

WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Parish Councillors are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of Wolston Parish Council to
be held at 7:15pm on Thursday 5th October 2023
at The Village Hall, Main Street, Wolston

Present: WPC Councillors: Mr T Willis (Chair), Mr G Rainey (Vice Chair), Mr T Ramsay, Mrs A Milne, Ms T Ball, Mr L Wright, Mr R Grainger, Ms J Galliford, Ms S Dobinson, Mrs D George (Clerk)
Rugby Borough Council: Cllr Ward
Plus 7 members of the public

The Chair thanked all in attendance and the meeting began with the Public Forum at 19:17 hrs
The WPC Meeting began at 19:48 hrs.

96 Apologies -To receive apologies

Apologies received and noted from Cllr H Tims and Cllr D Poole

97 Declarations of Interest (existence and nature) on items on the Agenda –

Councillors to declare any personal and/or pecuniary interest on items on the agenda.
Cllr T Ramsay declared a personal interest in item 107, and in item 108 as his children use the William Cree Close playground.

Cllr L Wright declared a personal interest in 100 d) being a trustee of the Village Hall and in 108 because his grandchildren use the William Cree Close playground.

Cllr T Ball declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 100 d) & e) as a trustee of the Village Hall but reserved the right to comment and in item 107.

Cllr S Dobinson declared an interest in 100 f) as a Trustee of the WLCC

Cllr G Rainey declared an interest in 100 d) and e) as Chair of Village Hall and 100 h) he is married to a millstone gardener) and 100 i) as representing the Village Hall on the Warm Spaces Group.

Cllr R Grainger declared an interest in item 100 i) as representing St Margarets Church on the Warm Spaces Group

Cllr T Willis declared a blanket interest as a borough councillor.

98 Minutes – To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 7th September 2023

Proposal: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 7th September 2023 subject to correction of small spelling errors, pour and Cllr H Timms.

Proposed: Cllr T Ball

Secunder: Cllr R Grainger

6 in favour

3 abstentions

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Wolston PC held on 7th September 2023 subject to correction of small spelling errors, pour and Cllr H Timms.

Cllr T Willis reported that he had consulted with the monitoring officer regarding item 107 Notice of Motion under standing order 8. This item can be moved from the closed session to the public session, in order to maintain openness and transparency.

Cllr T Willis proposed that item 107 be moved to after the finance at item 101.

A discussion took place. Cllr L Wright did not object to item 107 being moved into to the public section.

Chair Cllr T Willis proposed to move the item 107 to the public section of the meeting at item 101.

Signed.....

99 Clerk's report – To receive a progress update on any non-confidential items.

Clerk reported on the following items.

Objections to AGAR 2021/2022 – finalised and the external report and certificate received.

AGAR 2022/2023 External Auditors Interim Certificate has been received and posted on the notice board and website.

VAT Claim £26,421.03 received in July 2023.

Christmas Tree has been ordered.

Cllr L Wright has collected the donated Oak Tree.

Account Balances as of 12 September 2023, Current Account £130,213.48, Business £51,574.88. Interest received in September 2023 on the Business Account was £211.13.

WPC have applied to Rugby Borough Council for the road closure for Remembrance Day, Rugby Borough Council are supplying a Traffic Management Company to manage the road closure.

Environment Agency Results of sample water testing carried out in the brook running through the waste site showed no levels of cyanide that would constitute any risk to human health or the environment.

Coal Pit Lane Reflector Posts – WCC have confirmed that the road markers will be replaced.

Millenium Way Arrows on Humps – WCC have confirmed that all the lines and the arrows on the humps of Millenium Way will be replaced.

Manhole Covers and Bollard – WCC have requested streetlighting to fix the bollard and raised an S18 with Seven Trent Water to replace the manhole covers.

After some discussion it was agreed to circulate to Cllrs, via email, the external auditors report and certificate received for the AGAR 2021/2022 including the findings on the objections to the AGAR 2021/2022, prior to publication.

Sample Water Testing - A discussion took place regarding levels of cyanide which do not occur naturally.

Cllr G Rainey suggested the water samples need to be tested continually.

100 Finance

a) To endorse payments made in September 2023.

A discussion took place regarding the confidential items on the payments list.

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

Cllr A Milne suggested that all councillors belong to the finance group.

Cllr G Rainey had no objection to this and suggested that perhaps finances could be discussed in the pre-meeting.

b) To note payments received.

Proposal: To note payments received £211.13 Interest from HSBC

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr R Grainger

8 in favour

1 abstention

Resolved: To note payments received £211.13 interest from HSBC.

c) To note bank reconciliation.

Proposal: To defer this item to the next meeting after the Finance Working Group have checked the reconciliations.

Proposed Cllr T Ball

Seconded Cllr L Wright

Unanimous

Resolved: To defer this item to the next meeting after the Finance Working Group have checked the reconciliations.

Signed.....

- d) To consider and if appropriate approve a grant application for Brandon and Wolston Village Hall £1500.00

A discussion took place. Cllr G Rainey reported the submission for this grant application is the same as each year prior to this one.

Proposal: To approve a grant application for Brandon and Wolston Village Hall £1500.00

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr T Ramsay

8 in favour

1 abstention

Resolved: To approve a grant application for Brandon and Wolston Village Hall £1500.00

- e) To consider and if appropriate approve a grant application for Brandon and Wolston Village Hall £5905.00

Cllr G Rainey - This item has been withdrawn – the issue relates to the replacement of the roof. The Village Hall are in the process of a substantial grant application to do the complete roof. Taken advice and made an initial application for support. £5905.00 is the suggested donation. It is part of the conditions and terms of the grant application. This Item is withdrawn and will be re-submitted.

- f) To consider and if appropriate approve a grant application for Wolston Leisure and Community Centre £6704.51

Cllr T Willis – following meeting with WLCC along with Cllr S Dobinson and Cllr T Willis (borough Cllr) they are waiting to hear from WLCC. Carpet looks very tired and needs replacing.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the application, the quotes being over 12 months old, a meeting between WPC Cllrs and the Trustees, the budget provision, the aesthetics and presentation of the building being vital to its income stream.

Proposal: To defer this item until the finance group have received the up to date quotes, to arrange a finance meeting on 12th October 2023 for recommendation to an Extra Ordinary meeting on 19th October 2023 but we agree it in principal provided that sufficient money is within the grant budget.

Proposed: Cllr T Ball

Seconded: Cllr L Wright

Unanimous

Resolved: To defer this item until the finance group have received the up to date quotes, to arrange a finance meeting on 12th October 2023 for recommendation to an Extra Ordinary meeting on 19th October 2023 but we agree it in principal provided that sufficient money is within the grant budget.

- g) To confirm signatories on the new banking mandate for WPC Bank Accounts at HSBC are Cllr T Ramsay, Cllr T Ball, Cllr L Wright, Cllr S Dobinson, and Cllr G Rainey.

Proposal: To confirm signatories on the new banking mandate for WPC Bank Accounts at HSBC are Cllr T Ramsay, Cllr T Ball, Cllr L Wright, Cllr S Dobinson, and Cllr G Rainey.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr T Ramsay

Unanimous

Signed

Resolved: To confirm signatories on the new banking mandate for WPC Bank Accounts at HSBC are Cllr T Ramsay, Cllr T Ball, Cllr L Wright, Cllr S Dobinson, and Cllr G Rainey.

- h) To consider the current process for funding and reimbursement of expenses to volunteer gardeners to maintain the Wolston Village Planters, Millstone, War Memorial and Coronation and Jubilee Tree Gardens to include the purchase of plants, bulbs and compost to the value of not more than £1000.00 per annum and make any appropriate decisions.

A discussion took place regarding CEO of WALC's advice on this subject. It was suggested that WPC speak to Bungalow Nurseries or Malt Kiln Farm to create an account so that volunteer gardeners could choose what they need and the order be placed by the Clerk and paid for on invoice. It was reported that this was proposed to the gardeners club previously and that they felt it would not work. It was reported that the gardeners look around at a number of nurseries and then decide which plants to purchase. A councillor suggested the use of her own supplier to set up an account. Volunteer gardeners were asked to suggest names of the nurseries they visited with a view to WPC setting up an account with them.

Proposal: To defer the item to another meeting.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr T Willis

Unanimous

Resolved: To defer the item to another meeting.

- i) To consider the current process for reimbursement of expenses to participating venues and organisations from ring fenced Warm Spaces for All fund and make any appropriate decisions.

A lengthy and in-depth discussion took place regarding the origin of the Warm Spaces Initiative, that it was always intended to be a community run group, the way the funds were currently distributed, the necessity for a terms of reference for the group to be created to take the onus off WPC. The necessity for a letter from the organisation stating that WPC are holding the money on their behalf as they have no bank account. It was agreed that Cllr G Rainey and Cllr Dobinson would compose the letter.

Cllr T Willis requested that the finance group sort out the terms of reference.

It was agreed to defer the item to another meeting.

Item 107 moved to this section of the meeting.

Item 107 Notice of Motion under Standing Order 8 – To re-visit the minute 228 from 2nd March 2023 to include the option of rescinding the minute to enable an independent investigation to resolve this item finally and make any appropriate decisions.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr T Ball

Cllr T Willis Spoke to the nature of the subject being emotive and having caused great upset within the village. Cllr T Willis stressed that WPC are not debating the facebook profile but are debating the question of an independent investigation. Cllr T Willis had conversed with the Monitoring Officer regarding the cost implication. The Monitoring Officer had advised that quotes were discussed within the meeting. Crescita HR offer an all-in price for external HR investigations 1) £3500 = 10 interviews or 2) £5000 = up to 15 interviews then they prepare a report.

Signed

Cllr T Willis had asked the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) if a complainant indicated he was unhappy with the original report that it could it be classed as requiring an internal review. The ICO would only consider an internal review if the complainant had been seeking information that was withheld.

Cllr L Wright – said he could not quote from the investigations carried out by individuals unless I get their permission. Will the second investigator allow him to quote from the report. Cllr S Dobinson did the investigation.

Cllr T Willis – asked Cllr L Wright if he would change the wording of his notice of motion to include the word external and independent investigation rather than independent investigation. Cllr L Wright agreed.

Cllr L Wright provided names of three online investigators.

Are They Safe?

Cotswold Private Investigations

Global Private Investigators

Cllr L Wright suggested it would be less costly to contact various independent IT professionals who have face book expertise who can professionally and correctly interpret the evidence and give conclusive answer beyond any reasonable doubt, these can be found on an internet search.

An example company quoted £750.00

Cllr L Wright suggested there must be more than one individual involved in the fake facebook issue and that no further postings had been made.

Cllr L Wright requested a recorded vote.

Cllr T Ball reported that there is a charity which looks into internet fraud. They will support Parish Councils into looking into the subject and give an idea of what can be done, what needs to be done and how much it will cost and make a recommendation that may resolve this item.

A discussion took place regarding the content and nature of the face book page over the last three years.

Cllr T Ball proposed to contact the registered charity CIFAS furnish them with the proof to decide validity of the case, to speak to the insurance company to see if we are covered to take this investigation forward to see if there is any assistance and any pitfalls that they would see and come back with that information to councillors outside of the meeting.

Cllr T Ramsay suggested that a member of the public had further evidence.

Cllr T Willis requested that the evidence be circulated to all councillors.

Cllr T Willis requested the finance group to suggest how this will be funded should the investigation go ahead.

Cllr R Grainger supported as long as it is just an inquiry.

Cllr G Rainey queried what question would be asked of the professional investigator.

Cllr S Dobinson stated that it is important that all Cllrs see evidence, when talking to IT experts they had advised her it was circumstantial evidence.

Cllr T Ball provided the name of the charity, CIFAS. Cllr T Ball stated that the question to ask will be regarding a member of the public accusing a council employee of Misconduct in Public Office.

Cllr T Ramsay reported that three members of the parish council at the time were blamed for this and suggested that an investigation would clear them.

Signed

Proposal: The circulation of background information to all Councillors, WPC approach CIFAS with outline spec, the finance group suggest how to fund any independent external enquiry, contact with insurance company and no costs to be incurred.

Proposed: Cllr L Wright

Seconded: Cllr T Ball

Recorded vote:

Cllr L Wright Yes

Cllr T Ball Yes

Cllr S Dobinson Yes

Cllr T Ramsay Yes

Cllr R Grainger Yes

Cllr A Milne Yes

Cllr J Galliford Yes

Cllr G Rainey Yes

Cllr T Willis Yes

Resolved: The circulation of background information to all Councillors, WPC approach CIFAS with outline spec, the finance group suggest how to fund any independent external enquiry, contact with insurance company and no costs to be incurred.

Cllr T Willis thanked the council for their collaborative work on this item.

- 101 Councillor Resignation** – To note the resignation of Cllr T Shirley, for information only.
- 102 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) S 73 application for the variation of conditions 1, 5 and 6 of planning permission RBC/19CM005 to extend the time limit to complete sand and gravel extraction, importation of inert materials, and restoration by 3 years: to increase the total quantity of mineral extracted from the site from 1,200,000 tonnes nett to 1,400,000 tonnes nett: and to vary the total quantity of inert infill materials from 850,000 tonnes to 800,000 cubic metres at Wolston Fields Quarry, Wolston Lane, Wolston, CV8 3ES. Observations required by 11th October 2023.

Cllr L Wright recommended we do not agree unless we can meet the officers and land agent. A discussion took place regarding meeting with the applicant.

Cllr T Ball proposed acceptance.

Cllr R Grainger suggested the application is potentially misleading because of the different units used.

Cllr L Wright noted the difficulty in estimating the weight when it is on a lorry.

It was agreed to respond and draw attention to the use of two different units of measurement for the amount of infill and request clarification.

Proposal: WPC have no objection but ask for clarification on the amount of infill.

Proposed: Cllr T Ball

Seconded: Cllr L Wright

Unanimous

Resolved: WPC have no objection but ask for clarification on the amount of infill.

Signed

103 Working Groups -

- a) **To endorse Wolston Parish Council Working Groups and make any appropriate decisions.**
- b) **To endorse Wolston Parish Council Communications Policy, HR and Finance Working Groups Terms of Reference (TB)**
- c) **Working Group Delegates Reports – To receive updates from Working Groups, including NDP (GR), Allotments Working Group (SD), Finance Working Group, (TB), Open Spaces Working Group (GR) and HR Working Group (LW) and make any appropriate decisions.**

104 Compound Licence – To consider and, if appropriate, approve the Compound Licence as commended by WPC Solicitor (SD)

Cllr R Grainger reported that he had read all the documentation and has no problem with it other than a spelling mistake in the document.

Cllr L Wright Measured the compound and it is larger than stated. The site they are using is much larger than on the plan – we should ask Mr Dumbleton to make sure that they put everything to right where they have caused damage.

Cllr A Milne – Every legal document should go through the whole council.

It was agreed that this item be deferred.

105 Review of trees on PC land or planted by PC to include Dyers Lane Hedge – To receive an update from the Urgency Matters Working Group regarding immediate remedial work required and make any appropriate decisions. (TW)

It was noted that there was a meeting with a consultant regarding the next steps with the Dyers Lane Hedge for the morning of Saturday 7th October 2023. A discussion took place regarding the weeds around the base of the hedge in Dyers Lane.

Meeting closed at 22:20 hrs

106 Exclusion of Press and Public

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 items 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 staffing.

107 Notice of Motion under Standing Order 8 – To re-visit the minute 228 from 2nd March 2023 to include the option of rescinding the minute to enable an independent investigation to resolve this item finally and make any appropriate decisions.

This item was moved to before item 101

108 William Cree Play Area Wet Pour Quotes – To consider recent wet pour quotes and make any appropriate decisions. (LW/GR) Not discussed.**109 Human Resources (Staffing) – To receive any updates on any items of business that are likely to include staffing discussions and make any appropriate decisions. Not discussed.****110 Clerk's report – To receive a progress update on any confidential items. Not discussed.****111 Future Agenda Items – Councillors are requested 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. Not discussed.****112 Date of Next Meetings – To consider and confirm the date of Thursday 2nd November 2023 for the next 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 held.**

SignedChair

Date

Public forum opened at 19:17 hrs

Cllr S Ward - Reminder of help for households scheme, help with food, gas or electricity, search Household Support Fund on Warwickshire.gov.uk website -this is not a means tested benefit.

Report any problems with builders on new developments contact the councillors and they will do what they can to alleviate the problems.

Roadworks in Long Lawford, there may be road closures – they will feed the information back as soon as they receive it.

New defibrillator has been installed in Bennets Court. Accessible 24 hours a day. RJ Foundation will manage and carry out the inspections.

New Quiz night fund raiser for a new defibrillator in the Arden de Grey side of village.

Cllr T Ball – New defibrillators – have you looked at solar and wind power ones available?

Cllr J Rainey – support package – a lot of people do not have access to the website.

Cllr S Ward will give telephone numbers for those who cannot access the internet.

Cllr R Grainger will pass information on to the St Margaret's church pastoral care group.

Cllr J Rainey suggested a poster on the notice board in the co-op would help elderly residents who cannot access the internet.

MOP suggested a poster would be helpful in the Doctors Surgery.

MOP suggested the library.

Cllr T Ramsay suggested the public notice boards in the village.

Cllr S Ward – Remembrance Service at Memorial Gates Whitehall

Rugby Town website, rugbytown.co.uk has lots of events which are going on in the area. If you have any events to add please contact Cllr S Ward.

Cllr L Wright – mentioned that the bus service is not very good. – urgent need for this to be addressed.

Cllr T Willis – will mention this to Cllr H Timms. Perhaps she can bring pressure to Portfolio holder, and the bus providers.

Cllr L Wright mentioned that we requested a bus stop outside manor priory estate.

Cllr S Ward – reminded people of the indigo bus service – mini bus service provided by WCC – Dial a ride service. If residents register – Adult single £ Return £6 Telephone number is 01926 742000 – subject to availability 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday anywhere in Rugby.

Cllr L Wright – does the dial a ride service cater for wheelchair users?

Cllr S Ward – believed they are wheelchair accessible.

Cllr R Grainger – Office of the Police and Crime Prevention for Warwickshire – grant funding is available – requested residents to come forth with ideas of projects for crime prevention – e.g., CCTV in skate park –

Signed

Cllr R Grainger reported on the progress of the replacement litter and dog waste bins – hold up due to RBC's operatives lack of training for working on the highway – new operative is undergoing training there will be a delay of approximately 4-6 weeks.

MOP 1 – Agenda Item 107 revisiting minute 228 – Issue is very much alive – parish Cllrs accused who need to be exonerated or held to account.

Cllr T Willis – explained that WPC are revisiting with a view to an investigation but not to re-examine the history. We will not be re-discussing the issues that have gone before. We will be discussing the Notice Of Motion only.

MOP 1 – important for the ex Cllrs need to be exonerated.

Cllr T Willis – we will be discussing the motion put forward. He will be making an announcement.

MOP 2 – Are Rugby Borough Council aware of this motion.

Cllr T Willis – Yes, Rugby Borough Council are aware.

MOP 3 – Is a speed watch taking place?

Cllr R Grainger – in principle yes – need to get heads together and arrange some dates.

MOP 4 – Survey around bollard in village – resolution was passed to purchase new bollards and install.

Cllr T Ball – PWL was to carry out this in winter.

Cllr G Rainey – Original study required a re-visit due to some elements of bollards were queried. The survey has been done Cllr R Grainger and Cllr G Rainey have looked at it again – Cllr G Rainey will undertake, with Cllr Grainger to define a date for commencement of the project.

Cllr L Wright – He thought they had been ordered.

Cllr G Rainey – Will come back to council as soon as possible.

Cllr R Grainger – To clarify PWL is not allowed to dig on the highway without proper accreditation.

Cllr T Ball – Installed by a resident many years ago.

Cllr R Grainger – Strict regulations regarding digging on the highway – will progress with RBC.

MOP 3 Agenda Item William Cree – 108 – is there a reason why discussion of the quotation cannot be in the public forum?

Cllr T Willis – It is because of sensitive information contained in evaluating quotes.

Cllr T Willis encouraged members of the public who have numerous issues to contact us via email to the clerk or by telephone.

Cllr L Wright – Would be interested to know who painted the fence on the outside of the park, and what materials they used and would like to thank them.

Public Forum closed at 19:48 hrs

Signed