  AL |
| 97. | **Clerk’s Report**  AL verbally gave the Clerks report as most of its content is within the agenda. A formal written Clerks report will be shared prior to future meetings.   * A rolling action plan will be created and shared with all members with the minutes of each meeting * BMKALC AGM to be held on the 29th November – join remotely or in attendance at Haddenham. * Bucks All Age carers strategy launched on the 4th November and open until the 15th December – information shared with members and displayed on the village notice board. * Pension credit surgery dates from BCC shared with members and displayed on the notice board * Highways stakeholder conference slides shard with all members * Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board workshop to be held 21st November at 1830hrs SP to attend * MKALC advised to ensure that the increase to 15% on the 6th April 25 should be calculated into budgets * AL requested that all financial requests for next year’s budget be sent to her as she will be presenting the first draft of the budget at the next meeting. * Electoral request sent to Bucks CC on the 31st October in preparation for next year’s elections. * Lighting repairs have been requested for 2 streetlights in the village and EON state they will be repaired in 10 working days. * Land registry search for the school has been completed and shared with all members | AL  ALL |
| 98. | **Matters Arising**  Hedge at school needs to be cut – AL has contacted the Oxford Diocese contact to arrange for this to be done. Will update on receipt of further information  Kevin Ready has offered his resignation. All members thanked him for his time on the Parish council. KR to send SP written confirmation of this.  Case numbers of the Waddesdon fires to be obtained from AW / environmental Agency for our records. | AL  KR  AL / JH |
| 99. | **Reports**   1. Burial Ground & Churchyard   Application for a headstone received and meets current guidance. Fee sheet sent.  Formal burial records to be handed over to new clerk   1. Website / email   Quotes from NetWise and Cloud Next shared as both companies meet the approved government requirements  NetWise - £60 per annum for the domain  £699 to set up website  £440 per annum for hosting  All costs incur VAT  Cloud Next £50 per annum for the domain  £49.99 per annum for website and email hosting  Website to be set up by ourselves so will incur cost of  approx. £800  All costs incur VAT  All present supported the motion of choosing Cloud Next and proceeding with the changeover. JH to lead on this project.  There will be planned downtime on emails that will be communicated during the changeover of domains.  Current costs are £100 per annum and annual domain renewal so no significant increase to annual costs.  Disclaimer for non-intended recipients to be added to all emails.   1. Village Green   See separate agenda item     1. Charities   Nothing to raise   1. Buckinghamshire Council   Given in previous agenda item to ensure AW can attend another meeting   1. Speed Watch   Speed camera continues to read above actual speed despite frequent resets. AL to contact Brian to try and resolve.     1. Bucks Recycling   SP / SL attended the meeting remotely with Bucks recycling on the 5th November. Minutes shared with members although SP highlighted inaccuracies in the minutes. Full minutes to be circulated to all. Christmas tree collection offered – final details to be received. Offer of free collection of three small items per household as long as appropriate items for recycling.  The ‘temporary’ building is still there. Lights on the temporary building remain and are clearly visible from Westcott. AL to contact planning department.   1. Venture Park   Light pollution across 24 hour period remains. SL shared photographic evidence from Ashendon. SP to take up further with Venture Park. Concerns raised that planning for buildings does not include lighting so the Council will have to stipulate this in any planning objections in the future.   1. Other   Bill Piers from the Ramblers raised concerns regarding the footpaths around the village following investment of gates a few years ago. Some footpaths entrances have now been cleared by the footpaths team but they would like a link with the Parish council and a councillor to be a Footpath Champion. SL agreed to take this role. AL to forward all correspondence to her and introduce her by email to Bill Piers. | JH  AL  AL  AL  SP  AL / SL |
| 100. | **Finance**  Cllrs noted the financial report sent prior to the meeting.  Bank accounts as at 31.10.24  Current Account £27331.17  Savings Account £11397.89  Total £38729.06  October 24  Income £0  Expenditure £4166.81 (inclusive of £3k for tree work to the Church yard)  Access to the Bank is still awaited for the new clerk. Cheques can be sent but no online banking payments can be set up until this access is available.  TW suggested that AL contact all current suppliers to explain the situation. | AL |
| 101. | **Planning Matters**  Planning report shared prior to the meeting.  24/03305/APP Westcott Venture park Drone cage 10m x 10m x 10m  Parish Council comments to be sent by the 3rd December 24.  All members objected to the application for the following reasons:   * Unacceptable visual appearance. The height of the cage will exceed the Bund surrounding the area so will be clearly visible from the village. The colour needs to be defined and would need to be green to meld into the countryside. * No mention of lighting of the cage which will also be clearly visible from the village * Unacceptable noise disturbances. The area highlighted for the drone cage is the closest part of the venture park to residential properties in the village.   The Council noted that the object of having the Bund originally for the Venture Park was to soften the visual impact and create noise abatement of the Venture Park to the Village.  AL to reply to the planning comments request before the 3rd December | AL |
| 102. | **Village Green Enhancement**  JH has met with Holdfords as the selected supplier.  Plans shared with members of 70cm posts above ground around the edges and a hedging quote that has been suggested to be Laurel.  JH to discuss more native planting rather than laurel.  Provisional start date for posts is 06.01.25  JH to see if a deposit is required and pay accordingly  JH to review contract, method statements and define responsibilities ahead of the work taking place.  JH to visit nurseries where trees have been held to ensure all plants are ready and present | JH  JH  JH  JH |
| 103. | **Defibrillator**    Chairman of the cricket club has responded that they would be very happy to have the defibrillator at the Cricket club and the parish council to pay costs. They will seek permission if required from Waddesdon Manor.  JH will continue with the application for the British heart Foundation now we have the Cricket Clubs agreement | JH |
| 104. | **Land at Lower Green**  New contact at BCC – John Grossart – as the matter has now been passed to a separate team in the Agricultural and estate ownership.  John Grossart has already visited the site and JH is awaiting an update | JH |
| 105. | **Devolved Grass Cutting**  Cllr Waite has provided measurements to WPC. Total area of grass = 14,550m2.  AL to arrange for quotes and respond to the recent devolved strategy indicating that Westcott PC are not already in a devolved contract. | AL |
| 106. | **Playground Enhancements**  Re-consider in the New Year |  |
| 107. | **School Site**  New contact regarding the school site is Gordon Joyner – Deputy Director (Development and support) of the ODBE.  He has confirmed that Guardians (maximum of 4) will be in situe soon. They will be sleeping there overnight, and all have jobs.  He also confirmed that the Woodward Trust intend to erect a fence to mark their land at the rear of the school.  AL has asked regarding the length of tenure of the guardians, future usage and cutting of the hedge. AL will circulate the response once received.  All Land registry titles, and site maps shared with all members. | SP  AL |
| 108. | **Senior Residents Xmas Lunch**  2 quotes and menus received for Senior residents of Westcott’s Xmas lunch. Monies raised by Santas sleigh collection each year to form the bulk of the funding.  The Lion at Waddesdon have quoted for £20 a head for a two-course meal and coffee. £50 deposit required and provisional booking made for the 12th December.  The Railway centre at Quainton have quoted an initial £30 per head and then kindly reduced it to £25 per head for the 5th December.  All members agreed to opt for the Lion which will enable us to offer further places if required. SP asked if we can agree a maximum budget of £500 which all agreed.  AL to book the lion and settle the deposit. AL / SP to send invites and secure numbers and dietary requirements. | AL / SP |
| 109. | **Urgent matters of note**  JH raised the concern that Bus services are being further reduced, sometimes even on the day the driver is deciding not to follow the normal route which means the school children coming from Aylesbury cannot get home on a number of occasions. AL to email Cllr Phil Gomm at Quainton as the bus route is in relation to Quainton.  SL wanted confirmation as to what lorries are allowed to come through the village. Members discussed this and the only lorries not allowed through the village are Bucks recycling. Concerns raised previously with AW that many HGV’s are coming through the village due to the road closures, diversions and signage. | AL |
| 110. | **Date of next meeting:**  Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 7.30pm at Westcott Cricket Club - all agreed |  |
|  | **Part 1 of the meeting closed at 2135 hrs** |  |

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Date Agreed:

Signed:

Position: – Chair/Vice Chair/Councillor