

**WOODBOROUGH
PARISH
COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of the Meeting of Woodborough Parish Council held on
Thursday 21st September 2023 at 7.00 pm in the Parish Room**

Present: Councillors Steve Napier, John Brewin, Andy Towler (until 8.00pm), Brian Marnane, Chris White, and Johnny Paterson

Unitary Councillor Paul Oatway (from 7.15pm)

Clerk Ruth Kinderman

Residents Caroline Allen, Tony Phillimore, Darrin Oldman, Catherine Oldman, Helen Garcia, Ines Garcia and Chris Franklin.

1. Apologies

Cllr Linda Winter.

2. Pecuniary and other Interests.

None declared.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 6th July 2023

Cllr Brewin proposed these be accepted as an accurate record, seconded by Cllr Towler; all in favour and signed accordingly by Cllr Napier.

4. Matters arising

Invoices have been issued to businesses at Woodborough Yard who were willing to contribute to the defibrillator. Clerk to check that 'Bound by Veterans' is willing to recommence the former electrical arrangement. Delivery of the new equipment is still delayed but SWAST has confirmed the size of the new cabinet, which allows installation of new posts to proceed. **Action:RK**

5. Update from Wiltshire Council

Cllr Oatway had attended a meeting of the Swindon and Wiltshire Road Safety Partnership at which Superintendent Conway Duncan's successor had confirmed his support for enforcement in 20mph limits and zones. Cllr Oatway will follow this up in relation to Woodborough.

Cllr Oatway had successfully requested £250,000 for resurfacing along the A342, intended for the worst places between Conock and Wedhampton, and the stretch closer to Rushall. For unknown reasons, operators had resurfaced between Marden and Chirton instead.

With reference to the recent news reports relating to local authorities such as Birmingham going bankrupt, Cllr Oatway reassured the meeting that Wiltshire Council is in a strong financial position, having balanced its books for 2023/2024 without dipping into reserves. In addition to the budgeted increase for Highways from £14million to £16million, Cllr Oatway had successfully persuaded Wiltshire Councillors to transfer £1million from reserves to the Highways budget; this has also been augmented by a £3.6million pothole grant and a £10million general highways grant from central government, putting Wiltshire Highways in a position to almost double its planned work.

6. Payment and Finance

Current Account (Lloyds, reconciled to date) £266.26

Deposit Account (Lloyds, Including interest to date) £ 24865.48

Payments made since the last meeting in accordance with Appendix A (Table 1) of the Financial Regulations, and approved at this meeting:

28/07/2023	Clerk's salary - July	£118.00	+ VATn/a	S111
31/07/2023	Charlton Baker - payroll - July	£12.92	+VAT£2.52	S111
29/08/2023	Clerk's salary - August	£127.40	n/a	S111
26/08/2023	Charlton Baker - payroll – August	£12.92	+VAT£12.92	S111
29/08/2023	Clerk - re-imburse 'No Parking' cones	£58.27	+VAT£11.66	HA1980s96
07/09/2023	WALC - training course (Cllr White)	£45.00	+VAT£9.00	S111
12/09/2023	Mark Goddard Landscaping – strimming field path	£100.00	+VAT£20.00	S137
14/09/2023	Abbey Fire Protection - on behalf of Parish Room	£169.55	+VAT£33.91	S137
20/09/2023	PCAP - annual donation	£100.00	n/a	S137

Payments approved at this meeting:

22/09/23	Hall Hire for this meeting	£16.00	n/a	S111
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The 'Receipts & Payments & Budget Performance' spreadsheet was emailed to all councillors prior to the meeting and was available for perusal at the meeting.

The sum of £169.55 has been spent on behalf of the Parish Room - the sum of £180.45 remains available until 31/3/24.

7. Code of Conduct

The updated Wiltshire Code of Conduct had been circulated again to all councillors for their consideration. Cllr Brewin proposed that the Code summary, document 12A, be adopted subject to the suspension of those clauses irrelevant to this parish council. This was seconded by Cllr White with no objections.

Action:JB/RK

8. General Data Protection Regulations/ICO

Clerk had circulated a briefing to all councillors, with a link to training videos available on the Information Commissioner's website.

In discussion, it was agreed that the parish council does not hold any data which is not already in the public domain. It was noted that data relating to bank account signatories is held by the bank rather than by the parish council. It was agreed that registration as a data controller is not yet necessary.

9. Emergency Plan

Clerk had circulated the new template provided by Wiltshire Council's Resilience team. It was noted that Wiltshire Council expects the voluntary Community Emergency Coordinator to be the registered data controller for the information contained within the Emergency Plan; parish plans shared with Wiltshire Council should be redacted accordingly.

In response to comments about the proactive nature of the Emergency Plan, in contrast to the traditional British reactive approach to unexpected events, Cllr Oatway said that Wiltshire Council is responding to a central government directive to local authorities whereby parishes should be encouraged to improve their resilience.

It was noted that community WhatsApp groups are useful for emergencies; it was agreed to consider the possibility of having a separate group to be used in emergencies only.

Nobody present at the meeting volunteered to take on the role of Coordinator; it was agreed to advertise the role more widely in the parish. **Action:RK/all**

10. Planning Update

i)To note progress of applications/decisions by Wiltshire Planning Department
PL/2023/04272 – Amberley - Erection of garage and change of use of land from paddock to residential.

Wiltshire Council is due to publish a decision on 27th September. *(Post-meeting note – planning officers are considering suggested drainage schemes for the proposal and the decision date has been postponed to 25th October.)*

PL/2023/04817 – St Mary's - SSE need to work on a number of trees in the rear garden to provide the necessary clearance for overhead lines. Once SSE works are complete – removal of two ash trees; pruning one hazel; removal of three self-seeded ash; removal of three hazels; removal of one apple.

Wiltshire Council had no objection to these treeworks.

PL/2023/06627 - 1 Brow Cottages - Erection of small Garden Studio building as Home Office.

No objection had been submitted; Wiltshire Council is due to publish a decision on 29th September.

PL/2023/06235 – Hurdcott House - Apple tree – fell - The tree is in decline and showing signs of infection of Honey Fungus.

No objection had been submitted; Wiltshire Council had approved the works.

ii) To consider new planning applications

PL/2023/07580 – Glebe House - T1- Lime- remove all major deadwood; T2-T4- Elm- Fell x3 dead Elm trees; T5- Yew- Significant prune to prevent overhang on neighbouring property; T6- Willow- Light Prune to prevent excessive growth over neighbouring property; T7- Ash- Fell Ash tree suffering from Ash Dieback; T8- Ash- Fell Ash tree suffering from Ash Dieback.

It was agreed to submit no objection, with a comment to the effect that replacement of trees should be considered. **Action:RK**

11. Community Speedwatch

Caroline Allen reported that September saw another week of CSW duties, thankfully avoiding the heatwave of one week and the wetter weather the next. Seven sessions had been carried out last week, recording 311 vehicles of which 24 were travelling at, or in excess of 25mph (7.7%). Caroline said that a couple of people had asked the team why they were being filmed without their permission; the opportunity had been taken to correct their perception and to raise awareness of the 20mph speed limit. Caroline has asked Wiltshire Police if the camera can be replaced as it is sometimes a bit slow in registering speeds; as a result, quite a few vehicles were missed due to the inability to get a reading. Caroline has also requested more batteries, as the camera is going through them quickly. Caroline thanked Cllr Brewin for arranging the traffic survey strips on the Freetrade stretch; the statistics are awaited with interest. If a second site is approved, Caroline thinks that would be a good time to recruit additional volunteers, although she anticipates rotating sites rather than aiming to cover both sites each month. Clerk advised that traffic survey strips have also been requested for the C38, further north towards The Sands than the previous metrocount.

It was noted that the Woodborough CSW team is very active, especially in comparison with other local CSW groups.

12. Resurfacing – C38 and Church Road

Further to the site visit made by Local Highways Engineer Matt Perrott, who had advised Clerk how to request additions to the planned county resurfacing schedule, Cllr Oatway had accompanied Area Highways Manager Malcolm Beaven to The Sands; the C38 has now been accepted for major resurfacing works.

Clerk confirmed that Highways has been advised of the heavy agricultural vehicle use of Church Road and a site visit has been requested.

13. Areas of Responsibility

Parish Steward – next dates are 27th September; 25th October; and 22nd November. Requests for tasks should be sent to the Clerk until Areas of Responsibility are reassigned once Cllr Napier moves away from the village.

Requests noted were washing the history board and clearance of all gullies and drains, including that at the bottom of Smithy Lane opposite Rose Farmhouse and that between Honeywood House and the bridleway. Requests are submitted to Highways at least a week before each visit.

School – Cllr Paterson will meet the new headteacher, Mrs Katie Scaplehorn, shortly. It was agreed that an informal meeting with the new Chairman of the School Governing Body, Mr Mark Banham, should also be arranged to discuss parking and traffic. It was noted that Matt Perrott, Local Highways Engineer, had advised that schools could have a Parking Plan as well as a Travel Plan.

PRMC – Cllr Marnane will replace Cllr Napier on the Parish Room Management Committee. The PRMC is grateful to resident Josh Dear for arranging the installation of the new kitchen as an Aster apprenticeship training project. It is hoped that the toilets can be refurbished similarly. A handrail down the slope from the car park to the Parish Room is planned, subject to satisfactory correspondence with the Diocese.

Environment – it was agreed that Cllr White should pursue his idea of a Bills Clinic, offering money-saving advice to residents; to be held in the Parish Room.

14. Diary dates and Correspondence

Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group (LHFIG) – Wednesday 18th October – online. Cllr Brewin to attend with a view to resubmission of the SHFS bid for the footpath extension. **Action:JB**

Pewsey Community Area Partnership (PCAP) – Thursday 19th October – venue to be confirmed – it was agreed to offer to host the meeting in the Parish Room is convenient. **Action:RK**

Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) – annual meeting – Wednesday 25th October – Devizes - Cllr Brewin to attend. **Action:JB**

Neighbourhood Watch Association annual meeting – Saturday 7th October – Devizes. Resident Steve Warren has volunteered to attend and find out more about the scheme.

It was noted that the North Wessex AONB grant scheme administered through the NW Landscape Trust is open for new applications. This parish council successfully applied for a grant towards the telephone kiosk refurbishment in 2019. It was agreed to consider potential projects; it was noted that bus shelters do not fulfil the scheme's criteria.

Clerk had received a letter from a French War Graves Committee, enquiring after relatives of the late Flying Officer Nicholas Peel, shot down off the French coast in 1941 and buried at Grandcamp-Maisy. Clerk had made enquiries with the Swanborough Team for further information about the pilot's father, Harold Peel, vicar of Woodborough from 1944-1950, but without success. Clerk to respond accordingly.

A letter had been hand-delivered to all councillors regarding the field footpath, hedges, and screening. Cllr Napier acknowledged the letter and explained that the correspondent would have to seek his own legal advice regarding his ability or otherwise to insist that the parish council reinstates the hessian screening. Cllr Napier invited further questions so that any outstanding matters relating to the field footpath could be finalised before he moves away from the village in due course. In response to allegations that the footpath causes a nuisance and disturbance, contrary to the terms of the lease, Cllr Napier said that both parties to the lease are content and that anybody who feels aggrieved should appoint their own solicitor to address their concerns. In response to a request to confirm that the parish council has followed the correct procedure in every way regarding the footpath and southern verge of Smithy Lane, Cllr Napier replied in the affirmative. In closing the matter, Cllr Napier reiterated that the parish council has no intention of replacing the hessian screening and that any concerns about overgrown trees should be passed to the landowner or to the parish council, for referral to Highways if there was any inconvenience to agricultural vehicles.

15. Any Other Business

Cllr Brewin delivered a statement thanking Cllr Napier for his seven years as chairman of the parish council, noting particularly the three excellent village celebrations that have taken place during that time and which have largely been the result of Cllr Napier's military 'can-do' attitude. Cllr Napier responded in kind, expressing his belief that public service is the best thing one can do, and acknowledging the kind sentiments expressed. Cllr Napier confessed that receiving council meeting summons had often reminded him of the misgivings he felt years ago, when seeing his name on the altar boy roster; in both cases, his doubts were unfounded and the experience enjoyable.

A further question was raised from the floor in which it was alleged that documents to hand could be used to prove that the response given by Cllr Napier under item 14 was incorrect, as the parish council had apparently given inconsistent information over the years regarding the ownership and responsibility for the hedges and trees adjacent to the field footpath, on the verge and bank.

Cllr Napier expressed his great displeasure at this matter being raised again at the close of business, having been finalised under the previous item.

Cllr Napier advised that if anybody wished to pursue allegations that the parish council had been deliberately untruthful, he should obtain a solicitor and follow the correct procedure with regards to mounting a legal challenge against the council.

Cllr White noted that there is no reference to screening in the lease and that all information about ownership and responsibility was given in good faith, based on the information available to the parish council at any given time.

In discussion, it was ascertained that the document held as evidence of inconsistency was a letter written to Mr Danny Kruger, MP, in 2021. Clerk advised that this correspondence between the resident and Mr Kruger in 2021 had prompted a further search in Highway records, generating a detailed map, the results of which were minuted on 10th February 2022, item 10.

16. To set date of Next Meeting

To be arranged.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.