

Whittington Parish Council



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Minutes of the Extra Ordinary meeting of Whittington Parish Council held on 10 December 2015 at 19.30 at Whittington Village Hall

1) Attendance and Apologies -

Those Present:

Chairman: Cllr S Macleod
Councillors: Cllr M Baker, Cllr A Guy
Officers: Mrs C Chambers (Parish Clerk)
Attendees: Councillor Rob Adams and 8 parishioners
Invited Guest Mr Steve Brooker and Mr David Chestney

Democratic Period/ Question Time

The Chairman reported that the former Clerk to Whittington Parish Council Mr Peter Roe had sadly passed away his family had arranged a memorial to his life which would be held in May 2016.

1) **Attendance and Apologies** - Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Clark, Cllr F Richards and Mr Roger Phillips.

2) Declarations of Interest and Ethical Matters.

- a To receive declarations of Personal (non prejudicial) Interests in items on this Agenda and their nature. **None.**
- b To receive declarations of Prejudicial Interests in items on this Agenda and their nature.

Cllr Guy addressed members and parishioners regarding the clarification of WPC's position as Trustees of Whittington Village Hall. Cllr Guy quoted from a copy of the trustee deed, he felt that a declaration needed to be noted as he considered that WPC might be trustees of the Management Committee and the freeholder of the land and building.

It was confirmed that that the meeting was held as a Council meeting and not as trustees. The Chairman confirmed that under the Clerks advisement the meeting would proceed, as the Council had recently become aware of the documents further clarification on the parish council's trusteeship was needed and would be clarified by an independent solicitor. Following discussion, Steve Brooker added that the documents were hard to read and VHMC would get their own legal advice on the trusteeship, he also added that if WVMC were/can sell the village hall then it would be discussed at an open meeting of all parishioners.

- c Ethical Matters. **None.**

3) Potential 106 Funding

Background - The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a report which reminded Members of the meeting held on 14 July 2015, at that meeting she reported that she had received an email from WDC which asked the Council to identify projects for potential s106 funding. She had identified 3 'live' projects within the parish that would benefit from s106 funding. The projects were Whittington Church Extension, Whittington Village Hall to be rebuilt and a Car Park for visitors to Whittington. These projects were agreed by the Council. The Clerk filled out the 'Potential Funding Sources Identified' form and circulated it to members before it was forwarded to Wychavon District Council. Copy of which was attached to the agenda. The report also reminded Members of the meeting held on 8 September, to which the Chairman reported on the meeting she and the Clerk had attended which was held on 11 August 2015 at Wychavon DC with Deputy Managing Director Vic Allison, Community Development Manager Jem Teal, WVHMC Chairman Roger Philips and David Hallmark. The meeting had been arranged by Cllr Rob Adams who was also in attendance. The aim of the meeting was to establish if s106 funding would be available from the Swinesherd development for the rebuild of Whittington Village Hall. Those present were informed that it would be hard to secure funding for a building, it was explained that the s106 had to meet criteria and had to be essential to the Swinesherd development, a new village hall building would not fall into that category, by law the money had to be spent on sport.

Update - The Clerk also reported that following further discussions with Jem Teal of WDC and Cllr Rob Adams, it had been reiterated that the projects did not fall within the criteria for s106 funding. But funding could be 'made' available through negotiation with Jem Teal and the Developer. The Village Hall and the Church extension had been identified as most likely projects to get funding. The project heads must be able to prove that their project would be of benefit, and serve the 'new' community. The Clerk had also been advised that the funding would not be a huge amount, therefore the council should take this into consideration if both projects were supported.

Potential s106 Projects - The Clerk had invited the project Chairman of Whittington Village Hall Management Committee and the project Chairman of Whittington Church Elizabethan Room Development Group to address the Council. Whittington Parish Council had been asked to discuss the projects for potential s106 funding and formally support both or one of the projects. Any funding that might be made available for either or both of the projects would be paid through the Parish Council.

a. Whittington Church Elizabethan Room Development Group - presentation by the Chairman of the Elizabethan Room Development Group Mr David Chestney.

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Chestney the Chairman of Whittington Church Elizabethan Room Development Group to the meeting and invited him to address the Council. Mr Chestney read out his report which had been circulated with the agenda, and is attached to the minutes (annexed 1). Following questions from members Mr Chestney confirmed that Whittington Church would not receive any financial help from the Diocese the funding was totally reliant on grants and local fund raising. He also confirmed that Whittington Church had reserves of £35k and that £12K had already been raised by appeal which started at the Harvest Festival. Mr Chestney also confirmed that it would take approximately 18 months to start the project. The Chairman thanked Mr Chestney for his report.

b. Whittington Village Hall Presentation - presentation by Steve Brooker on behalf of Village Hall Management Committee.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Steve Brooker to the meeting who had been nominated by Mr Phillips, Chairman of VHMC. Mr Phillips had submitted a report to the Council which was circulated to Members and is attached to the minutes (annexed 2). Mr Brooker gave a retrospective and his views, he then outlined the 3 options for the village hall;

Option 1 - to build a new build village Hall.

Option 2 - would be to refurbish or demolish the existing hall, he estimated that it would cost circa £350k to rebuild the village hall. To refurbish the existing hall would cost less but would not be beneficial as the village hall would be smaller in comparison to project number 2.

Option 3 - would be to move the village hall 'into' the after school club building which would create a larger space with additional facilities with a car park for which could be used by the Church, he added that this project could be a community facility. The VHMC was currently in negotiation with the after school club and subject to structural investigation, valuation and refurbishment the project could cost circa £200-£250k.

Following questions from members Mr Brooker was unable to confirm if VHMC had secured additional grants from other funding streams and could not confirm what community fund raising had been done. Mr Wood added that the bookings at the VH had raised funds, Mr Brooker confirmed that VH had £90k, he added that he was unable to confirm which option of the 3 listed above the Council was asked to support therefore no project time scale was planned and could not prepare a business plan until a decision about the after school club had been made. Mr Brooker left the meeting.

Following both representations and further discussion with members and those present the Parish Council felt that the presentation given by the church representative was clear, positive and informative, Mr Chestney explained what had happened, where things stand now and what was planned for the way forward. Financial questions were answered and they demonstrated their engagement with the community, to get current views and obtained useful feedback. The presentation explained how the new church extension would benefit the existing and growing future community. The Council felt that it was the strongest and clearest project case to be put forward to Wychavon at this present time. Although both projects would benefit from s106 funding it was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** to put forward Whittington Church's Elizabethan Room as the project they recommend for section 106 money that is available at present.

4) Date of Next Meeting.

The date of the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be Tuesday 12th January 2016 at Whittington Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Councillor S Macleod
Chairman

Annex 1

Elizabethan Room Development Group

Report to Whittington Parish Council – Section 106 Funding or Contribution

Purpose. The primary purpose of the Elizabethan Room, at the Church, is to provide the essential facilities of a universally accessible toilet and kitchen along with a reasonably sized meeting room and store. These facilities are currently provided in some measure by the portakabin (Jubilee Room) but the planning permission for this has now expired and must be renewed to enable it to remain until the extension to the Church is built and in use. The implication of this requirement is that there is no question of the portakabin remaining in any form in the future whatever the outcome of the present project.

Present Position. The NW Extension to the Church (the Elizabethan Room) was granted planning permission in May 15 with the support of the Parish Council. The estimated cost of the project is £250,000 and an appeal was launched on October 11th at the Harvest Festival Service and now stands at around £12,000, so there is a long way to go! All sources of funds, particularly grant, are being pursued and one of these is the possibility of Section 106 grant or developer contribution.

The Elizabethan Room. The major aim for the meeting room and attendant facilities is to provide for **community purposes** and to that end a survey of people in the area covered by the school catchment has been carried out to establish local needs. The result has shown strong support for school groups, mother and toddler groups, church groups, community groups, health and well-being, as well as local interest (heritage) facilities, reading and library facilities; a range of other uses were suggested. Consequently there is considerable interest in the Parish and beyond for the sort of space the new room would offer. Such interest and demand will increase with the developments already under way and proposed within the Parish. Developers apparently have the power to determine what constitutes an acceptable scheme and what does not relying on the demand from the increased population.

The Developments. Whittington will be surrounded on two sides by new developments which must have a direct effect on the Village with increased demand for local facilities and services of all sorts. For a start the school is expecting a much higher intake of pupils from the Parish and main catchment. The object of section 106 agreements was understood to be the support of local communities in dealing with the increase in use of their facilities and their provision where appropriate, in short providing for “community contributions”. Whittington must fall into that category and account should be taken of the need to extend the Church and renew the Village Hall both of which will be directly affected by the developments and which should be seen as a response to the much greater number of people living in the immediate area. However it seems there is no prospect of more than one scheme being funded so a choice will have to be made between the two for support.

David Chestney December 2015

WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE NEW HALL PROJECT UPDATE NOVEMBER 2016

The Committee has recognised that the existing hall is in need of replacement. An alternative scheme to refurbish and extend the hall was rejected after professional advice and a decision was made to look at a new build. After purchasing adjacent land from the Berkeley Trust we were able to seek planning permission for a new hall (Plan A). This was successful, but would still not provide a hall large enough to be suitable for multi usage. Funding was largely based on our existing savings and the promise of a substantial contribution from Bloor Homes. Unfortunately, these funds were much reduced and plans were put on hold until we were able seek further opportunities to raise the estimated £350,000 needed to complete the project.

Soon after this Nick Hodgetts revealed his Whittington Green project with the promise of a major financial contribution, the gift of new premises and the provision of a new village green. The Committee thought this project worthy of their support, should he achieve planning permission. After considerable delay his plans were refused and another scheme substituted, again after much delay these plans were withdrawn.

As the After School Club was considered in his earlier plans we decided to open a dialog with the owner to see if there was a realistic opportunity to develop a new facility based on these premises. The Committee consider these larger premises suitable for conversion into multi use without major outlay and have the added attraction of providing facilities and car parking for the Church. Pedestrians can also access the building without walking down a busy Church Lane.

These talks are still at an early stage and only after we have taken appropriate professional advice will we decide to recommend this opportunity to the Village. This is mandatory under the terms and conditions of the original Conveyance and there must be a majority in favour to proceed.

Our Hall is extremely busy and there are few opportunities to develop new community activities due to single use only. The arrival of 250 new households, together with a possible similar development will put greater pressure on available space. Should we return to plan A and build on the present site we still have a major funding issue so hope the Parish Council will support and encourage both developers and Wychavon District Council to provide us with the additional funds we need.

The present financial situation is as follows;

Building Fund	£90000
Wychavon Community Grant	£ 9000
Whittington PC	£18000
Allocated S106 Contribution	
Miller Homes	£ 8500
Bloor Homes	£51000
Possible Pegasus contribution	£22500

Obviously more money is needed but until we have a concrete project to proceed with, we are unable to approach other institutions to seek grants etc. We are aware that the 'New Homes Bonus' scheme may make some future contribution but all hangs on the Chancellors Autumn statement and Wychavon's subsequent decision on parish allocations.

Other actions the PC may consider is a specific Village Hall precept and the support of an approach to the Public Loans Board.

The Management Committee have, over the years, worked extremely hard to raise the funds we now hold and we hope our efforts will be recognised by Councillors.

Roger Phillips