

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

Held on Tuesday 9th February 2021 under the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

Present: P. Allsopp (Chair), M. Bartram, C. Blanksby, J. Houghton, A. MacPherson and I. Walters.
Cllr M. Ford (SDDC and DCC)
Members of the Public
D. Townsend (Locum Clerk).

090221/1 To receive apologies for absence

None.

090221/2 Variation of Order of Business

None.

090221/3 Declaration of Members' Interests

None.

090221/4 Public Speaking, including County, District and Police Representation.

A resident welcomed the draft Minutes being published on the website. He also stated that his question on the parish boundary had not been included in the Minutes, and he congratulated Derby Arena and Repton Road Surgery on their administration of the COVID vaccination.

A resident spoke in respect of Minute Number 090221/24(e). She felt that Hall Lane was not the most suitable site for the Outdoor Play equipment as it was very close to adjacent properties, and it would have been better on Twyford Road Playing Field. Hall Lane currently had a small childrens play area, and some examples of anti-social behaviour had already been observed. She also reported that residents adjoining the Hall Lane site were still awaiting the erection of a fence provided by the Council.

A resident spoke about the Councillor vacancies and asked if they could be included on Willington Parish Councils facebook page.

A resident thanked the Locum Clerk for her work at Willington Parish Council.

Cllr Ford reported;

- DCC Council Tax would rise 2.5%. The overall budget for the year was £572.4 million.
- The Causeway Culvert repairs were ongoing
- There were details on the DCC website for people affected by flooding or needing additional financial help throughout the winter.
- Two local COVID testing centres would be closing. Midway Community Centre would remain open for people who were non-symptomatic. Vaccinations were now being administered at Oaklands Care Village, Swadlincote.
- TRO consultations were being rolled out for Willington, Findern, Etwall and Repton
- DCC, with others were supporting the Freeport bid that included the EMIP land between the A38/A50. The bid was presented on Feb 5th 2021.

Cllr Macpherson reported;

- that there had again been problems with bin collection due to inclement weather, but they were working hard to catch-up.
- If anyone noticed blocked gullies, they were encouraged to report them to either SDDC or DCC.
- He requested that Cllr Ford ask DCC to prioritise the TRPF Village Green application.

Cllr T. Bartram asked as SDDC had recently undergone a change of Leadership from Conservative to Labour, if it would have any implications for the Village. Cllr MacPherson responded that Labour had gained control but it was business as usual for the Council.

090221/5 To confirm and agree as a true record the non-confidential Minutes of the Ordinary Willington Parish Council Meeting held on 12th January 2020.

RESOLVED to agree and sign the Minutes as a true and accurate record, subject to an amendment to Minute Number 120121/4 to include the following wording "A resident made the suggestion that consideration might be given to alterations to the Parish boundary".

090221/6 To consider a resolution to close the meeting for public participation under the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960.

Not Required

090221/7 Finance – Income and payments to 9th February 2021

To approve the income and payments to 9th February 2021 (attached at Annexe A to the Minutes). All invoices were available for inspection prior to the Meeting.

RESOLVED that all income and payments as submitted be agreed.

090221/8 To confirm and agree the accounts to month ending 31st January 2021

RESOLVED that the accounts and bank reconciliation to month ending 31st January 2021 as submitted, be agreed.

090221/9 Clerks Report

An updated version of the Locum Clerks report was circulated and the Locum Clerk was asked to copy Cllr MacPherson in on any unanswered emails from SDDC.

A statement was also read by the Locum Clerk further to previous recent personal comments that had been made about her on social media (attached at Annexe B).

NOTED

090221/10 Councillor Resignation/Vacancy Notices

The resignation of Claire Carter was reported, and it was confirmed that Vacancy Notices had been re-issued for all four current vacancies. The Chair thanked Claire for all of her work for the Council and for spear-heading the work carried out so far in progressing the plans for the extension to the changing rooms on Twyford Road Playing Field.

The process was discussed and it was pointed out that the cost of the election process would be approximately £4500.00, chargeable to Willington Parish Council.

NOTED

090221/11 Outdoor Gym (Hall Lane)

It was reported that a site plan had been requested, but not yet received from the Council's chosen supplier. S106 funding had now been approved and was awaiting release.

NOTED

090221/12 Update on s106 projects

The following updates were provided;

a) TRPF

- The plans although submitted had not yet been validated by SDDC
- Further to the resignation of C. Carter, further members of the informal working group were needed.

RESOLVED that Cllrs M. Bartram and T. Bartram join Cllr Allsopp on the Informal Working Group. Cllr Houghton will also join as soon as possible.

b) Tennis Court Refurbishment

Councillor Houghton reported that the previous contractor who had quoted had now withdrawn, and it was difficult to identify companies who could complete this work to get three quotations. Cllr MacPherson suggested that SDDC had a preferred supplier list that they may be able to share.

RESOLVED that the Locum Clerk approach SDDC for recommended suppliers.

090221/13 Signatories

It was reported that additional signatories had not been processed due to information not being provided. Members of the Finance Committee should all be signatories on the Council's bank accounts. Current signatories were Cllrs Allsopp, Houghton and Walters. Cllr T. Bartram was also a member of the Finance Committee and agreed to provide the required details to Cllr Houghton for submission to Unity Trust as soon as possible.

090221/14 Station Garden

It was reported that an offer of help to maintain the Station Garden had been received.

NOTED.

090221/15 Trees on Derwent Court

It was reported that a request had been received from a resident asking that the trees at the rear of the properties on Derwent Court be reduced in height.

RESOLVED that the Locum Clerk gets quotations for this work, to be re-submitted to Council.

090221/16 SDDC Summer Activities

Further to all WPC's sessions being confirmed, SDDC had four additional sessions available.

NOTED.

090221/17 Village Green Status – Twyford Road Playing Field

Further to Minute Number 081220/16, the Locum Clerk had written to the residents who had originally requested Village Green Status, asking if they would consider withdrawing their request. Responses from two of the residents objecting to this request were circulated to all Councillors.

NOTED.

090221/18 Twyford Road Playing Field (Cllr MacPherson)

Further to a query at January's Council Meeting, it was been confirmed that Twyford Road Playing Field was now protected as a Local Green Space through the adopted Local Plan. The Local Green Spaces Plan (which had the full weight of a local plan document) was adopted in September 2020. Policy BNE8 in the Local Plan Part 2 sets out the protection afforded to local green spaces with a further two policies within the Local Green Spaces Plan itself. The wording of policy BNE8 is set out below.

Policy BNE8

Local Green Spaces will be protected from development except in very special circumstances or for the following limited types of development where they preserve the openness of the Local Green Space and do not harm the purpose for its designation:

- i) The construction of a new building providing essential facilities for outdoor sport. Outdoor recreation, cemeteries, allotments or other uses of the open land;
- ii) The carrying out of an engineering or other operation.

Designations of Local Green Spaces will be made through a separate Development Plan Document or Neighbourhood Development Plan. South Derbyshire District Council will work to enhance the biodiversity, heritage, recreation and tranquility value and where possible the public accessibility of Local Green Spaces through appropriate site management.

Cllr MacPherson agreed to provide a list of all sites in Willington with Local Green Space protection.

090221/19 Road Traffic Regulation Orders

This had been circulated to all Councilors on 14th January 2021 as a response was requested before the February meeting took place. The Locum Clerk did not receive any replies, and had therefore not responded. Public consultation had still not taken place. The Locum Clerk was asked to re-circulate this consultation.

NOTED.

090221/20 S137 Application – Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

An application for S137 funds had been received from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

RESOLVED that Derbyshire Wildlife Trust be allocated £3749.00.

090221/21 S137 Application – Willington Village Hall

An application for S137 funds had been received from Willington Village Hall.

RESOLVED that Willington Village Hall be allocated £1000.00.

Council also considered Minute Number 090221/24(c). The decision is recorded below.

090221/22 Tow Path (Willington to Findern)

The state of the footpath/towpath between Willington to Findern was discussed, and it was agreed that it was also very poor between Willington towards Burton, although it was thought that the path to Findern was used more.

RESOLVED that the Locum Clerk write to the River Trust and Derbyshire County Council to ask if maintenance work could be carried out between Willington and Findern.

9.00 pm. It was proposed and seconded that the Meeting be extended.

RESOLVED that the Meeting be extended past the two hour limit to allow all business to be completed.

090221/23 Planning Applications

- a) DMPA/2020/1459. The erection of a new dwelling on Land adjacent to No 6 The Castle Way, Willington, Derby, DE65 6BT.
- b) DMPA/2020/1332. Loft conversion with existing dormers to be extended and external alterations. 33 Georgia Avenue, Willington, Derby, DE65 6RB.

NOTED

090221/24 Correspondence Received

- a) An email was received in respect of the Parish Boundary.

NOTED.

- b) A response to Minute Number 101120/22 was reported, in regard to parking on Green Close. c)
- c) An email had been received requesting financial support for the Station Adopters Proposed Memorial Stone.

RESOLVED that a s137 Grant be agreed to cover the cost of a planning application (up to a maximum of £234.00)

- d) An email had been received regarding dog mess. It was agreed that dog mess was increasing in the village, and it was;

RESOLVED

- a) that the Locum Clerk write to SDDC and request the presence of the dog wardens as a deterrent and also ask if they would consider siting CCTV cameras in the 'hot-spot' areas.
- b) That Councilors identify the 'hot-spot' areas and this matter be considered at the next Council Meeting (March).

e) An email had been received regarding the siting of the Outdoor Gym on Hall Lane, requesting that the site be reconsidered as it was not suitable due to security concerns at their property which was adjacent to the site. This matter was debated and it was agreed that this site was the most suitable site for this equipment as had been previously agreed. The fencing around this site was also discussed, and it was;

RESOLVED that the Locum Clerk obtains quotes for fencing around the rear of the Play Area which borders on St Michaels Close/Church Close. The fencing to consist of metal posts and green mesh fencing as exists.

090221/25 Items for Information

All items of interest had been circulated by email.

090221/26 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

090221/27 Staffing Matters

The recruitment of a permanent Clerk was considered and it was;

RESOLVED to commence the recruitment process.

The Meeting closed at 9.55 pm

PAYMENTS/INCOME TO APPROVE 9TH FEBRUARY 2021

Date		Name	Description	VAT	Total inc VAT
			INVOICES ATTACHED	£	£
9.2.21	BACS	South Derbys CVS	Finance Clerk Inv. 9288		33.65
9.2.21	BACS	Streetscape	Replacement Springer	307.00	1842.00
9.2.21	BACS	D. Townsend	Locum Clerk Inv. 160		1175.00
9.2.21	BACS	G. McCulloch	Litter Picking/Play Area Inspection (includes cr £5.00)		189.00
9.2.21	BACS	B. Davis	Newsletter		162.00
			FROM BANK STATEMENT		
			PAYMENTS		
4.1.21	DD	SDDC			43.00
19.1.21	DD	EON			13.83
			INCOME		
18.1.21	CHQ		Burials (Memorial)		74.00

**REPORT; LOCUM CLERK'S REPORT
TO; COUNCIL 9th February 2021
FROM; D. Townsend**

Further to recent social media posts and abuse that has been aimed at me personally, I would like to include the following report within my Clerk's report (Item 9).

Over the past 18 months I have experienced bullying and intimidation that I have never experienced before in either my personal or working life. This is all documented and I have maintained records of all behaviour that I have experienced.

This Council has had 5 members of staff in the 18 months before I became the Locum Clerk. The Council also appointed a permanent Clerk during the last 18 months who remained in post for less than 1 month. This record speaks for itself.

The last 18 months have also seen an independent investigation of two Councillors behaviour which culminated in a Standards Hearing which found numerous breaches of the code of conduct including bullying, intimidation and lack of respect.

During this time I have also experienced online bullying and intimidation, including most recently some libellous statements from local residents on social media, all of which I have recorded and am currently deciding what action to take.

Included on this Agenda is a request for Councillors to consider the appointment of a permanent Clerk. The Council must ensure there is a robust procedure in place to protect future members of staff from the minority of people who wish to continue promoting a toxic environment in Willington.

There are currently 4 Cllr vacancies on WPC, and I would implore you all to pull together, be positive and encourage the best people for the job. If there is a will for an election, and the correct processes are completed, then an election should go ahead – it is a democratic process – new blood and new ideas are always welcome.

During the last few months this Council has achieved many things. It has entered into informal consultation with residents, secured S106 money for the benefit of residents, and it is proposing to complete an extension to Twyford Road Playing Field changing rooms - the planning permission has been submitted and the PC are hopeful to be able to complete this within the timescales. Improvements are planned for the tennis courts, and an outdoor gym has been agreed for Hall Lane Park. There are now many up to date policies, and procedures in place although this is work in progress. This is the time to look forward and be positive.

I, as Locum Clerk am an employee. I am not 'fair game' for being harangued on social media – I am not sure how those who do this would feel if this happened to them in the course of them doing their job.

However, in conclusion to this report, I also must thank many of the current members of the Council for their support during what has personally been a very difficult 18 months.

Please be positive – Willington has a lot to be positive about!