

LITTLE WOLFORD PARISH MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 21 OCTOBER 2015 IN LITTLE WOLFORD VILLAGE HALL

Present: David Farman (DF, in the Chair), Diz Farman (DiF), Colin Ablewhite (CA), Beryl Braithwaite (BB), Chris Cond (CC), Bob Large (RL), Shirley Large (SL), Simon Lewis (SiL), Michael Revere (MR)

The meeting opened at 7.35pm with a welcome to all from the Chairman.

1. Apologies for absence:

Gill Ablewhite, Gill Cotter, Charles & Jane Hobbs, Arran & Melinda O'Dell, Jane Revere, Chris Stretton.

2. Minutes of last meeting:

The draft minutes of the meeting of 22 April 2015 were approved (proposed BB, seconded CC) and signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.

3. Matters Arising:

- *Memorial bench on the village green:*

DF had written to Jenny Matthews following the last meeting. The bench has now been replaced by the Mathews family with a metal bench. It was agreed that the Chairman will write a letter of thanks to Jenny Matthews.

4. Chairman's Report:

- *Planning:*
 - Approved:
 - Removal of an agricultural tie at Pepperwell Lodge;
 - Change of use of the former coach-house at Wolford Fields Farm, to extend the existing residential use of the first floor into the ground floor.
 - Outstanding:
 - Variation of the previously-approved conversion of redundant outbuildings at Wolford Fields Farm to form four residential units, where permission is now sought to add a single-story extension to Plot 1, together with a detached carport.
- *Highways:*
 1. Little Wolford Road was closed for a day for road repairs, but some potholes remain.
 2. BL reported that flooding continues near his house; MR stated that a gully needs clearing: DF will inform Warwickshire County Council's Highways Department.
 3. Stratford District Council's StreetScene Department has updated their grass-cutting contractors' maps. Grass verges within the 30mph zone are now being cut although, since different contractors are used, not to the same schedule as the village green.
 4. The road markings on the Shipston Gyrotory have been repainted; BB was congratulated by all for her persistence in this matter.
 5. There have been more accidents at the Portobello crossroads; DF will ask County Councillor Chris Saint whether the signage has been refreshed as promised at the last meeting.

- *Parish Meeting Website:*

1. Registration of the domain <littlewulford.org.uk> has been transferred to the Parish Meeting, and is paid up until 30 March 2017, when a 2-year renewal will cost £9.98 +VAT.
2. A new hosting package for the website and email has been arranged in the Parish Meeting's name. The provider has offered its default package free of charge for the first year, with a renewal date of 19 September 2016. Renewal with the default configuration (server space, number of email addresses, etc.) would cost £47.88 +VAT, but exceeds the Parish Meeting's current needs; a basic configuration would cost only £24 +VAT.

- *Broadband:*

1. The fibre-to-the-cabinet upgrade to Long Compton Cabinet 2 has been completed; DF is conducting a survey of broadband speed in the village since the upgrade and so far has received 4 responses. SiL has noticed increased speed; CA, MR and DF have experienced significant speed reductions.
2. SugarNet plans have slipped, and delivery is now to be expected "before Christmas". As a first step, a microwave link has been established to a mast at Manor Farmhouse, and is currently under test. MR enquired whether anyone subscribing to this service will have the ability to cancel this contract if BT can deliver an improved service: DF confirmed that SugarNet will offer a one-month rolling contract.
3. The superspeed broadband rollout to Great Wulford is behind schedule.
4. DiF confirmed that she had taken to the Parochial Church Council the potential use of St Michael & All Angels church tower for hosting a wireless antenna, and approval in principle had been given. A mobile telephone provider is also thought to be considering this possibility.
5. DF stated that discussion is underway with another wireless broadband provider in the area but this is at an early stage.

5. Expenditure incurred under delegated powers:

The Chairman reported that, since the last meeting, he had incurred the following expenditure:

- Renewal of the Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils annual subscription (£10);
- Hire of the Village Hall (£10);
- Postage (£0.95);
- Printer cartridges (£31.50).

This expenditure was within budget and was approved by all (proposed MR, seconded CA).

The bank account balance currently stands at £890.00, with a further £63.84 balance on the pre-paid debit card and £7.90 in the online postage account, giving a total of £961.74.

6. Anticipated future expenditure for 2014/15:

The Chairman reported that the following expenditure was anticipated during the remainder of the current financial year:

- £200-£250 budgeted contribution towards maintenance of Wulford Churchyard;
- £10 on hire of the Village Hall;
- <£10 on minor items of stationery.

The forecast end-of-year balance would be around £700.

7. Budget for 2016/17:

The Chairman explained the difference between setting the budget and deciding the precept requirement, and why we need to hold reserves. He proposed repeating the current year's budget of £500, comprising:

- £250 towards churchyard maintenance;
- £100 towards administration costs, including stationery, postage, hall hire, website, etc;
- £150 towards reserves for future community projects, such as any Parish contribution sought as part of the broadband upgrade programme.

The Chairman asked for views on building up reserves. SL proposed that we should continue to build up reserves and this was agreed by all present. The budget for 2016/17 was approved (proposed BL, seconded SiL).

8. Precept for 2016/17:

Last year's precept was set at £500, less a £50 grant from Stratford District Council in lieu of payment by council tax benefit recipients. The Chairman proposed that the 2016/7 precept should again be set at £500, less any grant that may be forthcoming from Stratford District Council, and this was agreed by all present (proposed CA, seconded CC).

9. Issues of particular local importance:

There had earlier been a request from DiF for information on village hall administration. The Village Hall management committee had indicated to the Chairman that its AGM would be an open meeting, publicised in both Little and Great Wolford and all villagers invited to attend. CA confirmed that this would be the case, and indicated that the next AGM would be in February 2016. The Chairman had therefore agreed that this would provide a more appropriate opportunity for sharing information on village hall matters.

10. Matters raised by an Elector of the Parish:

- A complaint regarding noise from an event held in the Village Hall car park had been withdrawn, following assurances that, in future, the hall's neighbours would personally receive advance notice of any planned event of a similar nature.
- Gill Cotter has resigned as internal auditor. SiL volunteered to take up this post; this was approved by all present.
- DF asked for assistance with this year's poppy collection, which he had undertaken since Les Cass's final illness; there were no volunteers.
- BB kindly offered to collate information on near misses at the junction of Little Wolford Road and the A3400: she would like to record the time and date of any incident, together with what happened.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm, to be followed by refreshments. Bob and Shirley Large thanked the Chairman and his unofficial minute secretary for the work they do, and wished this to be minuted.