

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WATER ORTON PARISH COUNCIL
Held on 27th November 2019 AT 7.30PM IN THE PAVILION

In the Chair: Cllr Robinson (Chairman)

Present: Cllrs. Robinson. Bevan, Chown, C. O'Meara, Hailstone, Lee

Clerk: Daphne Robinson

C.C & B D Reilly, 8 Members of the public

Public Forum

A resident asked what was happening with the closure of Gypsy Lane. It was explained that Gypsy Lane would be closed intermittently until June 2020. There was concern that once the rugby club building work started that, due to the closure of Gypsy Lane, construction vehicles would use Vicarage Lane. It was advised that owing to the delays caused by HS2, the notice for tenders had not been issued yet.

Another resident asked about the pothole in Plank Lane. Cllr. Robinson reported that it had been filled. Cllr Reilly explained that until the rain stopped there could not be an extensive repair done. In the meantime, highways would continue to refill the hole when reported. Cllr Reilly reported that the drop off system at the school was working well. He explained that both he and the school headmaster were concerned with the new farmers entrance so close to the school entrance.

183. Chairman's Report

Cllr Robinson said his remarks would be covered under the maintenance committee.

184. Apologies

Cllr. B. O'Meara – working late. BC Judy Macdonald

185. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

186. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2019

Cllr C. O'Meara pointed out item 171 had omitted who had been voted as the vice chairman. The clerk noted and said she would make the amendment.

Proposed by Cllr. Hailstone, **Seconded** by Cllr Bevan and **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2019 be approved.

187. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

188. To co-opt Mrs Wendy Rees on to the council

It was **Proposed** by Cllr Bevan, **Seconded** by Cllr Chown and **Resolved** to co-opt Mrs Rees onto the council. Mrs Rees signed the declaration of office, witnessed by the clerk and was then invited to take her seat at the council.

189. To receive reports from the Borough and Count Councillor.

Cllr Reilly gave a resume of grants he had awarded over the last month. He reported that he was planning to form a cycling forum and hoped to have representation from the parish council. The project involved two routes giving access from Water Orton to Kingsbury Water Park and from Water Orton to Birmingham. Two planning applications had been received, one for a Surf Centre and one for the Wall of Prayer. He advised that although the sites would be in the loop of the M42 and M6 the Wall would be around 150ft high and illuminated and visible from Attleboro Lane. It is expected to become a popular tourist attraction.

Cllr Reilly said that the Water Orton Action Group had been awarded £10,000 for the Heritage project, which would cover the history of the railway station including its impact and the important role it played within the life of the village. Although the funds awarded fell short of what the group were expecting, the work on the station car park would still be progressed. This would include modifications to the car park and fencing. He reported that NWBC were close to obtaining authorisation for traffic wardens (civil enforcement), hopefully January/February once it had gone through parliament. He said he had met with shop keepers regarding parking outside the shops.

There were discussions with the public regarding vehicles parking on the pavement opposite the shops. The clerk reported that this had been discussed with the Police and Crime Commissioner who said that people should take photographs of the offending vehicles with a clear view of the registration number and send them to the police. The police would then be able to issue fines. It was appreciated that this was an on going problem with no quick resolution. Cllr Reilley advised that a meeting would be taking place with highways to prevent HGV lorries going down Marsh Lane and trying to get over Vesey Bridge.

190. To appoint a third councillor to each of the following committees:

- a. Finance Committee – Cllr Chris O’Meara
- b. Maintenance Committee – Cllr Bevan
- c. Personnel Committee – Cllr Chris O’Meara

191. To receive a report on the Playground Equipment

Cllr Chown advised that the welding work had still not been done. Clerk to chase. He reported that while inspecting the playground equipment Streetscape came to empty the dog bins. The worker explained to Cllr Chown that the bin on the playing field and the one outside the library had been installed too high for him to be able to empty them. He had therefore covered the bins so they could not be used. It was agreed the clerk would investigate.

192. To receive a report on the Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Bevan advised that there were seven phases to the process for producing the Neighbourhood Plan. He suggested that consultation with the village would start mid-January. A questionnaire would be produced to be delivered to all households. A two-page article would be placed in the end of January edition of the Coleshill Post. It was hoped that residents would come forward to help with the production of the NP.

193. To receive an update on the school

Cllr Lee reported that everything had settled down well. There were still issues with getting on and off the site through the walkway. The headmaster has been asked to cover maternity leave at another school 2 – 3 days per week up until Christmas. From January he will be covering 4 days therefore he will only be at Water Orton school on a Wednesday. Cllr Lee advised that the deputy head was more than capable to cover. She reported that there were concerns with the new entrance for farm machinery on Plank Lane very close to the school entrance. She queried as to why this had been passed by highways knowing its proximity to the school.

194. To receive a report from the maintenance committee

Cllr Robinson advised that the constant rain had caused major problems with the resurfacing of the car park. It had caused the laying of the tarmac to be delayed but hopefully this would be done within the next few days. There would just be one disabled parking bay marked out to meet regulations. Cllr Robinson reported that the internal lighting in the pavilion had been changed to low energy LED strip lighting and that work on the external lighting had been done. He advised that the Bowls club had requested to meet to discuss having work carried out on the toilets in their club house. Cllr Robinson said there was definitely a need for the toilets to be upgraded. The Bowls club would come back with their proposal.

195. Financial Matters

a. To consider financially supporting the proposed Ring and Ride Service.

A report from Cllr Reilly had been circulated to councillors explaining the benefits, timetable and cost of the service. Councillors believed it would be a very useful service. As the council were meeting in December to discuss the 2020/21 budget. It was **Proposed** by Cllr Lee, **Seconded** by Cllr Hailstone and **Resolved** to agree in principle to financially support the service and to approve the amount at the next parish council meeting following the budget meeting.

b. To approve the automated and future payments

Proposed by Cllr C. O’Meara, **Seconded** by Cllr Hailstone and **Resolved** to approve the automated and future payments.

c. To discuss the Library request for a grant.

Cllr Rees declared an interest as she is a member of the library committee and did not take part in the discussion or vote. The library had made an application for a grant to help with the running costs i.e. the Library electric bill. Cllr Bevan raised the point that the council had agreed not to award any organisation grants for running costs. The clerk advised that the library does not necessarily fall into the same category as it is a service for the community as a whole. The clerk advised that the council had the powers to award the grant under section 137. It was **Proposed** by Cllr Lee, **Seconded** by Cllr C O’Meara and **Resolved** to support the grant under section 137. Further discussions concluded that the grant for £3000 would be awarded over two years with £2000 being paid this year and £1000 paid November 2020. There would be conditions with this. The main condition to be that the library committee would, by the end of the first year, show that they have made efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the library building therefore reducing energy costs.

If the council feel that they have met this condition, then the second payment will be approved. **Proposed** by Cllr Lee, **Seconded** by Cllr Bevan and **Resolved**.

d. To consider the quote to install a new intruder alarm system

It was reported that the current alarm system has not been serviced for many years. The clerk had met with Chubb to arrange for the system to be serviced but the engineer was unable to find the system's battery. It was suggested that it be upgraded to a wireless system with more benefits than the current old system. It was agreed that this should be dealt with by the maintenance committee as the quote was within their permitted spend.

196. Correspondence – To agree for two councillors to respond to the public consultation regarding Strengthening Police Powers for Tackling Unauthorised Encampment.

Cllrs C. O'Meara and Hailstone offered to do this.

197. Proposed by Cllr Robinson, **Seconded** by Cllr B O'Meara **to exclude the press public to discuss matters of a confidential nature.**

The meeting held to discuss the budget for 2020/21 had showed that the running costs of the pavilion were far greater than the income. The time sheets for the caretaker showed that the hours worked did not total his contracted hours of 18 hours per week. This was mainly due to the fact that most regular users open and lock up the pavilion themselves. It was agreed that to offer the best value to the electorate, the caretaker's hours would be reduced to cover the hours he works. It was agreed that the personnel committee would meet with the caretaker after Christmas to discuss their decision.