

WHISSENDINE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 8th February 2016, in the
Village Hall , Whissendine

Present

Chairman: Mr W Farr
Mrs L Arnold Mr R Comber
Mr T Edmunds Mrs P Lake
Mrs C Moss
Dr S Lammin (proposed for co-option)

In attendance

Three candidates for the vacant Ward Councillorship
The political agent for one candidate
Mr P Tatham (village webmaster)
Mr G Clyde (NPD steering group)
1 village resident to observe
Mrs Jen Lacey - Parish Clerk

1416: Public time.

The candidates introduced themselves briefly and had come with the intention of observing to learn about Whissendine issues rather than with specific questions. There were offers of possible assistance to get the Neighbourhood Development Scheme started when Mr Clyde assisted Mrs Moss in giving information on the amount of work the NPD would entail.

It was estimated that at least twenty people would be needed to work on the scheme over a three year period, and at present five had expressed sufficient interest to attend a meeting. There would also have to be a grant application made as the amount of publication and printing was considerable. Mr Clyde observed that initially the scheme had to be powered by the Parish Council as it would be required to make the application to Rutland County Council to begin the plan, and the scope encompassed the whole parish not just the village. Information had been given that RCC was not accepting any new schemes at present, but it was believed that there was a legal obligation for any request properly made to be actioned.

Mr Tatham confirmed that IT support would be readily available. The website had the capacity to store and publish data as required, and both he and Colin Miles would be interested in being involved in the project. He asked Councillors if a short presentation on the development of the website should be made at the Annual Parish Meeting and was assured that this would be welcomed. (Mr Tatham left the meeting).

The number of dog waste bins in the village was queried by a candidate because a resident believed there were not enough. It was explained that any waste bin could be used for wrapped waste and noted that this should be clearly stated in the next issue of the Grapevine in case others were unaware of the fact.

Councillors and the public present remembered Councillor Begy, who had recently passed away and noted sympathy for his family. It was observed that he had attended public meetings in the village on occasions and acted as Ward Councillor during a period when Whissendine did not have one, presenting information from RCC. He would be sadly missed by many who respected his time given to public service.

1516: The co-option of Dr Susan Lammin

This was proposed from the Chair and unanimously accepted. Dr Lammin completed a Declaration of Office witnessed by the Clerk. This and her register of interests would be submitted to RCC.

1616: Apologies for absence:

Mr D Hatton.

1716: Declaration of Pecuniary Interest:

Mr Edmunds had put in an estimate to make repairs to the village pump. He left the room when this item was discussed.

1816: Minutes Parish Council Meetings of 4 January 2016

The Clerk reported two typographical corrections following circulation of the minutes which were then approved on the proposal of Mrs Lake.

1916: updates on ongoing business not covered by agenda items

a) 0616a the name of the footpath

WEG expected that the Parish Council would now propose the name Chapel Walk to RCC and it was agreed this should be done.

b) 9615b) Hortons Lane

Dr Lawrie had informed the Parish Council of a resolution between himself and RCC Highways (email to D Brown) to the siting of the Horton Lane sign. He was also satisfied with the work carried out by RCC on hedging and verges in the lane, so closing a matter that had previously been reported to the Parish Council by Ward Councillor Asplin.

c) 0716 Produce & Craft show

No proposal had been sent in respect of sponsorship for the Produce and Craft Show for inclusion on the agenda. Mrs Lake reported that offers and donations had been received since the last meeting that covered most classes. The children's section remained in need of support. Councillors agreed in principle to sponsor this and that this information could be given to the show's organisers. The detail of what would be awarded to each class winner and the amount to be spent in this respect would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

d) 111b) Ashwell Road footway and road surface

Dr Lammin reported that residents had been informed that work would be on 17 February and last for 3 days. Access would be restricted for this period.

2016: Reports from Councillors

a) The Parish Council Forum

Mrs Lake and Mr Edmunds had represented Whissendine and prepared a report for circulation to Councillors. Concern was expressed on a newly proposed method of passing information to RCC officers. Parish Councils and members of the public would use the same forms to give details of repairs and renewals required, and suggestions for new projects. It was thought that all would have to follow the same route for assessment by Cabinet which would prolong any action in response. A period of two years had been mentioned. It was hoped that some sort of triage system would be put in place to assess both the priority and scale of the work required so that there would not be long delays.

The other item of importance was that RCC was proposing taking over all street lighting and installing LED lamps for cost effectiveness. It was estimated that this would save the PC approximately £1500 per annum, if there was no charge made by RCC for the services of electrical supply and repair.

b) The Sports Club

Mrs Arnold reported on an Extraordinary General Meeting to determine a way forward for the club. Eight new people had come forward to assist. The chief problem was the building that was expensive to upkeep and would shortly need major repair. There was discussion on whether it should be replaced altogether by a smaller pavilion, and whether the Village Hall and Sports Club should combine resources rather than be in competition with each other. A report would be given at the APM.

c) Whissendine Environmental Group

Minutes had been received for circulation. There was also a detailed report prepared for Councillors on the suggestion that willows should be planted in the wet area of the Cow Lane land. Expert opinion was that planting in this area would destroy the existing habitat and not bring any benefit. It was an important ecosystem that should be maintained. It was agreed that the report should be published in full on the website with a note in the Grapevine that it could be read there.

d) Village Hall

Mrs Moss had circulated an electronic copy of the Village Hall Committee meeting minutes. She had been unable to attend, but noted that the work in the basement was now complete and the hall now had a set of changing rooms so that more small theatrical groups could be invited. It was expected that the committee would seek further grants from the Parish Council in the next financial year.

e) Neighbourhood Watch

This was to be reconvened but operate in a different manner, with the police liaising electronically with designate contacts, who would in turn pass on information to a small group who had requested it confidentially. It was agreed that the police should be asked to explain this at the APM. Also that a bank enquiry should be made about stopping the £50 (donation) cheque as this had not been passed on.

2116 Planning matters

a) New planning applications:

215/1154/LBA To repair the original mill office at Whissendine Windmill using suitable materials

There was unanimous support for this application.

2016/0075/FUL change of use from public house (A4) to dwelling (A3)

There was concern at this loss of a village amenity and agreed that this should be passed to RCC Planning Dept. However, it was acknowledged that this had been a house within living memory.

2016/0059/FUL single storey rear extension & first floor extension over existing kitchen with dormer window at 23 The Nook.

It was acknowledged that the properties on each side of this one had extensions of a similar size, but single storey only. There was concern that the first floor extension would dominate and be out of keeping with the rear perspective of these old cottages, also that it could restrict both the right to privacy and light from the neighbouring properties. These would be put as planning objections to the application

2016/0102/FUL erection of a separate double garage adjacent to the dwelling at Milbank 14 Melton Road

It was noted that this was a previous application that had been refused by RCC Planning because no heritage statement had been included when one was necessary because of its proximity to the windmill. This was now available. Councillors had no further observations or recommendations.

b) Planning updates:

None

c) Neighbourhood Development Plan Group for Whissendine

(see also minute 1416, page 1)

Mrs Moss had circulated a summary of information gained on the production of an NPD which she and Dr Lammin proposed to make the basis of the presentation at the APM. There had been two meetings of those interested with an opportunity for discussion with a Langham representative involved in the Langham NPD. It was extremely hard work and needed a number of volunteers to support it with the benefit that the plan would become a statutory planning document once adopted. However, it was noted that scope for development in Whissendine was limited, even including nearby brownfield sites, so there was not the same necessity and incentive to shape development as in Langham and Uppingham. Mrs Moss planned to present more detail at the next PC meeting and gauge enthusiasm at the APM. A decision on whether there was sufficient commitment from enough people to go ahead would be taken at the April meeting.

2216: Whissendine Grapevine

a) Update on the current situation

It was reported that the Acting Editor, Mr Lake, would produce the next and at least two more editions of the magazine to stabilise the situation, so that residents would once again be expecting it as a regular event each month, and the distributors could re-establish their routines. He had had a further enquiry from someone interested in becoming editor and was awaiting a decision from the person concerned. There also remained the possibility of an offer from a resident who would be available from October. It was agreed that Mr Lake should be thanked for his rescue of the Grapevine and continued dedicated support. It was noted that an advertiser needed reimbursement.

b) Articles for inclusion in the March edition

The editor had forwarded two letters from a resident which had been submitted for the next edition. He was concerned about the amount of space they would take and the need for a right of reply to be given to the PC and RCC, whose actions concerning the footbridge and work in Cow Lane had been criticised. Councillors were also concerned that there was misinformation, and that much of the comment concerning events in early January would not be current and therefore relevant in March. After discussion it was agreed that neither letter should be published but a statement would be given that they had been received and the text and responses would be available from the Clerk for anyone who wished to read them. There would also be a note that contributions were welcome, but they should be kept short to ensure publication.

c) Letter from the printer

Mr Carter would be assured that the quality of the printing was entirely satisfactory.

2316: The Banks

a) The footbridge

The Health & Safety Executive had contacted the PC following a complaint about the safety of the footbridge. The risk assessments made, contractor's statement and photographs of the scene had been submitted, and the Chairman had telephoned to explain the rationale of the decisions made. All were deemed reasonable and the case was now closed. No reports of any accidents or injuries were given.

Mr Edmunds reported that surveys of the area with the contractor were continuing, but it was not possible yet to provide an assessment to determine whether the existing bridge should be repaired or replaced. It was agreed that if replacement was required WEG's suggestion of a wooden bridge would be followed and thought that installation should be by the company concerned. The Environment Agency would be informed as possibly discussion on the exact location of the bridge would be required.

b) Routine maintenance

Cory had agreed to carry out the mowing in 2016 for the same cost as in the previous year: £162.29 monthly + VAT. The contact was Mike Lowe.

2416: Highways & village maintenance

a) Village pump repair and painting

Three estimates had been requested and one received. It was agreed that Mr Edmunds should carry out the work according to the specifications given at a cost of £350. The job would be done in the spring.

b) Street lighting

Further information on the proposals from RCC (min 2016a) would be awaited. The Clerk was asked to ensure the street light inventory was sent to them. As things were changing it was agreed that there was no reason to have an assessment made on the current costs. The lamp on Station Road required attention.

c) Maintenance matters:

It was noted from the letter received on Cow Lane (min 2216b) that the resident believed the PC was responsible for some street maintenance. It was agreed that a note should be in the Grapevine to inform all residents that this was entirely the responsibility of RCC Highways and the PC could only report maintenance required in the same way as members of the public. It was not consulted on priorities, or procurement and was not responsible for monitoring the work or cost. No advance notice was sent on when work was to be carried out unless there was to be major road closure and re-routing of traffic.

Deterioration of the road surface at the Station Road/Ashwell Road junction and a pothole near the 30mph on the Oakham lane to be reported, also concern about the surface near the Oakham Road bus shelter.

2516: Financial business

a) Financial Report for January 2016

The Clerk reported cheques for £110 (NW and advertisement reimbursement) had not been transacted. Therefore the current account was £6218.72 as confirmed by the bank statement. The precept request had been submitted to RCC. There were no questions.

b) Payment was agreed for the following accounts:

• Impressions	£284.00
• Tree light costs	£ 90.00
• Village caretaker	£ 45.54
• Website hosting	£ 49.99
• Website domain name	£ 12.09
• Advertising reimbursement (min:2216a)	£ 30.00

c) PCC Graveyard Finances

These had been supplied to support the annual grant request to assist with maintenance. There was no increase on the £900 required in previous years and allowed in the budget. The figures would be circulated.

2616: The Annual Parish Meeting

The date as confirmed for 16 March 2016 as the school hall was available and had been booked.

- RCC's parking officer and the police had agreed to attend.
- Speakers from some village organisations had expressed an interest and an invitation would be sent to all, with the exception of Neighbourhood Watch (min.2016e).
- There would be presentations on the website (min1416) and Neighbourhood Development Plan (2116c), and the new Ward Councillor would need a slot to introduce him/herself.
- Time was also to be allowed for consultation on the refurbishment of the Village Green posts and a new seat to mark the Queen's 90th birthday.

It was considered this would give a full agenda and should be published in the March Grapevine.

It was agreed that refreshments should be provided: wine, soft drinks and nibbles.

1716: Correspondence

a) RCC information: Active Family Week and bus time amendments to go to the website

b) Melton Local Plan Emerging Options: Dr Lammin would attend a a consultation on 9 February.

c) Spire Homes Information: to be used to contact the person responsible for Whissendine re the need maintenance work at Sherrard Close car park.

General and advertising information and charity news to be circulated

The meeting finished at 9.50 pm

7 March	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.15pm
16 March	Annual Parish Meeting	School	7.30pm

Long Clawson Land Charity: vouchers to be obtained from Mace Stores and the shop reimbursed.