

Westerleigh Parish Council
Minutes of Full Council meeting
February 01 2016, Manor Hall, Coalpit Heath

Present:

Councillors: B Taylor (chair), J Butler, S Blackmore, D Boulton, M Crumpton, A Fay, A Gibbs, G Jancey and C Nicholls

Interim Clerk: V Anderson

1917. Apologies for absence

None.

1918. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011

None declared.

1919. Reports from South Gloucestershire Councillors on matters relating to the Parish

District Councillor C Young reported:

Planning issues

JSP and JTP

The consultations on these closed on Friday. The results will be published on the consultation website and used to draw up a draft plan for further consultation later in the year.

Mafeking Hall

Although plans were submitted, the application for the discharge of conditions was refused and referred to planning enforcement.

Council budget and New Homes Bonus

The administration's draft budget is due to be discussed at the Policy and Resources committee on the afternoon of Monday 1st February, before being referred on to the council meeting on Wednesday 17th February. Council tax is proposed to rise by a total of 3.99%, made up of a 1.99% rise towards general council services and a 2% rise to be levied under new powers given to councils to raise extra money that can only be spent on the growing cost of providing adult social care. From 2011 to 2015 the council saved nearly £45m in annual spending and by the end of 2015/16 that will have risen to £56m, with another £23m per annum of savings published for the period from 2016/17 to 2019/20 and a further £8m for 2019/20 yet to be identified. More detail is available in the meeting papers.

One aspect that will affect Westerleigh Parish is that there will no longer be a proportion of the New Homes Bonus money spent locally. It is proposed to keep it all part of the central budget, including the money from this current financial year, which had been held back pending news from the Government on what it was doing with the New Homes Bonus.

Merger of Area Forums and Safer Stronger Community Groups

As part of a restructuring of the council's committees, to be discussed at the Policy and Resources meeting on the afternoon of Monday 1st February, the administration is proposing to merge Area Forums and Safer and Stronger Community Groups on the basis of the 14 new SSCG areas. The Area Forums would no longer be decision making bodies administered as formal committees of council, instead becoming community engagement forums. It's proposed that the existing funding decisions that are made by the area forums will be dealt with by the relevant committees and members may receive individual funding allocations to use for grants.

Although this will probably be the most visible change for local people, there are other significant changes. It is proposed that the Adults & Housing and Children & Young People committees are merged to create a Children, Adults & Housing Committee, and Communities and Planning, Transport & the Strategic Environment committees are merged to create an Environment and Community Services committee. More decisions will be delegated to officers to make, rather than being made by elected Members. One example is that officers would decide what to do about Traffic Regulation Orders where there were objections, rather than Members.

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Please note that the Frome Vale Area Forum on 3rd March will still be going ahead.

Badminton Road Council offices

Another topic due to be discussed at Policy and Resources on Monday is also of direct interest to Westerleigh Parish, as it involves the Badminton Road Council offices. The report covers a number of options for rationalising the council's accommodation, but makes it clear in the recommendations that the administration's preferred option is consolidating and rationalising accommodation at Badminton Road, including an extension for a flexible council chamber, which would enable them to dispose of Kingswood Civic Centre. It might also involve extending the car park at Badminton Road, to cover both the extra staff and the visitors if the offices were to be used for public meetings.

At the committee I raised concerns about the potential impact on people living around the council offices, where there are already concerns about parking and traffic. I also sought reassurance that any plans would not affect the ability to deliver the Nibley Park and Ride in the future.

Another recommendation is that council officers continue to investigate options for the library and One Stop Shop in Yate to share a building. This could potentially include changing location and sharing accommodation with partner organisations.

Libraries consultation

The council will be going out to consult later this month on cuts to the library services. All the options presented at committee involved closing the mobile library and Chipping Sodbury library. The administration's preferred option also involves reducing hours for the main libraries (identified as Yate, Thornbury, Patchway, Kingswood and Bradley Stoke) by on average 8 hours per week and cutting the others (described as satellite libraries) to 2 days a week, with the option of local communities supporting more. That could include Parish Councils providing funding.

Fly tipper prosecuted

A Staple Hill man was ordered to pay £1,240 in fines and costs after admitting fly tipping waste in Besom Lane, Westerleigh. He agreed to remove some cardboard and packaging waste for a Yate resident for £40 and the waste was subsequently found dumped in a layby in Besom Lane. As usual, the council used the successful prosecution to remind people of the importance of using an Environment Agency registered waste carrier to dispose of household or garden waste, if you don't take it yourself to one of the Sort It Centres.

Sort It Centre registration

You may recall from one of my previous reports that you will now have to register your vehicle(s) to use the Sort It Centres, as part of a clampdown on business use and use by people from outside the area. At the time of writing, the council had yet to start its publicity drive on this, but it was discussed at the Waste Forum and you can now register on the council's website.

Rail campaigners suggest new Coalpit Heath station

Although this is not in any way an official proposal, the Parish Council might be interested to know that FOSBR, the Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways, has put forward a rail map showing what they suggest could be possible new stations, including **Coalpit Heath** and **Winterbourne**. They were intending to submit the map as part of their contribution to the consultation on the Joint Transport Plan for the West of England.

Network Rail

I have spoken again to my contact at Network Rail. He reports that there is a problem with them doing their biodiversity offsetting on their own land, he will update me when he knows more. He will chase up again the concerns about the vegetation growing out of the viaduct. They will be doing some work requiring the closure of Down Road and there is a meeting next Tuesday, which is in Winterbourne Parish but affects Westerleigh Parishioners.

Shrub bed opposite Manor Hall

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An officer is currently organising the works to remove a section of the shrubbery to improve visibility, this will be turned to grass. Following this they will evaluate if a small knee rail is required to provide separation. The horticultural part of the works will be completed before the end of March.

1920. Reports from representatives of other bodies

Cllr Butler reported that she had a meeting with the libraries committee regarding the libraries service review and asked if there were any comments regarding the proposed closure of Chipping Sodbury and mobile service to let her know. Cllr Crumpton mentioned that there was a real need to engage with young people and local schools for support against closures.

Cllr Fay reported that the chairman of the Ram Hill Colliery has resigned due to ill health.

Cllr Blackmore reported that The Minors Social Club/Coalpit Village Hall grant application had been refused.

1921. Confirm minutes of meeting held 18th January 2016

Proposed by Cllr Jancey and seconded by Cllr Butler the minutes were approved and signed.

1922. Matters arising

The Interim Clerk reported that the restocking of fish in Bitterwell Lake from St George's Park Lake had taken place during week prior as all licensing and permits were found to be in order.

1923. Finance - approve payment of accounts

Proposed by Cllr Crumpton, seconded by Cllr Fay and unanimously agreed that the list of payments presented be approved. All invoices relating to the payments were duly signed by two councillors.

To Whom	Details	Net	VAT	Gross
The Head Groundsman Ltd	Grounds maintenance	865.00		865.00
Hands Property Maintenance	Dog/Litter bins	522.00		522.00
Konica Minolta	Copier Hire	30.99	6.20	37.19
Konica Minolta	Copier Charges	67.08	13.42	80.50
	Total for month	1,311.07	19.62	1,330.69

1924. Correspondence

The Interim Clerk reported that he had received communication from the Westerleigh WI regarding:

Inadequate road signage for Westerleigh Crematorium. The Clerk reported that he had passed on the enquiry to the director and has received back a response saying they have often campaigned for more highway signage but this is often restricted by the Highway Authority.

Zebra crossing across Westerleigh Road. The Clerk explained he had been in contact with Cllr Claire Young about the matter and Cllr Young reported that although the matter had been considered a prior study carried out did not support the need as the pedestrian count was too low but she was happy to look into the matter further as it would improve safety in general.

The Clerk read out an announcement by South Gloucestershire Council regarding the successful prosecution of a fly tipper who had been caught dumping waste in Bessom Lane, Westerleigh.

1925. Planning Matters

a) Two applications were considered:

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PT16/0277/CLP - 32 St Annes Drive, Coalpit Heath, BS36 2TH.

Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for the proposed single storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation.

PT16/0184/F - The Firs, The Hollows, Coalpit Heath, South Gloucestershire

Erection of single storey side extension to form garage, cycle store and workshop. (amendment to previously approved scheme PT15/4815/F).

No comment or any objection was raised on either application.

b) Planning Enforcements – None received.

1926. Review of Council procedures and policies

Following on from the January meeting members considered a number of proposals regarding the need to review and update council policies and procedures. The top priorities proposed and agreed for review are:

1. Standing Orders
2. Committee Terms of Reference
3. Grievance policy

And then in no particular priority:

Data protection
Social media
Complaints procedure
Managing Information
Health and Safety and other employment policies
Business Continuity Plan

It was proposed by Cllr Butler, seconded by Cllr Nicholls and unanimously agreed that Mr Anderson be employed to review each policy and procedure in turn, working with the permanent Clerk once a draft document has been written by Mr Anderson.

It was also suggested that the website was in need of modernisation. Although most members supported this it was agreed to do this at a later date.

1927. Date of next meeting Full Council 7th March 2016 Westerleigh Village Hall

1928. Exempt Matters

Council agreed to go into exempt session for the final three items to consider personal and personnel issues

Signed: Date: 7^h March 2016