

WHISSENDINE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 2nd March 2015, in the Village Hall , Whissendine

Present

Mr W Farr (Chairman)
Mrs L Arnold Mr R Comber
Mr T Edmunds Mr D Hatton
Mrs P Lake Mrs C Moss

In attendance

Mr Philip Tatham (webmaster) & Mr Colin Miles (web expert)
Ms Gail Waller (RCC Councillor)
Mrs Jen Lacey Parish Clerk

Mr Farr welcomed those present shortly after 7.20pm.

02815: Report from Ward Councillor Waller

Ms Waller had attended at the request of Whissendine's Ward Councillor who was ill. She gave a report that gave the Parish Council information on the County Council's 2015-16 budget and on the future need for school places in Rutland. There was also the opportunity for questions on both topics.

There was to be no increase in council tax in the forthcoming year. Reserves would be used to support some services so that reduction in provision could be phased in rather than by sudden cuts. £75,000 had been set aside to maintain the current level of fire service provision at Uppingham, but negotiations were ongoing with the firemen and Leics CC on working terms and conditions. The money would ensure the service continued for two years, but there was no wish to spend it until a plan to secure provision after that time was achieved.

Planning was taken place to ensure there were sufficient places in Rutland's schools in the future. The number of homes had increased and brought a growth in the population of school age children. In the short term mobile classrooms could be provided, but as the County Council could not build any new schools it had the option of bussing children to where places were available, or encouraging academy/free school expansion. The responsibility of providing places was RCC's but parents had the right of choice and academies could determine their own admissions policy. This would result in a conflict of interests if places in an area were scarce. When plans were made they would be put out to public consultation as was legally required.

When her report was completed Ms Waller was thanked by the Chairman, and she then left the meeting.

02915: Report on the new website from Mr Philip Tatham

Mr Tatham reported that the flyers had been distributed with the magazine as planned, and he believed they had been favourably received. It was too early to gauge any increase use of the website, but it was attracting users with the Calendar and News page proving the most popular, and 'Knit & Natter' not far behind. It was known that the PC area had had visitors and those who used it spent time there.

The Whissendine Digital Photo Contest to stimulate interest in the site relaunch was also advertised on the flyer, and it was agreed that the prizes would be presented at the White Lion during a Feast Week event.

There was discussion on the presentation of the WI Project on the website which was followed by consideration of obtaining more historical photographs and papers that were a record of village history. Mrs Lake recommended consultation with Mrs Raymond, and a website request for further information.

It was agreed that a poster listing events was a good idea, and some were taken for indoor/outdoor sites around the village. More detail on each event would require reference to the website so it was another method of encouraging use. Councillors and the Clerk took flyers and posters for further distribution.

Payment was approved for £124.73 on invoices presented.

Councillors were appreciative of what had been achieved and looked forward to the presentation at the APM. Mr Tatham and Mr Miles then left the meeting.

03015: Public question time There were no members of the public present.

03115: Apologies for absence Ward Councillor Asplin had sent apologies as he was unable to attend.
Mrs Mould did not attend.

03215: Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 9 February 2015

These were approved on the proposal of Mrs Lake without correction or amendment.

03315: Declarations of Interest: None

03415: updates on ongoing business not covered by agenda items

a) 02015a) Installation of cycle racks

No one had visited the Play Area recently, but it was believed the rack was now installed. There had been brief contact from RCC to say that the work was being carried out.

b) 00515e) Loodal Farm report

The sheds were now cleaned, but it was agreed that Mr Howat should be asked to report as residents would want to be sure monitoring was taking place as spring approached.

c)02315a) Litter bin installation

In response to a query about when the bin bought for outside the village shop would be installed the Clerk replied that she understood it to have been obtained, but the contractors had to be available to secure it into position. It was agreed that a check be made to see if an installation date was known.

03515 Reports from Councillors

a) Whissendine Environmental Group (WEG)

Mr Comber had attended and reported plans for hedgerow planting. A variety of native species would be put in as whips and laid the following season. Once established in this manner the new hedge would be very low maintenance, needing little attention for around five years. Bird/bat boxes would also be installed in the area. It had proved a very successful project and new people were being attracted to the group. Future projects were being discussed and it was suggested that the sheepwash area at The Banks should be considered. Also that the APM should be used to consult residents and get suggestions for environmental improvements.

b) The Ward Councillor

Mr Asplin had sent a brief written report to note that he had not yet received any satisfactory answers to his enquiries from Severn-Trent, but he would continue to contact them. He had been assured by RCC that the gullies would be cleaned as requested. He also passed on a message from the school caretaker that the bin outside the school was loose and possibly dangerous.

Mr Hatton informed Councillors that he had secured it.

03615 Planning matters

a)2015/0086/OUT: Retrospective consent for conversion of ground floor space to living accommodation at Pickwell Lane

Councillors expressed concern that there was need for such as an application, and noted that the ground floor area that had been used for tack and equipment storage was now being used for living accommodation. Together with the designated living area on the floor above an additional house was being created and plans for additional housing at the site had been rejected previously. It was observed that there was no extension or alteration to the actual building either inside or out, and that the change did not impact on the area or neighbouring properties as they would not be observed from outside. It was considered the decision to approve or not would be based on planning law, and local knowledge could add little in the case of this application.

b) Planning updates

- Land to the rear of 91 Main Street - demolition of existing double garage and erection of a two storey, four bedroomed detached house. APPROVED
- Land to the east of 27 The Nook - erection of a detached house. APPEAL DISMISSED

03715: The Banks

a) Noticeboard

Mrs Raymond had sent a sketch of the drawing she would produce for the board which all agreed was delightful, and exactly what was required. Approval was given for this to be completed and Mrs Lake would thank Mrs Raymond on behalf of the PC. It was required for the board on A4 to complement the information.

A Fields in Trust sign (sponsored by Asda) had been received. It was agreed that this would be put on the fence between the small and large play sites to give those that visited the area confirmation that the land was a protected play space. Mr Edmunds agreed to arrange for it to be fixed.

b) Mowing for the 2015 season.

Written confirmation from Cory (by email) had been received.

c) Routine maintenance

None was known.

It was agreed that discussions should take place with WEG on the possibility of a project centred on the sheepwash and bridge to enhance the area, with financial input from the PC, before Mr Baker was asked to make repairs to the bridge. It was thought that a new, improved structure could be afforded if there was partnership with WEG and grant funding was also available.

03815: Highways & village maintenance

a) SID installation

Mrs Lake, Mrs Moss and the Clerk had met with Mr Slater of RCC in Ashwell and agreed a suitable location for the sign. It would be on the bank just before the first house on the left when approaching the village, making it clearly visible. It would possibly function on wind/solar power, but an electrical supply (parish light) was available nearby if required. Mr Slater gave an estimate of 3-4 months for installation. The news of this would be given at the APM.

b) Litter bins (see also min 03315c)

The resident in Harborough Close had sent a further email on the visibility and usefulness of the bin installed at the entrance to the footpath. Councillors agreed that there was nothing to be added to the previous reply. WEG had noted additional dog fouling in Main Street and it was agreed it was the time of year when walkers tended to exercise their pets in the village rather than outside it, causing an regular problem. It was agreed that a note should be put in the Grapevine reminding dog walkers that all bins should be used and everyone who owned a dog was expected to clear up after it.

c) maintenance matters

The gullies had been cleaned and water flushed through, but it was noted that there remained blockages in the sewers that forced the water though the road surface. The observation was that RCC could make only temporary repairs rather than undertake the major renewals that would be necessary to solve the problems. Potholes at Willow Close & Sherrard Close junctions with Stapleford Road, and on Oakham Road beyond the village to be reported.

The bin outside the school had been fixed into position by Mr Hatton, and Mrs Arnold would stabilise the sign in Ashwell Road.

03915: Website update (see min 02915)

04015: Preliminary planning for the Annual Parish Meeting

There was discussion on the time to be allowed for each speaker as with the start at 8pm the meeting would be half an hour shorter than usual. It was noted that if all those invited wanted to speak there would have to be a five minute maximum with a brief opportunity for questions. Additional time would be allowed for the community police officer and the website if necessary.

04115: Financial business

a) Financial report for February

The current account balance was £2290.98 and it was not expected that any major payments would be made before the end of the financial year. Over £17,000 remained in the deposit account and it was not expected that money would be required from that in advance of the precept being received. Therefore the amount on deposit was increasing. However, funding was committed to the SID installation, the signage for The Banks and to assist the Village Hall. It was also agreed that play equipment in the small area would need replacement and money should be saved for that eventuality. Therefore the retaining the precept at its current level was justifiable.

b) Village Hall grant

Plans had been received but no estimates for the work had been provided. It was agreed that Mrs Moss should report to the Village Hall Committee that the Council found the ideas acceptable, but a decision on funding would be deferred until costs were known.

c) Continued membership of Fields In Trust

This was agreed. The £50 subscription would be paid.

d) Payment was agreed for the following accounts:

• Impressions	£ 324.00
• Clerk's office expenses	£ 27.00
• Caretaker	£ 42.73
• P Tatham (website development)	£ 84.74
• C Miles (website development)	£ 39.99
• Fields In Trust subscription	£ 50.00

04215: Correspondence

a) information from RCC on the Parish Council Forum & Standards Committee
paperwork to be circulated

b) information on changes to policing in Rutland circulated electronically

It was noted that the next two PC meetings would be on the 2nd Monday of the month as the first Monday in April and May were bank holidays.

The meeting finished at 9.05pm

18 March	Annual Parish Meeting	Whissendine School	8.00pm
30 March	Parish Council Forum	Catmose	7.00pm
13 April	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.15pm
11 May	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.15pm