

WASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 18th September 2024 in Washfield Memorial Hall at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr's Mrs A Taylor-Ross, M Balment, J Boundy, J Mock, R Webber and W Wood.

In attendance: District Cllr C Adcock , one member of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe

30/09/24. To receive apologies. Apologies were accepted from Cllr Mrs A Wych. Apologies were received from County Cllr R Chesterton and Mr and Mrs Roberts (Footpath Wardens).

31/09/24. Disclosure of interest in item on the agenda. No disclosures.

32/09/24. To agree the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 17th July 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

33/09/24. Matters arising from the minutes (not already covered by the agenda). None.

34/09/24. Public questions. The member of the public reported that the second part of the Green Lane to Pitt is overgrown and said the lane was the responsibility of DCC Highways and they should get it cleared and opened up. Landowners are responsible for the hedges/sides of rights of way and DCC the surface but in this case, ownership is not known. It would need a contractor to cut the larger branches. Another landowner doesn't want the bottom opened up. The member of the public said the Parish Council needed to insist DCC clear the lane and open it up. Stuart Howell, Public Rights of Way Warden will be asked to put in writing about the ownership of the lane.

The member of the public was thanked for his help in cutting grass on Footpath 2. A group of interested residents are meeting next Tuesday to look at ideas for reducing the carbon footprint within the parish as a community. The member of the public said they were not getting any message or take up from any level of government.

The Chair noted that DCC had signed up to the Climate Emergency but haven't given any direction. Neither have MDDC. Communication about any initiatives or funding sources would be helpful. There are very limited community resources in Washfield. The Chair questioned how the Parish Council was meant to find out about initiatives and funding opportunities. It was noted there have been some large grants for larger authorities.

There have been ideas for the hall but these haven't been taken forward. There could be schemes such as a community power scheme with local investment. The Chair asked councillors whether they wanted to support as a Parish Council. What substantial action is possible as a Parish Council needs to be found out.

35/09/24. Footpaths:

a) P3 Report. Mr & Mrs Roberts were unable to attend the meeting but had provided the following report:

Footpath 1: Haydon to Charterhouse (Cuckoo's Nest); Wheat (now harvested) and Maize (still growing) were planted over the path with no headlands left. Walked through the first part of the path from the Haydon end alongside the field and cut back brambles but undergrowth needed strimming to be comfortable to walk. (mid August)

Footpath 2: Mousebeare to Long Lane via New Park and Pitt. The County strimmer gang did come in early August to strim Mousebeare Lane. A parishioner has run his lawnmower along there since then which is a help. The top of the field has not been strimmed (mid August) and is still very difficult to walk on for approx the top 100 yds. The lane between the ford and the footbridge has been scraped and is much better. The gate and steps onto Long Lane are very overgrown (mid August). We cleared a bit but needs cutting back.

Footpath 3: New Park to Ennerleigh via Courtenay. Finger post reset in the field by New Park. Cleared brambles from the bridge between fields between New Park and Courtenay. Gate latch now working at the next field. Suggest that a finger post pointing both ways is put in to show the corner by the big tree where the path leaves the track coming up from Ennerleigh.

Footpath 4: Brook Lane to Long Lane. A gatepost with a waymarker has fallen down in the first field past the sewage works, new waymarkers have been put on a closeby post. Mentioned this to Will and asked him to replace the gatepost as this will prevent walkers going the wrong way. No problems other than needing strimming etc from the sewage works to the stile, down by the stream and the gateway onto Long Lane. Strimming also needed between Long Lane and the Link Road beyond Pound House.

Footpath 5: Bullfinches (Lower Washfield) to Courtenay via Stanterton. No problems

Footpath 6: From road between Slade and Charterhouse to Bridleway 7 below/ Smiths. New route at the top end from the road is well signed and works well. Cleared the stiles and walkway of brambles and overgrowth where the path goes over the stream and through the hedge into the field below Smiths.

Bridleway 7: From lane above Smiths to lane above Ramstorland. The track below Smiths Farm to the field needs a bit of clearance. Gate latch between the two fields going up on the Stoodleigh side of the valley has been oiled. The finger post at the top of that field has been reset. There is still a small gate there which could be used if an electric fence was set up but it needs posts and hanging. No idea where the gate came from. A tree fell across the track close to the Ramstorland lane end of the track some while ago and was initially agreed to be high enough and safe. Following a complaint from a Stoodleigh resident it has been reported this to the landowner, and he is going to look at it and check that it is safe and high enough for a horse and rider to pass beneath.

Footpath 8: Nibbs to Lower Washfield. The finger post at the Nibbs end has been reset. The gate and stile onto the lane at the Lower Washfield end are due to be replaced by the farmer within the next couple of weeks (stewardship scheme)

Footpath 10: Beeches to Lower Washfield, No problems.

Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross reported that she had spoken to the landowner who has planted crops over Footpath 1 and reminded them of their responsibility to keep footpaths open and not cover with crops. If they cannot avoid that they should mark an alternative route.

b) Any other footpaths matters. The P3 grant for 2024-25 has not been received and the Clerk is chasing this up.

36/09/24. Planning

a) To make a recommendation on any planning applications received before the meeting. No applications received.

b) To note the comments made on planning applications received between meetings.

24/00804/Full Erection of a roof over existing collecting yards and passageways. Location: Hatherland Farm, Washfield. Comment: no objections.

24/00805/Full Erection of a roof over existing collecting yards. Location: Hatherland Farm, Washfield. Comments: no objections.

c) To note any decisions on planning applications made by MDDC.

24/00524/Full Erection of an agricultural storage shed. Location: Land at NGR 292318 117036 (Pear Tree Cottage), Washfield. Decision: conditional approval granted.

24/00804/Full Erection of a roof over existing collecting yards and passageways. Location: Hatherland Farm, Washfield. Decision: conditional approval.

24/00805/Full Erection of a roof over existing collecting yards. Location: Hatherland Farm Washfield. Decision: conditional approval.

d) National Planning Policy Framework consultation. MDDC has looked at this closely ahead of the 24th September deadline. The new Labour Government want to build a lot more homes. The Local Plan will need to be adapted. It is being worked on prior to going out to consultation. MDDC want new homes to be net zero. Cycle lanes are being built into the plans for the new Garden Village.

e) Any other planning matters. No other planning matters.

37/09/24. Highways

a) To report on any highways work carried out in the parish and to note any highways work needed. Roads remain in a similar condition as reported at previous meetings. Cllr Boundy asked when the planned phased work at Badcott would start. Cllr Balment has been reporting potholes on the DCC website with variable response. There are a couple of drains which should have been jetted but are still waiting to be done.

It has been reported by a previous District Councillor that an ambulance found it difficult to drive through the road between the East Stoodleigh entrance and Stoodleigh Drive.

b) Any other highways matters. No other highways matters.

38/09/24. Reports.

a) County Cllr. No report.

b) District Cllr. Cllr Adcock's written report was circulated by email. Councillors noted the lack of planning officers. Cllr Gilmour had sent her apologies for not attending the meeting. She will be giving her maiden speech as a MP on 14th October.

39/09/24. Finance:

a) To approve any payments. It was resolved to make the following payments:

Mrs J Larcombe - £90.88 Clerk's salary (Payment ref: 2425/08)

HM Revenue & Customs - £22.80 PAYE (Payment ref: 2425/09)

b) To report any receipts and the bank balances. The Unity Trust Bank Current Account balance is £1318.37, Unity Trust Bank Instant Access balance - £2,000.00, NatWest Current Account - £0.00 and NatWest Savings account - £293.10.

The Clerk is trying to find out who to write to at NatWest to transfer the money in the savings account to the current account so the final transfer can be made and the accounts closed.

c) Bank reconciliation. Noted.

d) Report on budget v actual for April to September 2024. Councillors considered the report. There were no areas for concern.

40/09/24. To discuss updating of village pages on the website now volunteer has moved.

A possible volunteer has been found. The Clerk will contact MDDC to find out about Changing the admin rights.

41/09/24. Update on arrangements for the Parish Meeting. Proposed dates are 23rd October or 6th November and the plans for the meeting are the same as before. It is important to know about things like slurry pits for planning reasons. The health of the River Exe is important.

42/09/24. Chair's Announcements and Correspondence. The Chair had no announcements and there was no further correspondence.

43/09/24. Date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 20th November 2024.

Signed:
Chair

Date: