

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT WOLSTON LEISURE AND COMMUNITY CENTRE ON THURSDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7PM**

This meeting was held in accordance with Government Covid Regulations.

PRESENT Cllr T Harvey-Smith (Chair), Cllr G Fewkes (Vice-Chair), Cllr Miss T Ball, Cllr Miss S Dobinson, Cllr R Grainger, Cllr J Milne, Cllr A Parker, Cllr Mrs M White, Cllr L Wright and Mrs M Meede (Clerk).

Plus: Mrs Malyon (NDP) and 14 members of the public.

After members of the public and Councillors had been given the opportunity to raise any issues, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending, and the Parish Council meeting commenced at 7.25pm.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The apologies of Cllr D Cross for personal reasons were accepted.

The apologies of Cllr Mrs H Timms and Borough Councillors Bearne, Poole and Willis were noted.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (existence and nature) for items on the Agenda

Cllr Parker declared a personal interest in agenda item 70d). Cllr Wright declared an interest in agenda item 70d). The Chairman advised that Councillors could declare an interest later in the meeting should this become apparent for any agenda item.

69. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

All Councillors had been given the opportunity to review the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th August 2021 and the Extraordinary minutes held on 26th August 2021 prior to this meeting, and any changes requested by Councillors prior to the meeting had been seen by all Councillors. Following a brief discussion Cllr Milne proposed approving both sets of minutes which was seconded by Cllr Wright and the motion was passed.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 5th and 26th August 2021, having been approved for adoption by those who had been present at the meeting, be signed by the Chairman.

70. FINANCE

Councillors reviewed and discussed the accounts for payment and considered payments received.

a) To approve accounts for payment in August 2021.

Date Issued	To whom payable	For what purpose	Cheque number	Gross Amount
05/08/2021	Rugby Pest Control	Mole Control	106208	£72.00
05/08/2021	Mrs M Meede	Zoom subscription	106209	£14.39
05/08/2021	Lakeside	Grass Cutting July	106210	£960.00
05/08/2021	Wolston Baptist Church	Office Rent	106211	£930.00
17/08/2021	WALC	Data Protection Training (Cllrs Miss Ball/Grainger)	106212	£72.00
17/08/2021	EON	Streetlight 64 Meadow Road	106213	£43.80
17/08/2021	Shell Energy	Broadband/telephone	106214	£33.57
17/08/2021	Alexanders (Sovereign)	New slide deposit	106215	£262.37
17/08/2021	Parish Council Employees	Staff Salaries	106216-8	£2,274.72
17/08/2021	HMRC	PAYE	106219	£268.48
17/08/2021	WCC Pension Fund	LGPS	106220	£357.39
17/08/2021	Mr M Cooper	Fence repair and installing carvings	106221	£370.00
19/08/2021	Mr P Owen	Fuel	106222	£74.60
26/08/2021	EON	Electric - streetlights	106223	£982.73
26/08/2021	Banner Advantage Ltd (Staples)	Stationery	106224	£17.40
26/08/2021	PKF Littlejohn LLP	External Audit	106225	£480.00
				£7,213.45

Following a discussion, Cllr Miss Ball proposed approving the accounts for payment, which was seconded by Cllr Milne and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: The accounts, as listed above, be approved.

b) To note payments received in August 2021:

There were no payments received to note.

c) To note the 2020-21 External Auditor's report

It was confirmed that the external auditor's report had been returned clear with no comments or concerns. The report has been published on the noticeboard and on the Parish Council website in accordance with regulations.

Signed.....

d) *To review a request from Cllr Wright for a donation to be made to the Myton Hospice*

Cllr Parker and Cllr Wright had both declared an interest in this agenda item.

Cllr Wright stated that he had asked for a donation to be made to the Myton Hospice for his time and work involved with storing the wooden carvings for the village, including treating the wood and providing refreshments to the carver.

Cllr Parker said that he already supports the Myton Hospice and gives personal donations to the charity. He doesn't however feel that individual Councillors should dictate which charities outside the village are supported in lieu of payment for their time and work they do in the village. He noted that a lot of Councillors give their time and do things within Wolston without expectations that they can then request money is given to their chosen charity. Cllr Milne agreed and said it didn't seem fitting to single out a charity as he felt Councillors are volunteers. The Chairman mentioned that the Parish Council does give to charities including the Royal British Legion, but such payments are agreed by the Parish Council in advance, and he therefore suggested that Cllr Wright should fill out a Parish Council expenses form, (as Councillors are entitled to claim for expenses in certain circumstances) and then Cllr Wright can decide what he then does with any money he is able to claim. Cllr Miss Dobinson asked if this donation had previously been agreed, and Cllr Wright confirmed he had volunteered that the carver could use his premises so he could work undercover and that he would store the carvings, but said he had also put treatment on the carvings. Cllr Miss Dobinson suggested that in the future if a Councillor wants reimbursement for this type of thing it should perhaps be requested in advance. Councillors agreed with this suggestion.

The Clerk agreed to forward Cllr Wright a copy of the expenses form, and would also seek guidance on Councillors submitting a claim for this type of thing (storage and time etc).

71. ALLOTMENT LAND

a) To receive an update from the Allotment Working Group (AWG)

Cllr Miss Dobinson advised that this agenda item was purely to provide an update on the current situation, especially to residents who were present at the meeting.

Cllr Miss Dobinson then explained that over the last six months the Allotment Working Group (AWG) have been working on the new lease. The initial purpose was to update the existing 1991 lease, removing or amending the anomalies, inaccuracies and unhelpful clauses (eg the term of notice by the landowner from 12 months to 15 years + 5 years + 5 years). The AWG did this in consultation with the Allotment Association committee with whom we had two Zoom meetings, conversations on the allotment site and many email exchanges, and also ensured they kept other Councillors updated.

The negotiations were mainly with Rosconn and Godfrey-Payton (for the landowners) through Moule & Co (Land Agents). The Parish Council solicitor then raised a few queries which were being addressed.

Cllr Miss Dobinson advised that when the AWG asked for the approval of the whole Parish Council on what had been agreed at the beginning of July, she thought the process was nearly complete. However, then the landowners' solicitors became involved, and wrote a totally new, longer and more complex lease which appears to be significantly more restrictive. The Parish Council have also received and are following legal advice from our solicitor, which includes instructing Counsel to determine the legality of the Notice to Vacate.

This is to ensure the Parish Council look after the best interests of the Allotments Association and plot holders. Unfortunately, this may mean a delay in the process and also means there are no definitive updates to give which Councillors understand is especially frustrating for plot holders.

However, Cllr Miss Dobinson said she hoped people recognise it's not an easy process and, by following legal advice, Councillors are looking for the best outcome.

Following concerns raised last week about toxic waste on the historic landfill site adjacent to the allotments, the AWG will meet to discuss the issue and go through all the information they are aware of which can then be reported back to Councillors.

Finally a discussion took place and it was agreed that if and when it is time for plot holders to move plots, the Parish Council will consider how they can support the Allotments Association to provide help to some plot holders that may struggle on their own. This may involve getting volunteers, or paying for someone to help.

Cllr Wright then raised queries about the Statement of Common Ground, and that it is not accurate as it mentions details of the new lease are agreed as part of the planning application. Cllr Grainger stated that in meetings that had been held with Rosconn and agents for the landowner, which all Councillors had been invited to, the applicant's agent had clearly stated they did not want a new lease but sought to revise the 1991 lease, and so the Statement of Common Ground was accurate at the time. Since that time the applicant's

solicitors have issued a new lease, (and that is why the Parish Council solicitor is getting involved) which has therefore superseded the information in the Statement of Common Ground.

Cllr Wright asked why the Parish Council had been involved with the Statement of Common Ground and who asked them to. He was reminded that this had all been discussed numerous times before and he had asked this question before too. Cllr Miss Dobinson stated that the Allotments Association had asked the Parish Council to get involved with them and Councillors had felt they didn't want to turn them down.

72. PLANNING

All Councillors were given the opportunity to review the applications prior to the Parish Council meeting.

a) *R21/0640 – Proposed stationing of a workers mobile home (temporary 1 year permission)*

Cllr Miss Ball noted that there was already accommodation on site and raised concerns that this may not be a temporary home. Following a discussion, Cllr Grainger proposed supporting the application subject to neighbour consultation, and requesting that the site be inspected by RBC after 12 months to ensure the accommodation is removed/vacated or a new application is submitted. This was seconded by Cllr Miss Ball and agreed unanimously

RESOLVED: For the Parish Council to support this application subject to neighbour consultation and a site inspection taking place after 12 months to ensure the accommodation is vacated or a new application submitted.

b) *R21/0716 – Single storey rear extension at 7 Larchfields, Wolson. CV8 3JL*

Following a brief discussion, Cllr Milne proposed supporting the application subject to neighbour consultation, which was seconded by Cllr Parker and all Councillors were in agreement.

RESOLVED: For the Parish Council to support this application subject to neighbour consultation

c) *RBC/21CM011 – Retention of concrete batching plant on site for a period of three years at Ling Hall Quarry, Coalpit Lane, Lawford Heath.*

d) *RBC/21CM012 – Retention of existing roadstone coating plant on site for a period of three years at Ling Hall Quarry, Coalpit Lane, Lawford Heath.*

Councillors discussed the applications at Ling Hall Quarry (72a and 72b) before Cllr Grainger proposed supporting the applications. This was seconded by Cllr Fewkes and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: For the Parish Council to support these two applications at Ling Hall quarry.

73. PROGRESS REPORT

It was confirmed that WCC are aware of the damaged bridge by the War Memorial and will be meeting with Cllr Milne to discuss the damage.

Cllr Miss Dobinson, Cllr Grainger and Cllr Milne will be meeting a representative from the Environment Agency to discuss the problem with the vegetation in the Brook, including the vegetation in the Church Field.

A question was raised about the vegetation on Manor Estate, and Miss S Cross was invited to speak (as a resident and previous Parish Councillor) as she had met with representatives on site from RBC. She advised that the meeting had gone well, and there were a couple of options that RBC were looking into. All residents on Manor Estate will be consulted before any work takes place. Miss Cross was thanked for her continued work in relation to this matter.

The hedge by the Library was mentioned as a possible hazard again, and it was agreed that this would be followed up again.

74. CORRESPONDENCE

Councillors had been given the opportunity to review the correspondence list prior to the Parish Council meeting.

75. WOLSTON CHRISTMAS

Cllr Miss Ball advised that the Wolston Events group had been liaising with the Churches, School and other people and groups who usually get involved with the Christmas light switch on, which also includes the Salvation Army. Cllr Miss Ball also advised she is organising the road closure for the light switch on and for Remembrance Sunday. There was a discussion about the date for the event, and some concerns were raised about it being held too early. Cllr Milne then proposed that the date of 27th November 2021 which had been arranged by Wolston Events be supported, which was seconded by Cllr Miss Dobinson.

Councillors then discussed the lights, and Cllr Grainger confirmed that he has been speaking to the new streetlight contractor who has agreed to look at the feeder columns to ensure they are working and safe.

RESOLVED: For the Wolston Christmas light switch on to take place on 27th November 2021.

76. RECOGNITION OF CHELSIE GILES

Councillors discussed how Wolston can give recognition to Chelsie Giles, a 2021 Olympic bronze medallist who has a strong connection to Wolston. Cllr Miss Ball advised she had asked the family for suggestions but is awaiting their feedback.

Cllr Wright proposed offering Chelsie the 'Freedom of Wolston'. A discussion took place and it was felt this could be an option, but in general Councillors felt something more meaningful and personal would be more appropriate. Councillors are to give consideration to this and report back at the next meeting. Cllr Miss Ball agreed to continue to liaise with the family for their views.

77. WOLSTON WOMBLES (Volunteer Litter Pickers)

A request had been received from the volunteer litter picking group for hi-vis vests with 'Wolston Wombles' on the back, to enable the group to be more identifiable and encourage more people to join. Following a discussion the Chairman proposed up to £200 to support this initiative, which was seconded by Cllr Miss Ball and agreed unanimously. The Chairman thanked Miss S Cross who was present for leading the initiative. It was noted that the Parish Council currently supply litter picking equipment including litter picking sticks, hoops and bags.

RESOLVED: For the Parish Council to support the Wolston Wombles with the purchase of new vests up to £200.

78. DELEGATES REPORTS

- a) Parish Council Newsletter – Cllr Miss Ball advised this is ongoing.
- b) Streetlights – Cllr Grainger had provided a report for all Councillors prior to the meeting, and confirmed that the project was moving forward as expected.
- c) Standing Orders – The Policies and Procedures Working Group will be meeting to review the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, before being brought forward for approval by the Parish Council.
- d) Community Speed Watch (CSW) – Cllr Grainger advised that he has now met with the Police twice, and the approved locations for the CSW to operate from have been changed. The group are now just waiting for official approval from the Police in relation to the locations and for the risk assessments to be completed.
- e) Play surfacing – William Cree Play Area – It was noted that the play carpet in the play area seems to be lifting again. The cause is not known and Cllr Milne noted he hoped it wasn't vandalism again. Cllr Grainger advised that the Play Inspector had visited the site and may offer a recommendation in his report.

79. PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Councillors discussed the current list of Working Groups and Committees within the Parish Council, and some changes were made and agreed, with some Councillors coming off certain groups and others being added.

The Footpaths Working Group agreed the need to contact some residents who had been surveying the Public Rights of Way within the village, to offer them support.

Councillors agreed that each group or committee should have a Terms of Reference, and Councillors agreed that the lead for each group and committee should arrange for a copy to be sent to the Clerk within the next month. There is currently no lead for the Recreation Ground and Facilities group, and so it was agreed they would need to meet to appoint the lead.

The Clerk agreed to update the document with all the changes, before sending the updated version to all Councillors.

80. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Parish Council was invited to Resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and the public interest would not be served in disclosing that information.

Reason for Exclusion – The exclusion is on the grounds that items of business to be discussed are likely to include discussions about a lease, items of a commercially sensitive nature, staffing and legal advice.

The Chairman proposed the exclusion of press and public, which was seconded by Cllr Wright and all Councillors were in favour.

RESOLVED: For members of the public still present to leave the meeting for the next agenda item.

81. ALLOTMENT LAND

Councillors discussed the lease and Notice to Vacate, along with advice received from the Parish Council solicitor. Councillors also discussed the next steps and how to move forward, which may be dependent on the decision made by Counsel regarding validity of the Notice. It was recognised that the situation may become easier if the bid being put forward by the community group is accepted, but it was felt that some 'back up' strategies would be required, and it would be prudent to make some contingency plans. Cllr Miss Dobinson suggested that the Allotment Working Group (AWG) meet to discuss the options and to go through the possible scenarios, and also discuss the concerns about the toxic waste. Following a discussion, Cllr Miss Dobinson proposed that the AWG meet to discuss the issues raised, and then provide any updates to the full Parish Council as required. This was seconded by Cllr Parker and all Councillors were in agreement.

RESOLVED: For the AWG to meet to discuss the issues raised and feedback to the full Parish Council.

A discussion about buying the land then took place, and it was agreed that the Clerk would seek clarification from RBC about the periods the land can be sold other than to a community group due to it being an Asset of Community Value.

82. HUMAN RESOURCES (STAFFING)

The Chairman confirmed that the HR Working Group is currently updating the job description and person specification for current vacant Lengthsman position, including what the position may entail as WCC may no longer be running the official Lengthsman scheme. A discussion took place about the jobs that need doing whilst no one is in post (for example emptying the bins) and also about the need to advertise the post as soon as possible. Cllr Parker proposed that the decisions around advertising for the post and deciding what is required be delegated to the HR Working Group, including salaries. This was seconded by Cllr Miss Dobinson and all Councillors were in agreement.

RESOLVED: For all decisions around advertising and replacing the current vacant position to be delegated to the HR Working Group.

83. PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS (Information for sharing)

Councillors discussed items for uploading to the village website, the Parish Council Facebook page and for inclusion in the Avon Grapevine. Councillors are reminded they can submit articles/information at any time, and do not need to wait for Parish Council meetings.

- Parish Council vacancy - Manor Estate vegetation clearance - Wolston Wombles
- Christmas light switch on - Brook (meeting with Environment Agency) - CSW

84. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councillors were reminded that guidance had been given to only include urgent items on the agenda for the next few months, when meeting face-to-face. Due to this, some agenda items mentioned may not be discussed for a couple of months. A discussion took place about the order of agenda items, and it was agreed that the Clerk and Chair will meet to discuss what they feel is best.

- Parish Council equipment maintenance programme - Village Boundary Change
- Christmas Light Switch on - Recognition of Chelsie Giles

85. DATE OF NEXT MEETING/S

The Chairman confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting is due to take place on Thursday 7th October 2021 at 7.15pm at Wolston Village Hall

As there were no further items on the Agenda the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:55 pm.

Signed:..... Chairman

Date:

**Notes on the Public Forum and Parish Matters held during the
Parish Council Meeting on 2nd September 2021.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if there were any representations from anyone present at the meeting.

Questions were asked about the allotment land planning application, including about the possible loss of community facilities and concerns about the toxic waste. Cllr Miss Dobinson advised that Solicitors were involved in relation to the transition for plot holders, and that the Allotment Working Group would be meeting to continue discussing all of these concerns, including the issues around the toxic waste. Cllr Grainger noted that the Geotechnical document mentioned an intrusive survey, and it is understood that this has now taken place, but the results have not yet been published (and it is unlikely they will be published until the application goes for full planning permission). A further question was asked about the Notice to Vacate and timescales, and it was explained that legal advice was being sought around this, but the Allotments Association are adamant they would want no/minimal disruption during their spring to summer growing seasons. It was also noted that the developers would be contractually obligated for the work on the proposed new allotments to ensure the work is completed (including clearance of the current allotments and work on the proposed new allotments) but it is likely they would contract this work out to a more specialist contractor. Cllr Miss Dobinson gave assurances that this would be monitored.

A resident raised concerns about traffic and parking on Main Street. Cllr Miss Ball advised that this was an issue the Road Safety group were looking into.

Mrs Malyon provided an update from the NDP Working Group. She advised that the latest version is now with Avon Planning Services, and the document has also been sent to all Parish Councillors and members of the NDP Steering Group. The NDP Working Group are now looking to update the project plan and are looking at any outstanding tasks. Councillors all confirmed receipt of the document.

Cllr Miss Dobinson then gave a synopsis of her first year as a Parish Councillor, including the fact it has been a steep learning curve and there is a lot more that goes on and work Councillors are required to do than she anticipated. It has involved learning about the way Local Government works, including policies and procedures, and she has also learned the importance of the need for Councillors to work together, even when they have different views.

As there were no further comments or questions, the Chairman declared the public forum part of the meeting closed at 7:25pm.