

Minutes of Wolston Parish Council Meeting Thursday 3rd October 2024

Start: 7:15p.m.

Venue: Brandon & Wolston Village Hall, Main Street, Wolston CV8 3HJ

NOTICE AND AGENDA Public Forum and Parish Matters (Commencing at 7.15pm) For Councillors and members of the Parish and press to raise any issues or matters of concern with the Parish Council. The full Parish Council will commence after the public forum has been closed by the Chair – this will be no later than 7.30pm. A time limit of 5 minutes to speak per person may be imposed to keep to schedule, and this is at the Chair’s discretion.

Meeting started: 19:35

Present: Cllr. TIMMS (Chair), Cllr. RAINEY (Vice-Chair), Cllr. DOBINSON, Cllr. RAMSAY, Cllr. BALL, Cllr. WRIGHT, Cllr. MILNE, Cllr. GALLIFORD, L. KNOWLES (Acting Clerk)

Members of public: 3

102. Apologies - To receives apologies.

Apologies received from RBC Cllr. TIMMS

103. 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. WILLIS – any items/matters with regard to Rugby Borough Council.

Cllr. BALL – Item 113 (pecuniary)

Cllr. RAINEY – item 109 (family member)

Cllr. GALLIFORD -allotments

Cllr. RAMSAY - allotments

104. Minutes – a) To review and if appropriate, approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th September 2024

Proposed: Cllr. RAINEY

Seconded: Cllr. MILNE

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstention: 3

Cllr. WILLIS responded to a question posed at a previous meeting by Cllr. WRIGHT regarding Borough Council’s policy on recording of minutes.

Thomas Griffiths, Chief Officer of communication expressed the policy as:

a) private session should NOT be recorded.

b) public session should be deleted once the minutes have been approved as these are then regarded as the formal record of the meeting.

Mr Griffiths will forward the policy which will be circulated to all councillors.

b) To review and if appropriate, approve the minutes of the ‘Extra’ Parish Council meeting held on 23rd September 2024

Cllr. WRIGHT raised a Point of Order that in his opinion the minutes were not representative of what took place at the meeting in the private session. He has written a letter explaining his reason, which is associated with this meeting, for standing down from the HR & Open Spaces Working Groups.

Cllr. WILLIS stated intention to return to this later in the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. RAINEY

Seconded: Cllr. BALL

Cllr. WRIGHT requested a recorded vote.

For: Cllr. DOBINSON, Cllr. GALLIFORD, Cllr. MILNE, Cllr. BALL, Cllr. RAINEY, Cllr. RAINEY, Cllr. WILLIS

Against: Cllr. WRIGHT

Abstention: Cllr. RAMSAY Cllr. OSMOND

105.	<p>Notice of Motion – “...To reduce the risk of injury to pedestrians using village footways during winter months, the Parish Council debate the need to grit the footways as is evident in an adjacent parish...”.</p> <p>Cllr. WRIGHT detailed the proposal – for reasons of safety for residents, Wolston PC take on responsibility for the gritting of footpaths around the village as when required.</p> <p>An individual is prepared and has the necessary equipment to carry out the task effectively.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY supported the need to debate this issue, as historically, the gritting of pavements did take place and there are strategically placed grit containers around the village.</p> <p>Decision made to add this item to the agenda of next meeting when Cllr. WRIGHT will present a costed and detailed proposition to propose a trial of the operation.</p> <p>Proposed: C WRIGHT Seconded: Cllr. RAINEY For: 8 Against: 1</p>
106.	<p>Co-option – To discuss and consider co-option of a prospective councillor, to receive any expressions of interest and if appropriate, vote and co-opt a councillor.</p> <p>No expression of interest.</p>
107.	<p>Finance – a) To approve payments for September 2024.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY explained that the report from the Finance app Advantedge is still not producing a full report. All transactions for services and goods have been paid and entered on the app but for reasons not yet worked out, the report produced by the app is not complete.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY confirmed that the document presented is true and valid.</p> <p>Cllr. RAMSAY enquired re. access to Parish Online. It was confirmed that everything has been paid. Not extensively used in last year and so access had been suspended and no one informed. The issue is now resolved and by beginning of next week all access will be reinstated and user details will be circulated.</p> <p>Cllr. WRIGHT enquired about payment to Rugby First for CCTV monitoring which has not appeared on reports. Cllr. RAMSAY responded with information that the PC has never been sent a quote or invoice.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT Seconded: Cllr. MILNE For: 7 Against: 1 Abs: 1</p> <p>b) To note payments received. Interest received on savings account. Precept should go in at end of month not yet shown on bank statement. Noted</p> <p>c). To consider a Grant Application from Wolston Juniors Football Club for £1,459.80 and make any appropriate decisions.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY: The document circulated submitted last month for information but required clarification regarding details of what the club wanted to develop.</p> <p>Success full season aspirations for the future. Grant in line with last year – support to continue in winter months.</p> <p>Details given of how the club has developed and grown in the last year and plans for the future.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY recommends approval of the grant.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY responded to a proposal by Cllr. WRIGHT by confirming a discussion with WJFC admin has taken place to plan a review of the grant and will also arrange for an appropriate letter recognising full</p>

	<p>commitment to the Dyer’s Lane ground in the future. Will also provide guidance on how to apply for the grant effectively, next year. We now have the opportunity to establish a positive, working relationship with the Secretary of the football club.</p> <p>Cllr. RAINEY responded to Cllr. RAMSAY enquiry regarding relationship of WJFC with the Leisure Centre. Difficulties have been resolved and as a regular customer WJFC has the opportunity to now build a positive relationship with the Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Cllr. BALL: suggested if WJFC are going to use the pitch an agreement must be in place to check liability insurance and would like to see evidence of Parish Council support.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT Seconded Cllr. MILNE For: 8 Against:0 Abstention: 1</p>
108.	<p>HR Consultant – To discuss and consider the use of an HR Consultant for Parish Council matters and make any appropriate decisions. (TB)</p> <p>Cllr. BALL proposed that the PC carry out a full survey to ascertain if it wished to employ the use of a HR company which has become common practice among parish councils.</p> <p>This service can vary from £8.50 per month, per employee, for a company such as Bright Online to provide a simple system, record of holidays/ absences etc with a line management service, to Peninsular, at a cost of approximately £47.00 per month, per employee.</p> <p>Cllr. BALL brought this item to the meeting for consideration and debate to ascertain if the PC wishes to go ahead with this and if agreed will provide a full costing with all options put forward.</p> <p>Cllr. OSMOND through own experience of such a service it would be opinion that it would be useful to explore what this proposal would look like and would welcome more information.</p> <p>Proposal: That Wolston Parish Council investigate the use of a HR company.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. BALL Seconded: Cllr. MILNE For: 8 Against: 1 Abstention: 0</p>
109.	<p>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 www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk. To discuss and if appropriate comment on any planning applications received.</p> <p>a). Ref: R24/0176 - Proposal at: Former Nursery, Rugby Road, Brandon, Warwickshire, CV8 3GJ For: Outline application for the redevelopment of a former horticultural nursery and garden centre to provide up to 43 residential dwellings together with public open space. All matters reserved except for access.</p> <p>Wolston Parish Council has not formally received this planning application as it does not fall within Wolston development.</p> <p>This is an item on agenda primarily from a FLAG perspective and as a larger development. It is the proposed development of the former horticultural/nursery and garden centre on edge of Brandon & Binley Woods for up to 43 residential dwellings together with public open space, all matters reserved except for access. This application will go to Planning Committee.</p> <p>Councillors put forward their opinions and views.</p>

Storage for sandbags has been purchased and the boxes will be located strategically in areas of the village.

RBC & WCC provided the sand for sandbags which have now been filled.

There will be a fundraiser in January to raise money for Flood Action Group.

Cllr. WRIGHT questioned if the council is going to provide funding for FLAG.

The issue of big tractors travelling at speed through the village via Coalpit Lane – causing damage to roadside gullies / homes / other vehicles.

Cllr. BALL suggested that this be noted as an item for Traffic Issues.

Cllr. WILLIS confirmed that funding for flood action is on the RBC agenda. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to protect their own property. WPC does have a role to play within the plan of action.

There has been some confusion regarding the money raised by the Just Giving Fund, which decided to use the money for the wider community. As a result, a resident purchased the storage boxes in good faith.

Cllr. WILLIS proposes that, if the issue cannot be resolved, WPC take on payment for the storage boxes.

Proposal: Funding from WPC to cover the cost of suitable sandbag storage boxes.

Cllr. WRIGHT moves that this becomes an item on next agenda.

Proposer: Cllr. WILLIS

Second: Cllr. BALL

For: 8

Against: 1 (would like more info.)

Abstentions: 0

Open Spaces

Record his thanks to Cllr. WRIGHT for substantial support in the last week, particularly with the contracts that have been awarded.

Open Spaces activity includes –

- upgrading and remedial work on Dyer's Lane play area,
- cleaning & refurbishment of the skateboard park is underway (Cllr. RAINEY will confirm if skateboard park needs to remain closed)
- hedge bordering the recreation ground and houses at back of Brook Street can go ahead with regard to lowest price quote and speed of delivery of service.
- Work has started on preparing a winter works schedule for the Public Works Lead (should be available in November PC meeting)
- Plan for placement of bollards (original documents located). With support of Cllr. WRIGHT & Richard HAYCOCK, a proposal will be put together for next PC meeting.
- Removal of intrusive shrubbery at entrance to Brook Street is completed.
- Damaged goalpost at Dyer's Lane made safe. Now awaiting a quote for replacement with steel goalposts, concreted in the same position, for casual and occasional use by youth of the village.
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Allotments

Cllr. WILLIS confirmed that the action to seek legal advice regarding the relationship of Allotment Association and PC is in hand.

Youth club –

WCC Youth service require grant back. Cllr. DOBINSON will send minute from last meeting to WCC. Has a letter been sent to youth leader by clerk? Clerk will action.

Posters on PC notices boards need to come down. Cllr. RAINEY to action.

	<p>Neighbourhood Development Plan Group Cllr. RAINEY reported that NDP Group has a document which they have confidence in. It has been reviewed positively by all people responsible for those issues. Due to shortage of staff for a period of time, we have reached a stalemate and not maintained the schedule. The group needs to decide on the next steps. A meeting is planned with Mr. Ingles and another meeting with the Communications Group. The group needs more people prepared to help.</p> <p>Communications Group. Cllr. BALL reports no further progress on live streaming. Need to work out budget for it. New equipment needed. New email system is not compatible with 'wolston.co.uk'. Need to investigate an alternative.</p> <p>Question posed by Cllr. WRIGHT reports that the swing suitable for disabled, will be in action from weekend. He posed the question, if a suitable notice can be out up to inform users of the adaptation of the swing. Cllr. RAMSAY to action investigating the appropriate wording.</p>
111.	<p>Events/Communications a) Remembrance Sunday – To provide an update and confirm arrangements for the day, inc. road closure and costs incurred, and make any appropriate decisions. (TB) Cllr. BALL reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wreaths have been ordered. • Meeting for order of service with Chaplin Teresa. • With regard to a representative for village resident, emergency services and uniform services a – notice will go out on Facebook for nominations. • Need to make decision on who is going to lay wreath on behalf of PC. <p>b) Christmas Lights Switch on – To provide an update and confirm arrangements for the day and make any appropriate decisions regarding the event and any budget requirements, e.g., purchase of tree. Cllr. BALL reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stalls are ordered. • Christmas trees – prices coming out at end of month. Will investigate recommendation for rental of tree. • If within budget, will be brought for sign off at November meeting.
112.	<p>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. Proposed: Cllr. WRIGHT Seconded: Cllr. MILNE All in favour (Cllr. RAINEY not in room)</p>
113.	<p>Human Resources (Staffing) – To receive any updates on any items of business that are likely to include staffing discussions and to make any appropriate decisions.</p> <p>a). To provide an update on recruitment to the vacancy of the Clerk/RFO to WPC and make any appropriate decisions. (ALL) Cllr. Ball declared an interest in this item and therefore left the room. (21:23hrs)</p>

	<p>Cllr. WILLIS read out a letter from Cllr. WRIGHT indicating his resignation from the HR and Open Spaces Working Groups, citing criticism and attitude from councillors as the reason. Read out letter – resigning from group HR highlighting criticism and attitude from councillors. Cllr. WILLIS expressed disappointment at losing Cllr. WRGHT at a crucial time and voiced the possibility of discussion to re-engage Cllr. WRIGHT. Cllr. WRIGHT agreed that, if considered worthy, will continue in the role until the new clerk is appointed. – does not want to let council down. Not fair that 2 people make decisions.</p> <p>FOI request Cllr. WILLIS expressed confusion as to whether the FOI request was submitted from a resident or councillor. Cllr. WILLIS will familiarise himself with terms of FOI to respond to Mr. WRIGHT as a council taxpayer.</p> <p>Appointment of new clerk to the parish council. Once interviews of candidates are completed, the interview panel should bring their recommendations to the full council for a decision. This could be a stand-alone meeting. Cllr. WRIGHT expressed opinion that it would be difficult for the panel to interview a fellow councillor. Requested that support with the interview is sought from WALC.</p> <p>Outstanding payment to the previous clerk Cllr. RAINEY reported that The Finance Working Group has given due diligence to the amount of money paid to the previous clerk for holiday pay. It can be confirmed that the final salary was correct in terms of hours worked and holiday pay; it did not reflect overtime and toil hours accrued through last year and this year. In seeking to sort out the paper trail for the claimed overtime and toil, there is not paper trail that authorises work done. The PC, currently, does not have such a system in place. The contract states you may be required to work hours in addition to your contracted hours and such hours need to be approved. However, there is no paperwork to support those decisions.</p> <p>The remaining issue is 40 and quarter hours of additional work. The record chart was prepared by clerk but not authorised by anyone. The record itemises areas of work and hours awarded to those hours and includes FLAG, Warm Spaces, AGAR Possible ways forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay nothing for additional hours and face a possible tribunal • Pay according to claim • Pay a compromise - Pay hours plus carry forward – 33 hours. No consensus achieved, Cllr WILLIS proposes that unless HR can bring something forward to support another decision, the documents need to come before full council. Questions can be presented as BAU.</p>
114.	<p>Future Agenda Items – Councillors are requested to use this opportunity to raise items for future agendas. NB. Councillors are reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New emails & village website
115.	<p>Date of Next Meeting – To consider and confirm the date of 7th November 2024 as the next Parish Council meeting at The Village Hall, Main Street, Wolston 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.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr. WILLIS Seconded: Cllr. RAMSAY All present in favour.</p>
	<p>Meeting end: 22:05</p>