

**WINSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2012**  
**At the Jubilee Hall, Winsham.**

**2482 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

Those present: -	Mr John Chance	Chairman
	Mr John Gapper	Vice Chairman
	Mrs Mary Haggard	
	Miss Trish Baxter	
	Mr John Sullivan	
	Mr Michael Dunkin	
	Mr Nathan Mode	
	Mr Andrew Partridge	
Parish clerk:	Mrs Elaine Willis	
District Councillor:	Mrs Sue Osborne	
County Councillor:		
Public:		
Apologies:	Mrs Kim Turner	

**2483 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**2484 DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS**

Councillor S Osborne reported that she had attended a neighbourhood planning workshop which was also attended by several small parishes. She confirmed that the current Policy SS2 has a presumption against development in rural settlements unless it is sustainable development.

The SSDC Local Plan was due to be put to Full Council in December but this has been delayed to await the English Heritage report.

A Local Choices workshop was run by County with the idea of talking to local communities to see what services they would like to take on, for example: library and community wardens. In South Petherton they had taken on a lengths man for road maintenance but funding for this has now stopped, the estimated annual cost for this was £15000 but the grant had only covered £3000. Councillor Michael Dunkin expressed concerns that it was unlikely that overall it would be cost-effective for parishes to take on this type of work and that the experience in South Petherton showed that parishioners could be faced with increased costs.

There was still no further news on the Show ground application but she had expressed concerns to the planning team about the length of time the application had taken.

**2485 MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**2486 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH MEETING** held on 7th November 2012. The Chairman signed the minutes as a true record.

**2487 MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE AND ANY SUBSEQUENT ACTION TAKEN**

- a) Band hut and allotments –Councillor John Chance reported that they had received confirmation from the solicitors that they were progressing with the freehold transfer. The District Council would transfer the land “as is” and the parish council would need to formulate early plans for maintenance and use. Ideas to overcome the potential problem of the large allotment sizes would be to either sub-divide them or offer a buddying system, where for example, an experienced allotment holder who was now finding the plot too big could share with a novice.

- Councillor Michael Dunkin reported that a tree had come down recently.
- b) Councillor John Chance reported that he had amended the Register of Interest form to make it applicable to our adopted Code of Conduct. It would be up to individuals whether they completed the revised form now or waited until next year to do so. *Action: JC to email new Register of Interest Form*
- c) Neighbourhood Planning – Councillors Nathan Mode, John Chance and the clerk attended a workshop. Councillor Nathan Mode reported that a Neighbour Plan was a legal document that would set out where communities wanted to build and what type of development would be preferred by the community. The idea behind the Neighbourhood Plan is to stimulate the economy through development. The plans would prequalify areas for development making the planning applications in that area a simpler process. There are many stages to producing a Neighbourhood Plan including a referendum. Neighbourhood Plans also need to be compatible with the Local Plan. When asked, the representatives of District and County Council confirmed that producing a Neighbourhood Plan could cost between £20,000 and £100,000.
- Where the Neighbourhood Plan works is if, for example, a community wanted new sheltered housing. A Neighbourhood Plan may stimulate a developer to look into the project. Neighbourhood Plans are also important for communities where development is likely to be required by the Local Plan, where the community wants active involvement in deciding where and what sort of development will take place.
- Councillor Trish Baxter responded that we could do a plan but in the future the population of an area may change and also their aspirations for that community may change but by putting it on paper it would give developers a way to push through a plan that is no longer wanted.
- Councillor Nathan Mode went on to explain that as a Neighbourhood Plan is only designed to support development (essentially a development wish list), it would not be suitable for Winsham. However, in order to give the Planning team guidance on the wishes of the community, Winsham should produce a plan of some sort – a Parish Plan. He went on to explain that a Parish Plan unlike a Neighbourhood Plan is not a statutory document and provides the flexibility to either support or deter development in your area.
- Councillor Mary Haggard asked whether the land you designated for development had to be owned by the Parish. Councillor Nathan Mode responded no, that the land could belong to anyone, it is merely an expression of the desire of the community to see development of a given kind in specific areas.
- Winsham is designated as SS2 - Rural settlement, therefore, the presumption is against development which is one of the reasons that a Neighbourhood Plan is not relevant. There are exceptions to the restrictions of planning in rural settlements and these include: equestrian, agricultural and tourism based developments.
- Councillor John Gapper asked if you could safeguard an area from development. Councillor Nathan Mode responded that you could put your wishes in a Parish Plan if these are minuted it will be taken into consideration.
- Councillor John Chance expressed concerns that Neighbourhood Plans give developers an open door. He also expressed concerns about the cost of a plan, one local Parish with a population of 1000 people spent £20000 on producing a plan. A simple survey maybe enough to minute the feelings on development in our community. In a Parish Plan you wouldn't need to identify sites for development if the community expressed a desire for more accommodation.
- Councillor Trish Baxter expressed the view that infill may be a better solution.
- Councillor John Chance proposed that he arrange a meeting with planning officers for advice about doing a Parish plan. Seconded by Nathan Mode. *Action: JC to arrange a meeting.*

## **2488 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a) Application: 12/04339/FUL. Single storey summerhouse, Forge House Fore Street. – still being viewed by the planning subcommittee

## **2489 AMENITIES**

Councillor Andrew Partridge reported that there was nothing new to report.

## **2490 RIGHTS OF WAY**

Councillor John Gapper reported that he had cut back some of the hedge on the Liberty Trail. He had also contacted the officer at County about Broadenham farm lane and there will be a site inspection. He expressed the view that a good path would be of benefit to the community. The bridge at Forde Abby will not be repaired for some time.

## **2491 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- a) Cheques signed for Clerk's salary & expenses.
- b) Precept – Councillor John Chance reported that although we normally agree the precept for the following year at the December meeting, we had today been advised that parish councils will now be involved in funding Community Tax benefit. Councillor Sue Osborne explained that previously Central government repaid the District 100% of council tax benefit but in the next financial year they were dropping this to 90%. District Councils will be required to maintain the current levels of benefit to the retired and certain other groups, which means that the remainder of recipients could face a shortfall of 25% unless it is raised via the precept. The clerk asked Councillor Sue Osborne whether the precept would still be paid in time for the new financial year even though the application would be late. Councillor Sue Osborne assumed that the District would have to do this.

Councillor Sue Osborne also warned that if this resulted in a parish increasing their precept by more than the cap it would trigger a referendum. Councillor John Gapper expressed the opinion that council tax benefit was a matter for Central government. Councillor Nathan Mode expressed the concern that he would feel uncomfortable making decisions regarding benefits and tax rises. Councillor John Chance said that we had been advised that we would have to set up an emergency meeting suggested setting a meeting date to discuss the precept once all the information had been forwarded to us.

## **2492 CEMETERY**

No report given

## **2493 UPPER RECREATION GROUND**

Councillor Mary Haggard reported that dog fouling continued to be a problem and it had been necessary to halt some football matches due to the issue. The committee would like to put gates or bollards at the entrance as there is a problem with unauthorised parking on the ground. She asked for the Parish council support. The council agreed in principle. Councillor John Chance suggested that Councillor Michael Dunkin look into the possibilities. *Action: MD and MH to arrange a meeting*

## **2494 JUBILEE HALL**

Councillor John Sullivan reported that they are still looking into replacing the front windows; this would have to be funded by grants.

## **2495 HIGHWAYS**

Councillor Michael Dunkin reported that he had been told there was not any funding for clearing the drains at Broadenham lane. Councillor Trish Baxter expressed the view that this was dangerous due to the amount of ice in the winter. *Action: TB to discuss with Colin Fletcher*

## **2496 CORRESPONDENCE**

- a) War memorial bulletin
- b) Waitrose

Most of this correspondence was circulated prior to the meeting & the rest was made available to all members who attended the meeting.

## **2497 MEMBERS QUESTION TIME & ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) Councillor Trish Baxter reported that a parishioner had discussed the possibility of getting a barn owl box. *Action: Councillor Trish Baxter to investigate.*

- b) Councillor John Chance reported that Gabrielle Chambers had resigned from her post due to other commitments. The council expressed their disappointment at the decision. *Action: clerk to advertise the vacancy.*

**2498 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Ordinary meeting of The Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 6th February for 7-30 pm meet in the Jubilee Hall. Extraordinary meeting to discuss the precept; provisional date, Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February at 6:30pm.

Signed.....Date.....