

WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

The *unapproved* minutes of **Westleton Parish Council** at the meeting held at 7.30pm on **Monday 24th April 2017** in Westleton Village Hall.



Parish Clerk

There were present

Cllr R. Swindell (*in the Chair*), Cllrs A. Alexander, J. Alexander, A. Clough, C. Freeman, P. Holmes, R. Jones. A. Paige, N. Shearme and H. Williams.

In attendance

Cllr Michael Gower (SCC) and Jenefer Woodhead (Clerk).

PRE AGENDA MATTERS

Contributions from members of the public

There were no contributions from the public.

AGENDA

17/65 Introductory remarks and apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A. Smith.

17/66 Declaration of interests

Cllr Swindell advised he was being reimbursed by the council for the amount of £71.34 for materials for the Community Field.

17/67 Councillor resignation

Councillors acknowledged the resignation of Helen Williams who is moving out of the village.

17/68 Pre Meeting Report from SCC Councillor

Cllr Gower had provided a report for the annual parish meeting which preceded this meeting and a full copy can be found at the bottom of the minutes of that meeting on this website.

17/69 Pre Meeting Report from SCDC Councillor

Cllr Catchpole was not in attendance and had sent his apologies. He had provided a report for the annual parish meeting which preceded this meeting and a full copy can be found at the bottom of the minutes of that meeting on this website.

17/70 Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was agreed the minutes of the meeting on March 27th 2017 be accepted as a true record.

17/71 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- New street signs for Grange View had been installed.
- Barrel Fair storage - an update was provided under item 17/73
- Village 'gates' and Highways speed check - a report on the village 'gates' investigation was given in answer to a question during the annual parish meeting which preceded

this meeting and is recorded in those minutes. An update on the village speed check was provided under item 17/81.

17/72 Community Field

Cllr Swindell reported that a team from Community Payback had been at the field painting woodwork. After supplies ran out he had provided a 5-litre tin of Cuprinol of his own. He asked for the council's approval to purchase a replacement and this was agreed. He added he was impressed with the work carried out by the Payback team who had also strimmed the layby at Reckford Road. He reported the cricket nets are now in use and teams using the boules court had praised its condition.

17/73 Common

Cllr Jones read from his report on a meeting of the Common Advisory Group held on Friday 7th April. Much of it was for information and his report can be seen in full below. Items of particular note were:

- A potential location for two storage containers for Barrel Fair assets has been identified on the common. Before a proposal is put before the council, the advisory group will investigate whether anything in the Commons Act 2006 would prevent the siting of the containers.
- Cllr Jones had been told by Natural England that the council does not have a permit to burn waste on the common. An exemption certificate is needed from the Environment Agency. It was agreed the clerk should register the parish council for the exemption.
- A silver birch and four sycamores on common land that were interfering with telephone lines at Ralph's Mill have been felled and removed. Remaining trees interfering with the lines are the responsibility of the owners of Ralph's Mill.
- A dangerous tree at Ralph's Mill Cottage has been felled. It was on common land but the owners of Ralph's Mill Cottage had agreed to pay for the cost of felling in return for keeping the timber.

17/74 Council Finances and Accounts

- **Income** - There was no income to report to date for the new 2017-18 financial year.
- **Expenditure** - A report of expenditures to date was noted.
- **Invoices and Payments** – Payment of the following invoices was agreed.

From	Item	Amount
Roy Swindell	Community Field materials	£71.34
Arlette Smith	Gift for outgoing clerk	£12.50
Phillippa Welby	Outgoing clerk's fees & expenses	£67.00
Jenefer Woodhead	New clerk's fees & expenses (including handover period)	£381.99
David Blencowe	Spare padlock key and 2 vests for Community Speed Watch team	£20.53
CTS	Felling and removal of 5 trees	£120

17/75 Insurance

The council reviewed and approved the Asset & Insurance Register 2017-18. Cllr Clough advised that a new bench had been donated to the parish council by Mr & Mrs Boulanger to replace one that was in a state of disrepair. This will be added to the register with a replacement cost of £400. Cllr Clough had removed and disposed of the old bench. The clerk is to write a letter of thanks to Mr & Mrs Boulanger.

17/76 Planning applications

DC/17/1426/FUL – New residential dwelling, Greenways, Mill Street - No objections.

DC/17/1503/FUL - Two-storey rear extension & two-bay cart lodge, Coign, The Street - No objections.

17/77 Tree Warden Report

Cllr Clough reported that another mountain ash had died at the top of the green and he recommended its removal. Chris Spall had provided an estimate of £80 to remove it and dig out the root. The council agreed to the work. Cllr Clough to inform Mr Spall to go ahead. Cllr Clough also said he would recommend to the council later in the year that a double flowering pink standard cherry be planted in the middle section where the mountain ash are dying.

17/78 Road works, Hedges and Flooding

Cllr J. Alexander reported a villager had complained their car was damaged by greenery at the Yoxford Road entrance to the village after they had pulled over for an oncoming car. The council asked the clerk to write to the two landowners requesting their hedges be cut back. Cllr Holmes reported a large pothole on the left-hand side of Reckford Road just outside the village. The clerk to report to Highways.

17/79 SALC

No update.

17/80 Sizewell

No update.

17/81 Vehicle activated sign

Cllr Swindell reported on the latest data for March. A total of 33,036 vehicles had been recorded leaving the village along Blythburgh Road in 30 days. Of these, 16,236 had exceeded the 30mph speed limit. The report, including a breakdown of speeds recorded, is posted on the parish council noticeboard. He also reported the council has yet to receive speeding data from a Highways speed check despite a request for it.

17/82 Correspondence

Correspondence received included:

- Notification that a Transparency Fund application had been approved (to reclaim the £50 cost of continuing to use the OneSuffolk website which was previously free of charge); SCDC Business Bulletin; Leiston Neighbourhood Plan; Suffolk Walking Festival; The 'Great Get-Together' in memory of Jo Cox; AONB Monthly Update, Coastline Lite - Spring Edition; The Local Councillor Newsletter; Adoption & Publication of Local Plan Documents SCDC
- The council agreed to consider at its next meeting a request from the East Anglian Air Ambulance for a possible location for a clothing bank in the village.

17/83 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the council will be its annual general meeting and this will take place at 7.30pm on Monday 22nd May 2017 in the village hall.

Chair Date
(signed)

Report of the Common Advisory Group

The Group met on Friday 7th April when a number of important issues were presented for consideration.

1. Request by the Barrel Fair Committee to place a storage container on the Common

The Committee has a large amount of equipment stored at the home of Councillor Smith, Cherry Lees. The property has now been sold and new accommodation is urgently needed.

Prior to the meeting, Councillors Swindell and Jones had inspected the area at the bottom of the track just off the Reckford Road and concluded that it would be possible to locate a container there in a space which was outside the Common Management Plan. It was agreed to pursue this further and on the evening of 12th April the Group chairman and David Rous met with the Barrel Fair Committee on site. A suitable location, outside the Management Plan was agreed and this is recommended for approval by the Parish Council. The location is about 50 metres up the track from the gate and on the right-hand side where it will be easily accessible for the delivery of a container and for the members of the Barrel Fair Committee.

2. Visit of Susan Stone 13 February 2017

I have already reported to the PC meeting on 27th February on some matters relating to the meeting I had with Susan Stone of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the favourable report that she wrote on the overall appearance of the Common. However there was one matter arising from her visit which I did not report upon because I needed to obtain more information.

This concerns the burning of the waste material that accumulates from the work of cutting back the scrub. This is an important matter because the burning of waste is tightly regulated by the Environment Agency and all organisations wishing to burn their waste have to register with the agency in order to obtain a permit.

In the course of my discussion with Susan Stone on the procedures which had to be followed, particularly for burning waste in the open, it soon became apparent that Westleton PC does not have such a permit. So all of the burning of gorse, bracken and birch that has been done during the past decade or more has been unlawful. The appropriate permission for the Council to seek in order to burn the type of waste that we have is contained in Waste Exemption Certificate D7 - Burning Waste in the Open.

The recommendation of the Advisory Group is that the PC registers its request with the Environment Agency immediately. There is no charge for this.

In order to inform the Council in advance and to make the Advisory Group and the Bonfire Group aware of the requirements of Certificate D7 I have downloaded enough copies for everyone to have a copy this evening. Members of both Groups have had copies since the end of March and the matter was discussed at the meeting on 7th April. So nothing comes as a big surprise to any members of the Group this evening. In addition to discussing the implications of Certificate D7 with Susan Stone, I raised the difficult problem that we have in disposing of the large amount of ash that arises from the Bonfire. For the past three years it has been the practice of the Bonfire Group to bury the ash. Whilst this is a neat solution, it does not sit well with our responsibility for managing the Common. I was advised that the Environment Agency would strongly disapprove of this practice because of the possibility of contaminating the water table.

We are also advised that we should not have small fire sites at various locations around the Common because burning can cause lasting damage to the ground and cause nutrient enrichment which encourages nettles to develop. This advice applies to the practice of the Common Advisory Group, which will have to be modified.

3. Tree pruning near Ralph's Mill

In view of the costly quotation received from BT just to inspect the site, it was decided to manage this job 'in house'. Antony Clough and Nick Shearme would take responsibility and invite Chris Spall to quote for trimming the higher reaches of the trees.

4. Annual Safety Audit of the Common

David Rous said that he had done this job every year to date and asked that someone else should take it over. Roy Jones and John Bebbington agreed to take over.

5. Grassland cutting in the layby

David Rous reported that the grassland behind the hedgeline needed cutting. It was agreed to give this task to the Community Payback Team when they next came.

6. Replacement tools for working parties

David Rous raised the question as to whether some of the cutting tools used by our volunteers might need replacing. Julian Alexander volunteered to carry out an inspection of the tools. He has since done this and feels that the tools can be sharpened and need not be replaced. He has undertaken to do this work.

7. Plastic posts and rails

Everyone was pleased with this job and genuinely surprised how well the plastic 'wood' had blended with the local environment.

8. New noticeboard

Although this board had been considered expensive (£747.00 net of VAT), once installed it had the appearance of high quality equipment and was considered worth the outlay.

9. New meeting place

With the imminent departure of Arlette and Kevin from Cherry Lees, the Group needed a new meeting place. Councillor Swindell generously offered September Cottage.

10. Next meeting

Friday, 25th August.