

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, MAIN STREET, WOLSTON
THURSDAY 2nd February 2023 AT 7:15PM**

	<p>PRESENT: WPC: Cllr Dobinson (Chair), Cllr Wright, Cllr Rainey, Cllr Ramsay, Cllr Ball, Cllr Grainger (meeting notes) RBC: Cllr Poole, Cllr S Ward, Cllr T Willis WCC: Cllr. H Timms Warwickshire Police: Inspector Sally Bunyard-Spiers, Sgt. Ricky Franklin Plus 13 members of the public.</p>
	<p>Meeting commenced at 7.15 pm with the public forum Opened by Chair who welcomed all, and thanked attendees. Parish Council meeting commenced at 8.12 pm</p>
193	<p>Apologies and acceptance of reasons for absence – To receive apologies. Dawn George – Clerk. Sickness. Apologies accepted.</p>
194	<p>Declarations of Interest (existence and nature) on items on the agenda – Councillors to declare any personal and/or pecuniary interests on items on the agenda. Cllr. Ramsay declared an interest in item 202, and recommended that all Councillors should also declare an interest.</p>
195	<p>Minutes of the Parish Council – To review and, if appropriate, approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th January 2023. Resolved: That the minutes be approved.</p>
196	<p>AGAR – To consider, complete and approve and, if appropriate, sign the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 as part of the annual return. Cllr. Ball advised that the internal auditor had signed off the internal audit and has made some observations, including that for the purposes of the AGAR all internal control objectives were met. The internal audit had been delayed due to the records needed not being readily available, due to the departure of the previous Clerk at the start of the new financial year and an ongoing vacancy for the Clerk's position. Matters arising from the internal audit were that with regard to the bank reconciliation for 31st March 2022 there was a difference of £13.79 excess in favour of Wolston PC. A brief investigation has not yet identified the where the error is but as it has carried forward to the current year the RFO has a better idea of where to look. The internal auditor recommended that the higher balance should be recorded in the accounts and carried forward as the opening balance for 2022-2023. The internal auditor drew attention to the statement on the WPC website that all the policies and procedures were re-adopted on 7th June 2018, although some key documents appeared to be unchanged since they were drawn up. WPC were advised that best practice is that if any documents are reviewed and updated, even for minor changes, a revised 'latest review date' should be shown in the document. A recommendation was made that, as it is five years since the last review of the Policies and Procedures, the documents should be reviewed to ensure that they were still fit for purpose and the date of review should be annotated into the documents. Cllr. Ball advised that the Policies and Procedures Working Group would address this issue. Due to the departure of the previous Clerk it has not been possible to update the Asset Register to show the existence and value of all assets at the 2022 year end. The internal auditor was satisfied that the existence and value of assets as shown in the 2021 return could be used for the 2022 AGAR but noted that the asset register should be updated as soon as practicable to show any acquisitions or disposals after the 2021 return. Cllr. Ball noted that the internal auditor requested a breakdown of the March 2022 salaries which was provided. The internal auditor was happy and has signed the AGAR but suggested that WPC do need to investigate this further. Cllr. Rainey asked if the auditor had raised any matters of concern or highlighted any recommendations that were not recorded in the formal report. Cllr. Ball responded no, as most of the questions raised by the internal auditor had been answered, and that the main concern raised related to the need to review and update the policies and procedures. Cllr. Ball also confirmed that the auditor was satisfied that we use the previous year's data be used for the asset register and that the financial data shown in the draft AGAR was correct and that we could now send the document to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditor. Cllr. Ball advised</p>

	that she has sent a copy of the salary breakdown data to the internal auditor who had asked why certain elements were on payslips and some not, and this was explained.
	Proposal: That, subject to the points raised 'being taken on board' that the report by the internal auditor be approved. Proposed by: Cllr. Wright Seconded by: Cllr. Rainey Unanimous Resolved: That, subject to the points raised 'being taken on board' that the report by the internal auditor be approved.
	Cllr. Ball read out each of the nine AGAR statements relating to effective financial management. Each statement was proposed, seconded and voted on individually.
	All statements: Proposed by: Cllr. Wright All statement: Seconded by: Cllr. Rainey Unanimous Resolved: That all nine AGAR statements be agreed as 'Yes' Cllr. Dobinson thanked Cllr. Ball for the hard work put into supporting the internal audit and delivering the AGAR.
197	Finance
A	To endorse accounts paid to 31st January 2023. No data available. Deferred to next meeting Proposed: Seconded:
B	To endorse the bank reconciliation up to 31 st December 2022. No data available. Deferred to next meeting. Proposed: Seconded:
c	To agree the signatories for the HSBC bank accounts and sign the new mandate. (Cllr Grainger) Proposed: Cllr. Wright Seconded: Cllr. Rainey Unanimous Resolved: That Councillors Ball, Wright, Ramsay and Dobinson be signatories for HSBC bank account.
d	To discuss and agree on the use of telephone and online banking facilities for HSBC bank accounts and make any decisions accordingly. (Cllr Grainger) Proposed: Cllr. Rainey Seconded: Cllr. Ball Unanimous Resolved: Proposed to defer to next meeting, to be considered by Finance Working Group
e	To discuss and agree on the set up of a pre-paid debit card in the name of the Clerk to enable purchases up to £500.00. Agreed Proposed: Cllr. Rainey Seconded: Cllr. Ball Unanimous Resolved: To arrange to provide the Clerk with an HSBC £500 pre-paid debit card.
198	Budget 2023-24 – To receive and approve the budget for 2023-24 and make any decisions accordingly. To approve the Budget and any adjustments to reserves for 2023-2024 (Cllr Ball) Cllr. Ball advised that the budget data was not yet available. Proposed: Cllr. Rainey Seconded: Cllr. Wright Unanimous Resolved: To defer to next meeting when Clerk/RFO will be available.
199	Finance Working Group – To establish and approve Finance Working Group (Cllr Rainey) Cllr. Rainey discussed a proposal that WPC move to a 'business model' for managing finances. Based on a Finance Working Group composed of 3 Councillors, work would involve all matters relating to finance in support of WPC, but would not have any authority. Suggested that, for transparency, it is preferable for the Chair not to be a member of the Finance WG, Proposed: Cllr. Rainey Seconded: Cllr. Wright

Signed

	Unanimous Resolved: To establish a Finance Working Group, ToR at next meeting. Ball, Ramsay, Wright. Cllr. Rainey as acting chair.
200	RFO - To discuss and make any decisions as necessary to confirm the Responsible Financial Officer for Wolston Parish Council.
	Proposed: Cllr. Wright Seconded: Cllr. Rainey Unanimous Resolved: That Dawn George be appointed as Clerk / RFO
201	Planning - Councillors are to review planning applications prior to the Parish Council meeting. All planning applications and consultations can be viewed on the RBC Planning Portal Website. To discuss and if appropriate comment on any planning applications received.
a	R23/0012 at 28, Rose And Crown, Main Street, WOLSTON, Coventry, CV8 3HJ for Replace existing rotten wooden and Crittall windows with new timber framed windows. Consultation responses should be sent by 05-Feb-2023.
	Proposed: Cllr. Ball Seconded: Cllr. Grainger Unanimous Resolved: That WPC do not support the application. Cllr. Ball to send details of concerns to Cllr. Grainger.
202	Notice of Motion –
a	To consider and make any appropriate decision that the Standing Orders 8 and 24 of Wolston Parish Council be amended such that in paragraphs 8c,8d,8f and 24b, the reference to standing order 9 be amended to refer to standing order 8. (Cllr Grainger)
	Errors had been noted in the cross referencing.
	Proposed: Cllr. Ball Seconded: Cllr. Grainger Unanimous Resolved: 1) That the errors identified be corrected and 2) that update of the Standing Orders be expedited
b	To consider and make any appropriate decision, that standing order 8b of Wolston Parish Council be amended in accordance with the Notice of Motion circulated to Councillors. (Cllr Grainger)
	Proposed: Cllr. Ball Seconded: Cllr. Ramsay Unanimous Resolved: To review this as specific topic when the Standing Orders are reviewed. Aim to have revised Standing Orders in place to be considered for approval at the annual meeting in May.
203	Standing Orders - To consider and make any appropriate decision that standing order 11 be amended so that draft minutes may be made available to members of the public prior to approval. (Cllr Ball)
	Proposed: Cllr. Ball Seconded: Cllr. Wright Unanimous Resolved: To defer and review fully, to be incorporated when Standing Orders are reviewed.
204	Delegates Reports – To receive updates from the following groups:
	Allotment Working Group: Constructive meeting on Jan 27 th between Spitfire, WPC, WBAGA committee and plot holders. Notes of meeting will be available.
	Recreational Facilities Working Group: No meeting
	HR Working Group: Will be reported on separately
	Policy & Procedures Working Group: No meeting
	NDP Working Group: Cllr. Rainey: Received proofread copy, SG meeting within next two weeks.
	Communications Working Group: Members: Clerk, Cllrs. Ball and Ramsay. No meeting. Possible to use free email for communications. Cllr. Rainey left the meeting
205	Co-Option for Casual and Electoral Vacancies – To agree to advertise for members of the public to fill the vacancies after the notice period assuming no by-election has been called.
	Cllr. Rainey suggested that WPC may wish to go to election to establish a mandate. Cllr. Wright pointed out that to do this would need a referendum.

Signed

	<p>Proposed: Cllr. Wright Seconded: Cllr. Ramsay Resolved: That two casual and two electoral vacancies to be advertised, with aspiration to co-opt at next meeting.</p>
206	<p>Coronation – To discuss and make any appropriate decisions regarding WPC events and Mementos. (Cllr Wright)</p>
a	<p>Events: Possibly have one large street party in Main Street. Cllr. Wright / Cllr. Ramsay agreed to lead. Need to find out how many other street parties will be held, what will other organisations do ? Cllr. Ball noted that for road closure plenty of notice is needed. £3,500 available. Wolston Events will not support WPC in any future activities. Proposed: Cllr. Dobinson Seconded: Cllr. Wright 5 supported, Cllr. Ball abstained Resolved: Street parties: Cllr Wright and Ramsay to lead co-ordination of liaison with residents</p>
b	<p>Mementos: Mug 520 up to £1,500. Proposed: Cllr. Wright Seconded: Cllr. Ramsay Unanimous Resolved: Cllr Wright will lead to organise a coronation memento, with request for design input from St. Margaret's school</p>
207	<p>Profile of Sasha Noble – to agree a solution on how this matter can be brought to a conclusion which is agreed upon by all parties. (Cllr Dobinson).</p>
	<p>Cllr. Dobinson read out statements re correspondence with WALC. Referenced legal advice from WALC to close this issue. Cllr. Wright referenced allegations on FB that three current members of WPC were involved in the 'fake' account. Cllr. Ball and Cllr. Ramsay declared an interest and left the room. Cllr. Dobinson proposed that the legal advice be accepted and that the matter be closed. Meeting became inquorate, discussion on this topic could not proceed. Meeting suspended.</p>
	<p>Proposed: Seconded:</p>
	<p>Cllr. Ball and Cllr. Ramsay returned to the room. Meeting became quorate and continued.</p>
208	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public For Agenda Items 209 and 210. In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Parish Council is invited to Resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda 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 relate to personnel and staffing.</p>
209	<p>To discuss appointment of Youth Workers and make any decisions accordingly.</p>
	<p>HR Working Group have interviewed Katie Jennings. Recommend employment. Plan to interview other potential staff and start youth club at Easter. SCP 12. Propose employment. In absence of Clerk, Cllr. Ball will confirm details.</p>
	<p>Proposed: Cllr. Ball Seconded: Cllr. Wright Resolved: To make an offer of employment to Katie Jennings as lead youth worker</p>
210	<p>To Approve HR Group confirmation of completion of probation period and to confirm permanent appointment of Clerk/RFO</p>
	<p>HR Working Group have undertaken a post probation interview and recommend permanent employment as Clerk/RFO. Some skills gaps were identified, training will be arranged.</p>
	<p>Proposed: Cllr. Ball Seconded: Cllr. Wright Resolved: To confirm Dawn George as a permanent employee as Clerk to Wolston PC.</p>
	<p>A query was raised with regard to the propriety of a payment made to a former employee and an allegation of less than honesty with WALC by the Chair A vigorous debate was held during which Cllr. Dobinson left the meeting.</p>

Signed

	The meeting closed 10.39 pm
211	Future Agenda Items – Councillors are asked to use this opportunity to raise items for future agendas. Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision-making.
	Proposed: Seconded:
212	Date of Next Meetings – To confirm Thursday 2 nd March 2023 for the next regular meeting of the Parish Council at the Village Hall at 7:15pm. If an interim meeting is required, an agenda will be sent to Councillors and be put on the website and in the Main Street noticeboard three clear days before the meeting is to be held.

SignedVice Chair

Date

Signed

Public Forum	
A	<p>Cllr. Poole introduced the police officers. Police: Insp. Sally Bunyard-Spiers (S-BS) has 27 years in police, born and brought up in Rugby, lots of experience and understanding of policing. Rugby is both urban and rural. Policing in Rugby will be geographical rather than thematic, C.Insp, Jim Rankin will be in charge. Extra officers available 26 SNT officers. Higher level of police visibility. S B-S confirmed that the police use Wolston CCTV. New system will enable upload of images to police HQ. Member of Public welcomed extra officers. Has had two previous attempts at thefts from van. S B-S noted that crime fell during Covid, but crime rate is now returning to normal. Main issues: Number plates, Cat converters, tools, 48 number plates stolen in Rugby in November, 12 in January 23. Operation Inception – extra £15,000 for Rugby Rural Central - enhanced operations mainly targeting vehicle crimes. Why are number plates stolen ? No known reason. Rugby Police station front office will be open longer hours as a 'resolution centre'. Has there been an increase in crime due to WCC streetlights out at night. No evidence for this. Cells at Rugby police station will not reopen. S B-S will continue to liaise with PCC on this – may re-evaluate need for cells in future depending on how the area develops. Could be part of a future 'hub'. Data box to monitor traffic now costs about £2,000 – in future to be paid for by parish council (need to check !!).from Main Street. Member of Public queried data from monitoring boxes on Main Street, and validity of data. Sgt. Franklin will check numbers and advise. Dynamics of population and crime recording and policing in Rugby area has changed since Covid. S B-S not an expert on roads related issues – suggested WPC invite Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership. Police invite input from communities, to help evaluate how to use resources most effectively.</p>
B	Cllr Wright read out a statement from WALC regarding etiquette at PC meetings.
C	Member of Public:
A	Made comments about recording the meeting, availability of draft minutes and the fake FB profile and posts
D	<p>Cllr. Poole – had arranged for police to attend. Cllr. Ward – AED training was very successful, with about 50 attendees. Ask for details for AG Cllr. Willis – residents will need ID at elections. Cllr. Wright – any progress with development of RBC garage sites? Cllrs. Poole and Willis will follow up. Cllr. Timms – WCC budget setting this week. Cllr. Wright queried why the beech hedge by the library could not be cut to a lower level. Cllr. Wright has concerns about safety of people who use the path and requested that Cllr. Timms arrange for the top of the hedge to be lowered. Cllr. Wright stated that WCC had replaced the jubilee tree on the Derry, which has since died. Cllr. Timms advised that WCC will replace the tree but not in this financial year.</p>
E	Public forum closed at 2012