**Upton Snodsbury Parish Council**

**Parish Council Zoom Meeting - Minutes Tuesday 6th April 2021, 7.00pm Upton Snodsbury Parish**

**Parish Councillors Present :** Paul Seymour (PS) (Chairman), Roger Peart (RP) (Vice Chairman), Debbie Waters (DW), Sandra Jennings (SJ), Alan Grainger (AG), Martyn Macefield (MM)

District Cllr L Robinson, County Cllr R Adams

**Clerk/RFO:** Nicola Harding **In attendance:** Oneparishioner

**Parish Council Meeting**

**21/12 Apologies:** There were none received.

**21/13 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations made.

**21/14 Parishioner’s Comments:** There were no parishioner’s comments received.

**21/15 Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 12th January 2020**

Proposed RP, seconded MM, all in favour, to approve the minutes as a true record.

**21/16 Casual vacancy**

Proposed PS, seconded RP, all in favour, to fill the casual vacancy on the Parish Council by co-opting Louise Chance as new Council member.

*Action: Clerk to forward declaration of acceptance of office and register of interests paperwork for completion. Clerk to notify the monitoring officer at Wychavon District Council.*

**21/17 Progress reports from Parish Activities - brief updates:**

**a) PS - Grass cutting** Smart Cut have confirmed a 3% increase in charges for the new 2021 season. Proposal to approve expenditure for up to 14 cuts under finance item 21/18h.

**b) SJ – Lengthsman** SJ had met with AF and LF to discuss their proposed hourly rate increase for 2021/22. Having consulted with Worcestershire Calc and several local Parishes, it is evident that the majority of lengthsmen in the County receive an hourly rate of pay of £15 or more. Given the positive relationship between the Parish Council and current lengthsmen, it was agreed to propose an increase in pay to £15 per hour, 13.5 hours per month, and reassess in 2022 when considering the 2022/3 budget. It was also agreed that any additional duties outside the remit of the Lengthsman Scheme would need to be carefully considered, given the resulting additional increase in the budgeted figure set in January 2021. (Item 21/18 g.) The Clerk clarified that the contract between the lengthsman and Parish Council states that other work is with the specific approval of the Manager (SJ).

**c)Highways** For the purpose of this meeting, SJ drew attention to the large incidents of road closures in the vicinity in recent times, in

addition to the receipt of the road safety report conducted on behalf of Rob Adams and local Parishes along the A422. This was discussed

further under item 21/21 Reports b.

**d) MM – (i) School (ii) SWDP** There were no school updates to report currently. MM confirmed he would be assessing the current

public consultation on the SWDP Review sustainability appraisal, which sets out how sites and policies in the revised SWDP balance

economic and social factors with protecting the environment.

**e)RP – (i) Garage site (ii) Coventry Arms** Regular Zoom meetings have been agreed between RP/PS/MM and a director for Owl Homes, in

order to raise any concerns on behalf of the Parish Council. The development is currently progressing positively, though an issue has arisen

regarding rubbish in the vicinity. Land has been acquired for phase 2 of the development, however the current drainage issues need to be

resolved as a matter of urgency. Cllr Adams discussed proposed actions under his report in item 21/21.

*Action: MM to draw attention to some construction waste which has blown across the road from the development site.*

There are no further updates at present regarding The Coventry Arms site, however it was proposed and agreed that LC would act as the new

point of contact and liaise with the Parish Council regarding any future updates.

**f) AG – (i) Footpaths (ii) Neighbourhood Watch** Worcestershire County Council have agreed that up to 6 volunteers may now resume

voluntary work outside. It was agreed that RP would confirm dates and volunteers to commence the work planned prior to lockdown.

*Action: AG to provide a list of approved tasks to RP, who will circulate to volunteers.*

Worcestershire County Council have also supplied new gates to be installed by Mr John Tarran (farmer) at land off Foomers Way and Lower

Cowsden Lane in order to enclose sheep. An agreement had also been reached with the owners of Churchill Mill to make necessary repairs to

the damaged public right of way in the vicinity. The Public Rights of Way Officer at WCC had been liaising in this regard in order to avoid

future recurrences.

**e) DW/SJ - Rural Communities Programme** *Defibrillator*: DW confirmed that an electrician will complete the installation of the additional defibrillator in Cowsden on 23/4/21. SP would be providing current login information in order to update this and register the appliance.

*Village gates:* DW had made contact with the village gates company, who agreed to honor their original price provided on their quotation.

*Action: Cllrs to clarify precise measurements ahead of confirming the order.*

*New Homes Bonus:* Cllrs were reminded of the £772.00 New Homes Bonus funding still to be drawn down, which will need to be applied towards the purchase of a new vehicle activated speed sign before the closing date of 30th September 2021. Additional fund raising will be necessary to supplement the NHB funds secured. It was agreed that given the current situation, crowd funding via ‘Just Giving’ or a similar platform would be an appropriate means of raising further funds. As the recent road safety report highlights signage along the A422, it was agreed that a condensed response to the findings, along with crowd funding proposals be included in a Parish newsletter, especially in light of the many public letters received in support of additional signage to address speed through the village.

**f) PS/RP – Phone kiosk renovation** Refurbishments are progressing well. An order now needs to be placed for the supply of a glazing kit for the windows, and some engineering is required to facilitate the door closure of the kiosk. Members need to agree the purpose of the box, prior to completion to keep the village informed once complete and in situ. AG offered his support in the next phase of work and will look after the housekeeping of the box once installed.

*The Chairman moved the meeting to item 21/21 Reports.*

**21/18 Finance**

**a) Current Balances as at 1st April 2021:**

Business account £11,348.33

**b) Payments to report:**

7/1/21: Salary - December 2020 £132.83

13/1/21: Mr A. Farnsworth – December ‘20 £168.75

8/2/21: Salary – January 2021 £132.83

16/2/21: Mr A. Farnsworth – January ‘21 £81.25

16/2/21: Mrs D. Waters – Infant defib pads £82.20

8/3/21: Salary – February 2021 £132.83

11/3/21: Mr A. Farnsworth – February ‘21 £143.75

15/3/21: Mr R. Peart – Car park barrier expenses £30.00

6/4/21: Clerk’s expenses – Printing (ink cartridge) £14.99

**TOTAL £919.43**

**Income to report:**

10/11/20: Worcs. CC Grass contribution 2020 season £426.44

23/2/21: Worcs. CC Lengthsman October payment £168.75

24/2/21: Worcs. CC Lengthsman Nov/Dec payments £337.50

15/3/21: Footpaths book sales £30.00

**TOTAL £962.69**

*Proposed DW, seconded PS, all in favour to approve payments presented.*

c) Bank reconciliation (iii) and (iv): 31 December 2020 and 31 March 2021

The Clerk forwarded documentation to DW for verification and approval ahead of the meeting.

*Proposed DW, seconded PS, all in favour to approve the bank reconciliations as accurate.*

d) Proposal to consider migration of Parish website to new web hosting provider @ £43.20 inc VAT for the period 2021/22.

Proposed PS, seconded RP, all in favour, to approve migration of Parish website to Wix

*Action: CY had agreed to oversee handover of the site and complete initial set up. Clerk to make payment to CY on receipt of invoice.*

e) Proposal to approve A. Shephard, accountant, for internal auditor services of the 2020/21Parish Council accounts.

*Proposed DW, seconded SJ, all in favour. Action: Clerk to forward all completed paperwork for the 2020/1 Annual Return to internal*

*auditor for verification and approval.*

f) Proposal to approve expenditure @ £195.00 exc VAT from telephone box budget for a glazing kit, as part of the ongoing refurbishment

project.

*Proposed PS, seconded RP, all in favour. Action: Clerk to raise an order with X2 Connect Ltd for glazing kit and make payment on receipt of*

*invoice. Delivery to RP.*

g) Proposal to approve an increase in hourly rate from £12.50 to £15.00 for lengthsman services 2021/22 and virement @ £230 from

Provisions budget to Lengthsman budget.

*Proposed SJ, seconded RP, all in favour. Action: Clerk to complete contract paperwork to AF and Worcestershire County Council.*

h) Proposal to approve grass-cutting expenditure for the 2021 season @ £1,599.64 for up to 14 cuts (figure budgeted = £1,653.16.)

This represents a 3% increase to £52.17 per play area cut and £62.09 per verge cut.

*Proposed MM, seconded AG, all in favour. Action: Clerk to raise order with Smart Cut.*

**21/19 Planning**

**W/20/02265/HP – Wisteria Cottage, Cowsden**

An objection letter was forwarded to the planning officer on 17 February. Comments have been attached to the file as the case has been withdrawn, so that they may be referred to in future should an amended application be submitted.

**W/21/00153/FUL: Moorend Farm, Moorend Lane –** Application for temporary change of use of existing agricultural buildings to equestrian/agricultural use for 5 years.

*Comments were forwarded on 8/3/21.*

**W/21/00168/HP: Cowsden Croft, Cowsden -** Demolition of existing flat roof extension and erection of two storey rear and side extension

*Comments were forwarded on 16/3/21.*

**W/21/00140/CU: Unit 4A, Court Farm, Bow Wood Lane -** Change of use from mixed use to pet cremation facility.

Comments were forwarded on 24/3/21. DCllr Robinson confirmed she had spoken to the planning officer in detail about the scheme. Members were in agreement that as the proposed site is surrounded by residential properties and the application sees a change from commercial to waste handling, this is the wrong location for such a scheme and requires further, full assessment. It was agreed that further information is required to fully consider the application and as such, should be deliberated by the District Council’s planning committee. Members were also in agreement that there was currently insufficient local awareness surrounding the application, therefore it was approved that a newsletter should be circulated to residents in the vicinity of Windy Ridge, The Oak and Garage site to summarise the proposals. LR confirmed that the consultation period could be extended and agreed to liaise further with the relevant planning officer.

*The following actions were agreed: MM to provide a short summary of the Parish Council’s objections and forward to LR. LR to discuss the Council’s concerns with the planning officer. DW to summarise the points of objection in a newsletter.*

**W/21/00536/FUL:** Storage Land Adjacent Warrior Trailers Ltd - Cowsden Bank Farm, Naunton Road, Naunton Beauchamp - Proposed erection of an agricultural building for grain storage. Applicant: Mr Colin Collins

*Comments to be received by 19/4/21.* *It was agreed that LR would discuss the application further with the assigned planning officer and request the implementation of considerable screening as part of the scheme, in order to reduce the visual impact upon Cowsden residents.*

**21/20 Correspondence**

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| Stoulton Parish Council  Sairsha Veasey  Upton Snodsbury First School Office  South Worcestershire Development Plan Review - Parish and Town Council Newsletter March 2021  PKF Littlejohn, External auditor | Request for consideration of joint response from local Parish Councils regarding the proposed Worcestershire Parkway development:  *Members agreed that USPC would be included on a joint response made from Stoulton PC. This was forwarded by the Clerk.*  Email of concern regarding safety and the lack of street lighting in the Parish:  Cllrs raised the following points: There are currently 2 lights at the rear of Cutts Pool, which provide some theft deterrent and personal safety security, however the one nearest the street corner has been a cause for concern to neighbours living opposite in Pershore Road and some residents in Cutts Pool. When the bulb went out recently, some residents were happy for it to remain unlit. The general consensus was that a lack of street lighting enhances the rural setting and would be an incredibly costly venture for a small Parish. AG offered to provide advice for parishioners on personal safety to provide reassurance, information and support. *Action: Clerk to update parishioner with advice agreed.*  A request has been received to include a link to Parish newsletters on the school website for circulation and information. *Action: DW to forward link upon completion of each edition.*  The seven-week consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal report which supports the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) started on Monday 1 March 2021 and continues until Monday 19 April 2021. A briefing event was held on Monday 1 March 2021 for Parish and Town Councils and was chaired by Cllr David Harrison, Portfolio Holder for Planning at Malvern Hills. This briefing event was well attended, with approximately 80 people present, and a recording of the meeting, along with all the documentation relating to the updated Sustainability Appraisal consultation, can be found on the SWDP website - <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/swdp-review/swdp-review-regulation-18-3-sa-consultation>.  Receipt of external auditor instructions and default submission deadline for the receipt of the approved AGAR and supporting documentation or the Certificate of Exemption (as appropriate) is **Friday 2 July 2021.** |

**21/21 Reports**

**DC Robinson:** LR had forwarded a report for circulation ahead of the meeting, which was summarised and discussed and is attached to the minutes for reference.

**CCllr Adams:** The CC is concerned about an increase in mass gathering figures, given the existing circulation of the virus. There has been a reduction in Covid cases in the over 60’s age group and positive uptake in the second vaccination, however vigilance is still essential.

£800,00 in County Council funding has been provided for leisure centres in the County in order to keep them afloat during the pandemic.

The County Council is working with the District Council regarding safe voting during the forthcoming election campaign. It is hoped that there will be an increase in the uptake of postal voting in order to keep social mixing to a minimum.

WCC has injected £2,000 in funding towards the village bus service initiative, enabling villagers to access services in Pershore. It is hoped that an additional £6,000 in crowd funding may be raised in order to secure this important service. It is also hoped that free parking will continue in Pershore.

A technical report into road safety along the A422 had been received, as highlighted in item 21/17c. Recommendations will proceed after the elections in May when more funds will hopefully be available. RA confirmed he would speak with BB from Worcestershire County Council Highways to resolve the ongoing drainage issue at Windy Ridge, and arrange an on-site meeting with Highways/drainage representatives ahead of the end of his term of office.

*The Chairman extended his thanks on behalf of the Parish Council for all of Cllr Adams’ hard work and efforts in support of the local community throughout his term of office.*

**21/22 Dates of Next Meeting Tuesday 18th May 2021.**

***Time and venue to be confirmed according to Covid guidelines.***

**Signed ……………………………………………………… Date…………………………..**

**Chairman**