

Minutes 10/17

WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Thursday, 27th April 2017
at 7.00 p.m. in
Whitnash Community Hall, Acre Close, Whitnash.

PRESENT

Councillors: S Button Mayor
 T Heath Deputy
 A Barton
 G Cancilla
 Mrs J Falp
 B Franklin
 R Margrave
 S McFadden
 D Sage
 T Shepherd
 B Smart
 R Sparkes
 S Vaughan

Town Clerk: Jenny Mason

Police: 2

173/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Kirton and Short. Apologies for absence were accepted.

174/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the start of the meeting.

175/17 PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum

176/17 POLICE

Standing Orders were suspended to allow the Police to present their report.

PC Rachel Smith reported that there had been 147 incidents in Whitnash this month. 5 incidents of damage; 14 incidents of anti-social behaviour; 1 burglary; 2 incidents of vehicle crime and 2 drug related incidents and traveller incidents amongst others. Regular patrols are done in the parks and youngsters have been educated about the use of laughing gas. CCTV has been checked regarding the damage to the basketball court at Acre Close, but the camera was not pointing at the basketball court. A grill on one of the windows at the community hall has also been vandalised. Speed watch has started again and there are concerns about vehicles travelling at 47 mph in a 30mph zone in Tachbrook Road. There certainly is a need for a camera. Cllr Button thanked the Police for the report.
Standing orders were re-instated.

177/17 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to those who have helped set up this evening.
After a tough month, where we had to deal with the travellers descending on Washbourne Fields, we can now look forward to the summer months ahead of us.
I would like to thank those of us who were involved in the speedy removal of the travellers, as it was a difficult and at times extremely unpleasant task for all of those concerned. This includes the Town Clerk, individual Councillors, the Groundsman & his team, the Police and other local authorities. Not forgetting the residents for their help and patience.
Those involved should be very proud of themselves in having the travellers removed in an extremely quick time and the field cleaned up and restored to its former glory.
Following the removal, we arranged an extraordinary meeting, where we agreed to allocate emergency funds to putting in additional security measures. Unfortunately, the contractor who was appointed to carry out the work was not very good with the paperwork side and we circumvented some official rules in having the work started. As the Mayor, I have to take responsibility for this and if there are consequences with auditors, I will defend our corner, as we needed to act without delay.
We now have the problem of Warwick District Council giving the go ahead to purchase Leamington Football Club, with the view to giving the Travellers a permanent home on Whitnash land. Thank you very much again the WDC for being so considerate to our residents! We will now have another hopeless fight on our hands.
Congratulations to Leamington FC who secured 2nd place in their league and will have played their first play-off match last night.
We have once again sustained some serious and mindless vandalism in our parks, which is extremely disappointing for all of us.
We also seem to have a drug issue raising its head, which I raised as a concern to the Police at a meeting 2 weeks ago. Hopefully there will be added vigilance with these issues, as the longer nights are upon us.
Whitnash Sports & Social Club has been in disarray recently, as they failed to appoint the necessary officers to form a Committee. There is an EGM planned for Wednesday 3rd May, so if any of our members wish to attend, it starts at 8.00pm. However, it does look like Cleary's gym could be forming an association with WSSC, which could be very positive.
On a positive note, I am pleased to say that my charity ball was a great success and raised in the region of £7.5k. Thanks to those who attended.
We have also attended quite a number of civic events since the last meeting and I was filled with pride on Sunday to welcome Petanque teams from all around the country, including the England team, plus teams from France. This must have been extremely difficult to arrange and credit goes to all of those involved.
Another piece of good news is the reopening of the Heathcote Pub. This looks to be a really good pub and eating house, with a great menu and a very friendly atmosphere, at not unreasonable prices. Let us hope that this is a success.
The community hub continues to move forward and will be discussed later in this meeting.
The next meeting is the Mayor Making and I look forward to handing over the gong to Cllr Tony Heath and his Deputy Cllr Terry Shepherd.
Cllr S Button

Members raised concern about the proposed new traveller site on the Leamington Football ground. The football club will be holding an Extraordinary General Meeting to decide on a Memorandum of Understanding. Currently the football ground is the only site being considered.

178/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 16th March and 11th April 2017 as circulated were approved and signed as a true record.

Cllr Barton questioned the reporting of the List of Accounts and this will be clarified with the Auditor.

179/17 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THOSE MINUTES

16th March 2017:

159/17 Mayor's Announcements – Cllr McFadden commented on the excellent talk given by Barry Franklin on 22nd March 2017.

168//17 Accounts for Payment – there were incorrect dates on the expenditure over £500 – this had been amended and was due to a formatting error.

169/17 Reports from Ward Councillors – they are currently reseeding the grass on Tachbrook Park Drive and painting yellow lines.

11th April 2017:

175/17 Washbourne Playing Fields – no reply has been received from the CEO of Warwick District Council regarding financial support for the traveller incident in Whitnash.

180/17 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Warwick District Council Reports:

District Council Report for Whitnash Council Meeting April 2017

I have attended the following meeting since our last Town Council meeting;

Full Council, Employment, Planning, Scrutiny, Group Leaders, a briefing on Europa Way project, Executive, a briefing on W.D.C. new H.Q and a 1-1 with the Chief Executive and the Plato Trust A.G.M. and management meeting.

I raised concerns about the cessation of Councillors meeting for H.A.R.P Panels. This is where a resident is likely to be evicted from their council property and this is their last appeal if they feel the system has not been correctly followed. They are rarely held but I felt it was important that Councillors had some input to them. A number of other Cllrs agreed and the portfolio holder has changed the procedure so while not meeting as a panel the ward Councillors are informed so being able to support the resident if asked. A small change but one I felt important to still involve Councillors in the process.

The District Council presented a report on the purchase of land at Europa Way to provide a new football ground for Leamington F.C. along with other community facilities. All three Whitnash Town Councillors had to declare personal interests as we either own shares or have family members who own shares in the club. While all of us could see the opportunity for Leamington to have a new stadium, with the consequence of us losing a football ground and possibly gaining a Gypsy and Traveller site in Whitnash (especially after what we had gone through recently), we agreed to all abstain from the vote.

I continue to have meetings with the Deputy Chief Executive Andy Jones to progress the Community Hub project.

Cllr Heath and Cllr Margrave and I have spoken about what committee's we will sit on from May at the District Council

and we will probably change places on some so Cllr Margrave can gain experience on different committees

Cllr Judy Falp

Whitnash Town Council & Warwick District Council

The Planning Department at Warwick District Council is getting busier and all agency staff have been replaced. There is a backlog of planning applications and the department is working towards clearing this.

Cllr Heath

Whitnash Town Council & Warwick District Council

This year I have served on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee once again and occasionally substituted for Tony Heath during his absence due to illness.

Other than the District's support for our proposed new Community Hub project which is greatly appreciated; the support and services provided by Warwick District Council are in significant decline. WDC took away Concurrent Services funding which has meant that a) residents of Whitnash are being unfairly discriminated against and b) your local town council tax rate has had to increase to offset that funding cut.

During the invasion of Washbourne Fields by travellers WDC provided some assistance and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the councillors and residents who helped to make sure they were removed so quickly.

Issues coming up that in the next year are:

The boundaries of Whitnash are once again changing with WDC proposing to put east Whitnash into Leamington.

The consultation will begin soon. We, town and district councillors will need to come up with some real good arguments to avoid losing that area of Whitnash. The current justification is alignment of county boundaries.

We will be watching the progress of the leisure centre redevelopments and any plans for moving WDC headquarters.

Cllr Margrave

Whitnash Town Council & Warwick District Council

181/17 COMMUNITY HUB BUSINESS PLAN

A copy of the Whitnash Community Hub Business Plan 'Grant Applications Version 2017 - 2021' was forwarded to all Members before the meeting. Cllr Mrs Falp explained that this Plan will be discussed at the Warwick District Council Executive meeting on 28th June 2017. Extra money will have to be borrowed. Cllr Barton was not happy with some of the statements in the Business Plan and will forward these to the Town Clerk for the consultants to address.

Cllr Vaughan proposed the Business Plan is accepted and Cllr Sage seconded this proposal. All Members voted in favour.

182/17 REVIEW OF WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL WARD BOUNDARIES

Email received from Warwick District Council on 7th April 2017 to inform us that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England have accepted the request for a review of the Warwick District Council Ward Boundaries. This review will start in July 2017 and be completed by April 2018. This will then be followed by, if necessary a Community Governance Review of Parish / Town Council Boundaries and Wards by the District Council.

A copy of the letter sent to Warwick District Council after the March meeting will be forwarded to Mr Leach.

183/17 APPROVE AND ADOPT AMENDED SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The amended Social Media Policy was approved and adopted.

184/17 APPROVE AND ADOPT FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

The Financial Risk Assessment was approved and adopted.

185/17 HEATHCOTE / WHITNASH ROAD UPDATE

Cllr Button, Kirton and Shepherd met the Principal Road Safety Engineer in March 2017 to discuss the Golf Lane / Whitnash Road junction.

The Engineer has reported that a speed limit of 20mph will be considered for Heathcote Road and Whitnash Road, which will contribute towards the safety at Golf Lane, as approach speeds will be reduced. I have now explored this suggestion, and I am able to proceed with this. It has been provisionally agreed to fund the 20mph limit from the County Councillors Delegated Budget allocation (it will cost £10,000).

The Engineer plans to propose a 20mph limit from the junction of Franklin Road to the junction of St Margaret's Road. It is worth bearing in mind that all the side roads along this section will have 30mph signs as you enter those junctions, which will be backed with 20mph signs. There may be some resistance from residents of these adjoining roads as they will probably want these roads speed limits reduced to 20mph as well. This is not possible as they will not meet the required criteria.

Changing a speed limit is a lengthy process as a new Traffic Regulation Order has to be made, which involves an extensive consultation exercise. The first stage is informal consultation, followed on by formal consultation. If any objections are received then this will lengthen the process. On average the whole process can take about 6 months.

186/17 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

188/17 REPORTS FROM WARD COUNCILLORS

South Ward: Coppice Road and footpath needs resurfacing. Briar Hill School trees are blocking light from properties in Cotterills Close and Morris Drive. A resident has requested a sign saying NO BALL GAMES for the green space near Laburnum Drive.

East Ward: Nothing to report.

North Ward: Residents have been complaining that there are too many bollards on Heathcote / Whitnash Roads. The turning head at 92 Palmer Roads needs attention as the tarmac is breaking up. The trees in Whitnash Primary School have damaged the shed at 65 Palmer Road and are also damaging the footpath.

West Ward: Trees at bottom of Landor Road need pollarding. A zebra crossing is needed for pupils coming from Warwick Gates crossing over Franklin and Heathcote Roads.

Entrance signage to Whitnash needs cleaning and Cllrs Barton, Heath, Sage, Sparkes and Vaughan offered to clean the signs.

189/17 REPORT ON FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING:

Cllr Smart proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23rd March 2017 are received.

190/17 REPORT ON HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE MEETING:

Cllr Mrs Falp proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Hall and Playing Fields Committee meeting held on 9th March 2017 are received.

191/17 REPORT ON PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING:

Cllr Franklin proposed that a receipt (in the form of draft minutes) of the Planning Meeting held on 2nd March 2017 are received.

192/17 WHITNASH TWINNING ASSOCIATION REPORT

The Twinning Association AGM will take place on 23rd May 2017 at Whitnash Sports and Social Club.

193/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council meeting will be held on 25th May 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

SIGNED..... DATE.....