

PRESENT – Parish Councillors Geraldine Shepherd, Chair, (GS), Colin Baber (CB), John Hatherell (JH), Annabella Scott (AS), Mark Winston-Davis (MWD) and Parish Clerk John Shepherd (JS)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –District Councillor Jim Parsons (JP)
2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST IN CONNECTION WITH AGENDA ITEMS AS SHOWN AND NOT ALREADY STATED ON REGISTER OF INTERESTS – None.
3. TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 – Previously circulated by email, reviewed and APPROVED.

**Proposed: AS, Seconded: CB – Agreed unanimously.**

4. MATTERS ARISING

a. Update on selection of professionally developed PC Website

JS said that he had now received a competitive quotation from the supplier who had developed the websites for several local parish councils and this provided a number of optional additions that could be included at no additional cost. However, it should be borne in mind that the Parish Clerk was only a part-time post and there were only limited resources for inputting information onto the website and, perhaps more importantly, keeping it up-to-date. After discussion, it was agreed that MWD and CB would be members of the website implementation working group with JS, and he would arrange a meeting to decide what features were wanted on the new website, in addition to the mandatory information that had to be published under the Transparency Code. AS queried how many parishioners were viewing the website. JS agreed to try and obtain site usage data.

b. Parking issues during Arboretum “Autumn Colours” period

GS provided an update on the meeting held at the Arboretum to discuss the traffic and parking issues during events at the Arboretum. Present were GCC, Gloucestershire Highways, the police, the Arboretum and herself. There had been a lot of discussion about the problems but no magic solution was identified. Parking and traffic restrictions were to be put in place for the long weekend in the summer when the concerts were to be held. She was sceptical about how successful the planned measures were likely to be. MWD and JH made the point that when “no parking” signs were put out on the last weekend of the “Autumn Colours”, it had not cured the problem, merely displaced it, as the cars just parked further up the road, creating equally bad problems there.

5. TO REVIEW RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR CURRENT YEAR TO DATE

Councillors reviewed the receipts and payments for the current year to date, as published on the Parish Council website under Accounts 2016/2017. There had been no additional receipts or payments since the previous council meeting.

6. TO CARRY OUT BANK RECONCILIATION

Bank reconciliation was carried out by the Chair and Councillors. No discrepancies were identified.

7. TO REVIEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

JS reported that he had spotted one minor error: in para 10.3 the reference to Regulation 11 (l) should be corrected to Regulation 11 (h). Apart from that, he had not identified the need for any other changes nor were any other changes proposed by Councillors. The correction was approved.

8. TO AGREE THAT FOR COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY REASONS MEETINGS OF THE WEBSITE IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP WOULD NOT BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

After discussion, Councillors agreed that that for commercial confidentiality reasons meetings of the Website Implementation Working Group would not be open to the public.

**Proposed: CB, Seconded: JH – Agreed unanimously**

9. TO AGREE THE DATE AND VENUE FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

GS reminded Councillors that at the previous Annual Parish Meeting Leslie Cornthwaite had expressed the view that some parishioners might feel uncomfortable coming to the Chairman’s house and might be put off for attending. It had therefore been agreed to seek an alternative venue for the meeting. She reported that she had negotiated the use of the former “Tiggers” hut with

Westonbirt School for the meeting and had provisionally booked it for Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017. After discussion, this was agreed and it was decided that the meeting would commence at 1900 hrs. The hut would be booked from 1830 hrs to allow for setting up and would be until 2100 hrs. Light refreshments would be provided. JS confirmed that a sum of £100 had been included in the budget for the meeting.

It was also agreed that the Village Clean Up would be on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2017. As usual, helpers would be invited to rendezvous at Woodlands House at 1030 hrs, and that Geraldine Shepherd would order high-visibility tabards, picking sticks and plastic rubbish bags from Cotswold District Council. The Clean Up would be advertised both in the Parish Newsletter and on the parish council website.

**Action: GS and Parish Clerk**

10. TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF THE GRADE 2 LISTED WEIGH HOUSE AND BRIDGE AT HOME FARM WESTONBIRT AND DECIDE WHAT ACTION TO TAKE.

GS referred to emails received from Malcolm Potter concerning the state of the Weigh House and Bridge at Home Farm, Westonbirt that he said was a Grade 2 listed building, and circulated a copy of the correspondence. At her request, the Parish Clerk had obtained confirmation that it was Grade 2 listed and had investigated what powers, if any, the Parish Council had in relation to a listed building that was deteriorating through a lack of repair. The advice received from the SLCC National Planning Adviser was that he was not aware of any power available to a parish council that would permit it to directly intervene for the preservation of a Listed Building: those are vested with local planning authorities (which in this case would be Cotswold District Council) and the Secretary of State. He had also advised what powers were available to the local planning authority and suggested that the matter be referred to them.

After due discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council should write to Cotswold District Council advising that a parishioner had drawn to their attention that a Grade 2 Listed building, namely the Weigh House and Bridge at Home Farm Westonbirt, was deteriorating through the lack of repair.

**Action: GS**

11. TO CONSIDER ANY NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

a. [Erection of staff accommodation - Hare And Hounds Hotel Bowldown Road Westonbirt Tetbury Gloucestershire GL8 8QL](#)

This was a revised application after the previous application that the Parish Council had discussed previously had been refused. The Parish Council had written to Cotswold District Council strongly objecting to that application. Members were therefore familiar with the proposed development and focussed on the changes between the original and the revised applications.

Of the five reasons that the Parish Council had given in their letter of objection, only one had been even partially addressed, that of design. Whilst the materials to be used for the proposed building's construction do show some improvement, its design, layout, scale, form and detailing remain incongruous within this location and would result in harm to the setting of the Hare & Hounds Hotel, which is a "non-designated heritage asset by virtue of its historic, architectural and aesthetic interest". Members did not consider that the amended application made a valid case for additional staff on this site. It remains a wholly inappropriate location for the proposed staff to be living there. There are no facilities for them on the site other than the hotel itself and very limited public transport during the week, with none on Sundays. Members remain concerned about potential additional pressures on parking at the site which is already inadequate and over vehicular access both during the construction phase and for emergency vehicles to the new building after completion. Finally, nothing has been done to address the serious environmental concern over sewage disposal that was raised in the Parish Council's letter regarding the previous application.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that a letter should be sent to Cotswold District Council strongly opposing this application.

**Action: GS**

b. Other Planning Matters

GS also mentioned that she had been advised by Geoff Fitch that he was submitting a planning application for an extension to his house at Primrose Hill in the near future. Details would be forwarded to members when they were received.

12. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**The date of the next parish council meeting will be the AGM on 3rd May 2017 at which meeting the dates for parish council meetings for the following year will be agreed.**