

MELBURY OSMOND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

Venue: Reading Room

Date: 11th January 2016

Time: 19:30

Present:

Council: Jon Burden (Chair), James Evans (Vice-Chair), Anna Roxburgh, Michael Kowalewski
Martin Smith, Pete Coverdale, Lindsay Reeve (Clerk)

WDDC Mary Penfold, Cllr from Frome Valley Ward

Public: Four members of the public were present

1. Open Meeting:

Nothing was raised.

2. Apologies:

Charles Swallow, PC Alex Bishop and Michael Bevan

3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Extraordinary Meeting

Minutes were approved unanimously and signed by JB.

4. Matters Arising

WDDC have yet to announce a decision on the Melbury Dairy planning application.

5. Precept.

JB asked that this be discussed after the subject of the Village Hall.

6. Playground

Jon Burden (JB) reported that he had received thirteen responses to the Parish Council letter asking villagers for their views on the future of the playground. These responses were varied but the general feeling was that the facility should be kept but perhaps as a smaller version due to the high repair costs. Other suggestions were that Mandeville Joinery could be approached about giving a quote for repairs, that the village itself could take a hands on approach with the repairs, and Robert and Maria Galloway suggested that there should be inclusion of a garden between the boules ground and the playground for the older residents of the village to enjoy and said they were happy to create this.

James Evans (JE) said he felt this would just add more costs in the future and did not feel it was a good idea. JB suggested that the way forward was to have a committee that would come up with the financial options for keeping the playground to include repair and future maintenance. Further discussion majored on the great cost of repairing all the current play equipment and suggested reducing the size and perhaps replacing the bark with a cheaper material.

JE felt that the committee should have two councillors on it. Pete Coverdale (PC) and Anna Roxburgh (AR) agreed to represent the council and to organise the committee by finding other volunteers from the village.

JB thanked them for agreeing to organise this and PC confirmed that the next ROSPA inspection was in May so the insurance was valid till then which gave them time to develop a plan.

7. Tennis Club – Application to WDDC for Tree Felling

JB summarised the report from Ilchester Estates which recommended just one of the four trees in question be removed which was tree two. Roger Caesley informed the PC that the village hall committee had put their own application in for tree four to be felled as it was causing visible damage to the hall and that they were waiting for a decision.

PC read out comments from Ros Senior on the Estates report. She felt all the trees apart from tree one were causing, or would cause in the very near future, damage to the tennis court or village hall and should be removed.

It was agreed that the PC should put in an application for trees one, two and three to be felled and take the advice of the WDDC Tree Officer. JB would discuss the outcome of the WDDC Tree Officer decision with the Estate.

8. Village Hall Funding

AR declared that she had a non-pecuniary interest in this matter.

JB proposed a donation in 2016 of £250 to the village hall which subject to funds could perhaps be increased in future. This motion was proposed by PC and seconded by JE.

Mary Penfold (MP) asked if there had been any success with a grant application to WDDC and AR said the Village Hall committee had put one in and were waiting for a response which they hoped to receive by the end of January.

Precept – (Matter 5 on the agenda)

JB confirmed that the Precept was currently £1711 but that the tax base had dropped this year. He stated that if the Precept was not increased the PC would be in deficit in five years based on predicted spending. JB stated that an increase of 15% would be required to meet the predicted expenditure for the coming year but suggested that, as there were funds in the bank account, 10% should be considered. JE originally suggested a 10% increase but thought that 15% should be considered in order to meet the budget, although he recognised that would not be well received by the village when the PC had funds in the bank. The feeling was the bank funds should be spent on the village hall donation and rise in clerk's salary to keep the Precept rise lower.

The resolution, proposed by Martin Smith (MS), was that the increase should be 10% and this was seconded by JE with all others present in favour.

10. Highways

JE felt the missing bollard reported by Charles Swallow (CS) had actually been replaced. He reported that the holes in the road at the entrance to the village had all been filled by the Highways Dept.

He stated that the bricks out of walls near Bridge Cottage and the bridge in Barton Lane were caused by heavy vehicles but not necessarily Estate tractors as the school bus and lorries could also have caused such damage. He commended the Estate for repairs to the verges but questioned if it was actually their responsibility or the Highways Dept.

Regarding the double white lines on the A37 and the possibility of them being extended. MP agreed to speak to Michael Bevan (MB) regarding a site meeting with JE, MB and herself to further this.

10. Transparency Code/Website

AR summarised the outcome of meeting that had taken place earlier in the week between herself, the Clerk (LR), Roger Caesley and Steve Gallagher (SG), who created the current village website, the purpose of which was to establish the best way forward to comply with the Transparency Code requirements.

It was agreed that with the large amount of extra information legally required to be on a PC website the

solution would be to have a new website commercially created and managed. At this meeting AR thanked SG on behalf of the PC for all his hard work creating and maintaining the existing site.

It was agreed that the suggestion to the PC would be that a new website for both the PC and village be approved as a government grant was available for the majority, if not all the cost of this, through the local branch of the NALC. It was also suggested that advertisers could be found to meet any costs not covered by the grant and that village societies like the Tennis Club, Garden and Show Society, Friends of St Osmund's and the Village Hall could contribute a small sum for their presence on the site.

An Exeter based company Vision ICT were suggested as a possible supplier of the new website as they specialise in council and parish council sites.

AR proposed the PC approve a new website and this resolution was passed with MS abstaining.

It was agreed that a subcommittee would be formed and SG would be invited to be part of it as his input would be much appreciated and that AR would contact Vision ICT to discuss the way forward.

11. AOB

MS requested that contact numbers be on the new website as he had experienced an issue with the Village Hall and found it hard to contact someone.

AR said that there had been an issue with access to the far end of the village when the splash was high and a gate was locked. JB said he would look into and contact the Estate if necessary. There was some confusion about which gate as it was believed access was through the back of Townsend Farm not the gate into the actual Estate.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday March 14th.