

MELBURY OSMOND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

Venue: Reading Room

Date: 14th March 2016

Time: 19:30

Present:

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

WDDC Mary Penfold, Cllr from Frome Valley Ward

Public: Three members of the public were present

1. Open Meeting:

JB summarised the letter he had received from Ben Jones of Ilchester Estates regarding the proposed extension to Melbury Dairy. The letter stated that the Estate had put this plan on hold for at least 12 months due to a combination of uncertainty over the EU referendum and the current downturn in milk prices.

Roger Caesley asked the council if they were planning to be involved in any way with the "Clean for the Queen" campaign. JB said it could be discussed under Any Other Business.

RC said he had concerns regarding road safety over the width of the hedge opposite School Cottage. JB said he would speak with the owner of the property to see if there was an issue and, if so, what solution was appropriate.

RC asked for an update on the tree application at the tennis courts. The clerk said that she was waiting for the tree officer, Ron Martin of WDDC, to come back with a date to meet at the site and that Ros Senior from the tennis club had agreed to attend. The clerk said that someone from the village hall committee was welcome to attend also. They would be advised of the date when known.

There was some confusion about the application as the clerk had applied for only three of the trees to be felled believing the village hall had applied for the remaining tree nearest to the hall. The village hall committee explained that they did not apply but put an e mail request in to WDDC for advice and wrote to the Estate informing them that they are unable to maintain the terms of their lease with the tree damaging the building. They also informed the meeting that they had a response from another tree officer so the clerk is now seeking clarification on the differing responses and establishing which tree officer has overall responsibility for Melbury Osmond.

A request was made by Peter Harpham, on behalf of John Senior, regarding insurance cover for the gymkhana that has been proposed as part of the summer fete. The clerk is to establish if the PC's insurance will cover the event.

2. Apologies:

PC Alex Bishop and Cllr Michael Bevan

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes were approved unanimously and signed by JB.

4. Matters Arising

Nothing

5. Smaller Authorities Audit

It was unanimously agreed not to opt out of the new SAAA External Audit arrangements.

6. Playground

The playground committee (AR and PC) presented their report on the playground and options for its repair/retention/reduction or total replacement. The recent PC questionnaire to residents asking their opinion resulted in a fairly even split wanting it repaired /retained and those that wanted it repaired/retained but reduced. The committee said that kindly several offers of help were made and donations were offered including towards annual maintenance and renewing the equipment in metal. However the committee reported that the costs of replacing the current equipment with new metal equipment would be extremely expensive and that could only be done if considerable funds were found from grants. Cllr Penfold offered to find out where Sydling St Nicholas got a recent grant from and the playground committee presented various other options but it was agreed that any application for grant funding could only be made when a decision was made on the way forward. This could not happen until after the next ROSPA report which would give a clear picture of what needed to be done to meet insurance conditions.

The playground committee's proposal therefore was to mend the broken seesaw and wait for the next ROSPA report in May to see what they recommended. This proposal was accepted.

JE asked that the playground committee be thanked for all the work they had done to produce the comprehensive report.

7. Tennis Club – Application to WDDC for Tree Felling

This was covered in the open meeting but MS asked that it be minuted that there had been confusion with regard to whether the village hall had put in a formal application to WDDC for tree four to be felled when they had not. It was the understanding of all members of the Council that the Village Hall committee were going to apply separately for a felling order.

8. Clerks Salary

JE asked the clerk to leave the room while this was discussed. It was agreed to increase the annual salary by £100 to £600.

9. Highways

JE confirmed he had walked the village with Cllr Penfold to examine the damaged verges and general state of the road. Cllr Bevan had previously indicated that there were no funds available. There was a discussion amongst the council about the damage being caused by the school bus, oil lorries, BT vans and others so not just the Estate tractors.

CS said the matter had been dragging on for some time with no action and that if something wasn't done about the state of the entrance to the village and the verges he would step down from the council and asked for this to be in the minutes

CS suggested that the council should repair the verges at the entrance to the village as part of The Clean for The Queen campaign.

JE proposed to the council that a letter be sent to the head of highways at the County Council asking for the council to re surface the road from the A37 entrance to the village to Drive End Farm and then from Bridge Cottage to the top of Barton Hill. This was agreed by all and the clerk was asked to send the letter.

10 Website

The clerk confirmed that the grant application had been made and that as soon as the funds appeared the website company would start work on the new site. They had agreed to build a free 4 page holding site as the existing village site would no longer be active after March 31st.

11. Any Other Business

MK said a resident had spoken to him about a dog loose in the village that had scared her dogs and the council agreed that it was a matter for the dog warden who she was going to contact.

CS Suggested that the there was a missing bollard by the entrance to the village and that by replacing it and adding another, after the area had been repaired as part of The Clean for The Queen campaign, the verge there would be protected from future damage. He also suggested that as part of this clean up the road signs should be cleaned and the bus shelter.

CS Commented that dog mess continued to be a problem especially by the main entrance into the Estate.

Cllr Penfold asked if the council were aware of the referendum on a potential new governance structure for WDDC which will take place alongside the Police and Crime Commissioner elections on May 5th. She went on to outline the details.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday May 16th and this will be the annual parish meeting