

WESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held remotely on Zoom on
Monday 1st March 2021 commencing at 7.00pm

- Present:** Chair: Cllr G Fuller;
Cllrs D Cooper, J Honess, R Hopkins, E Jackson, L Mansell,
R Moss, P Williams and P Wilkinson
- Absent:** Cllrs V Cox and B Wallbridge
- Attending:** Lesley Close, Clerk and Tracey Stephens, Admin Assistant;

129. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Wallbridge and accepted.

130. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interest.

131. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 1st February 2021

Resolved: The minutes of 1st February 2021 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed.

132. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Environment and Development Committee – 8th February 2021

Resolved: That the minutes of the Environment and Development Committee meeting held on 8th February be noted.

(b) Finance and Personnel Committee – 17th February 2021

Resolved: That the minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on 17th February be noted.

(c) Climate Change Emergency Working Group – 2nd February 2021

The points from the Climate Emergency Working Group were noted.

Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting.

Signed Dated

Westfield Parish Council

133. CREATION OF WORKING GROUPS AND UPDATES

Waterside Valley Working Group – It was agreed that this group would be made up of Cllrs Fuller, Hopkins, Jackson, Honess and Mansell.

Jubilee Green – It was agreed that this group would be made up of Cllrs Fuller and Hopkins.

Westfield in Bloom – Discussion was held regarding entering Britain in Bloom this year. It was felt that with the purchase of Waterside Valley it would be a project too far this year and that Council should look to enter next year. Cllr Hopkins proposed, Cllr Wilkinson seconded. Vote was 8 for and 1 against.

Resolved: Not to enter Britain in Bloom this year, but to consider entering next year.

134. TO PREPARE FOR THE POSSIBLE RETURN TO FACE TO FACE MEETINGS BY 7TH MAY

It was noted that the current legislation on holding remote meetings expires on 7th May and that it hadn't been extended beyond that. NALC had outlined a suggestion of wording for a letter to the local MP to request an extension to this date, or to allow hybrid meetings so that all councillors would have the opportunity to attend meetings.

Resolved: (1) to write to The Right Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP outlining concerns about holding exclusively face to face meetings in light of the current restrictions and requesting hybrid or online meetings be allowed to continue.

(2) to hold the Annual Parish meeting online on 4th May at 7pm, before the start of the Annual Meeting of the Council – also online.

135. APPROVAL OF ANY ITEMS OF £5,000 AND CONSIDERATION OF ANY VIREMENT

Resolved: To approve expenditure of £90,000 plus fees and disbursements on land at Waterside Valley

136. TO CONSIDER DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The report of the Climate Change Emergency Working Group was received.

Resolved: Westfield Parish Council to declare a Climate Emergency, as recommended by the Climate Change Emergency Working Group.

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137. TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF LAND ADJACENT TO THE LAND THE PARISH COUNCIL IS IN THE PROCESS OF PURCHASING AT WATERSIDE VALLEY AS RAISED AT F&P (Minute 113 refers)

Resolved: to work with the current application and consider purchasing this land at a later date.

138. DOGS AT THE RECREATION GROUNDS (Cllr Hopkins)

It had been noted that dogs are frequently being allowed to run free on the recreation grounds, despite signs saying dogs should be kept on leads, and they were leaving mess.

Resolved: to write an article for the Journal asking owners to respect the rules at the recreation grounds with their dogs and to strongly point out the health risks that are linked with dog mess.

139. GOOD FRIDAY WALK, STOPPING AT WESTHILL RECREATION GROUND (Cllr Jackson)

Cllr Jackson advised that the churches in Westfield and Radstock hadn't yet decided whether to do the walk. It was agreed that, if they do so, should they wish to finish at Westhill Recreation Ground then they have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the public.

140. TO AGREE THE FIXED ASSET REGISTER AS AGREED AT F&P

Resolved: to agree the fixed asset register as agreed at F&P, with thanks to the Finance Officer for her work.

141. OUTSIDE BODIES REPORTS

There were no outside bodies reports.

142. CREATING COMMUNITY IDENTITY

There were no reports on Community Identity.

143. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Fuller reported on the huge positive feedback he had received regarding purchasing the land at Waterside Valley. Cllr Hopkins suggested he feeds back that positivity to B&NES via Cllr Moss.

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144. B&NES COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Jackson reported:

- Concerns over the B&NES budget which would mean some planning officers were to be made redundant.
- Local Plan update is still ongoing.
- She was working on Liveable Neighbourhoods and trying to find a way to use the funding in Westfield.
- Youth Club is going from strength to strength.
- She is doing a lot of case work and feels that more needs to be done to get the word to people about the help that is available to them.

Cllr Moss reported:

- An 5% rise in the B&NES budget. He felt some of the suggestions for savings were worrying – eg charging for leaving building materials at recycling centres will lead to more fly tipping. There was to be a loss of planning enforcement officers and a public health officer. Council Tax and Business Rates are crucial to B&NES income, but that is going to reduce.
- Liveable Neighbourhoods was about encouraging people to walk or cycle to places of work or school, which he felt is fine in cities, but not in outlying areas.
- There is considerable extra case work for Councillors. He reiterated Cllr Jackson's point about getting the message to people about what help is out there for them eg Citizens Advice

Cllr Mansell asked if money from the Government for work with domestic abuse sufferers is to be filtered down to Westfield. Cllr Moss said he will investigate.

The meeting closed at 8:39pm

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Signed Dated