

WESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held at the Oval Office, Cobblers Way,
Westfield on Monday 7th February 2022

Present: Cllrs G Fuller (Chair), D Cooper, R Hopkins, E Jackson, R Moss, B Wallbridge (Vice Chair), P Wilkinson and P Williams.

Absent: Cllrs J Honess, L Mansell, S Pritchard. Cllrs Honess and Mansell attempted to join the meeting via Zoom but due to a breakdown of internet connection at the Parish Council, Zoom was not operating alongside this meeting.

Attending: Lesley Close, Clerk

121. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pritchard due to a 24 day custodial sentence.

Resolved: (1) not to accept the reason for absence by Cllr Pritchard;
(2) to write to B&NES Standards Committee stating that regardless of the reason for the custodial sentence, Cllr Pritchard's actions are bringing the Parish Council into disrepute which is contrary to the Code of Conduct for Councillors. Cllr Moss to also contact B&NES separately for any further advice in this.
(3) to write to Cllr Pritchard asking him to reconsider his position on the Parish Council.

122. Declarations of interest and dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

123. Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting – 5th January 2022

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 5th January were amended at minute 120, first bullet point, with the deletion of 'more virulent but'. With this amendment it was agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

124. Committee and working group reports

(a) Environment and Development Committee – 11th January 2022

Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting.

Signed Dated

Westfield Parish Council

Resolved: That the minutes of the Environment and Development Committee meeting held on 11th January be noted.

(b) Finance and Personnel Committee – 20th January 2022

Resolved: That the minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on 20th January be noted.

(c) Queen’s Platinum Anniversary Working Group –Following a full discussion, it was agreed not to go ahead with the Queen’s Platinum Anniversary celebration at Westhill Recreation Ground due to difficulties in confirming entertainment and contractors. This to be published in the Warbler.

(d) Waterside Valley Working Group – (1) the update was noted;

(2) the RoSPA report was received and it was agreed (a) to write to all residents backing on to the grounds, stating that the trampoline and football goals would be removed from the site in line with RoSPA recommendations at the end of February; and (b) to make enquiries regarding the costs involved in retaining a rope swing across the river;

(3) It was agreed to note the Bio Diversity Net Gain Survey and hold this in abeyance until the Government Guidance about the scheme is clearer;

(4) The quote of £520+VAT for a valuation of the land adjoining Waterside Valley was agreed.

125. Approval of any items over £5000 and consideration of any virement

There were no items over £5,000.

126. To consider and agree the final budget as recommended by the Finance and Personnel committee

Resolved: to agree the final budget as recommended by the Finance and Personnel Committee.

127. To consider and agree the precept in the amount of £218,590 (£114.71 pa for a Band D Property) as recommended by the Finance and Personnel Committee

Resolved: to agree the precept in the amount of £218,590 for 2022/23. This equates to £114.71 pa for a Band D Property.

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128. To consider and agree the Precept leaflet

Resolved: to agree the precept leaflet 2022/23, with thanks to the office staff for all their work on the precept this year.

129. Financial Risk Assessment

Resolved: to agree, as recommended by F&P:

- a. Internal Control Environment
- b. Risk Management Strategy
- c. Financial Risk Assessment
- d. Annual Review of the Insurance Schedule
- e. Local Council Risk Survey summary report

130. Update on walking meeting with Will Godfrey of B&NES

Mr Will Godfrey, CEO of B&NES will be joining Councillors in Westfield on Monday 14th February at 3:30pm. It was agreed to meet at the Parish Council office, where Cllr Hopkins would drive Will Godfrey and Cllrs Cooper and Jackson on a route to include Ruskin Road, Byfields and the Caravan at the Railway Inn.

131. Outside Bodies reports

Somer Valley Walking Festival 10th and 11th September – It was agreed that Cllr Wallbridge would lead this walk again on 10th September and liaise with the Walking Festival accordingly.

Mardons Club – Cllr Cooper reported that the Club was coping well in the circumstances.

Westfield In Bloom – Cllr Jackson gave an update. Concern was raised about (1) the lack of support at the public meeting; (2) the impact on the grass cutting by putting a planter on B&NES land at Shakespeare Road;

Air Pollution on the A367 – Cllr Hopkins had contacted several major companies as requested at a previous meeting for quotes on undertaking air pollution surveys. The lowest was £14,800 for a 10-day air sampling test, which the Parish Council can not justify at this time.

132. Creating Community Identity

Christmas Lights Display – The Parish Council was glad to see the lights have been taken down, but 10 or 12 sockets have been left with the flaps open at the top, letting in water. The Clerk to contact Lamps and Tubes.

Road Signage to Westfield – Cllrs Moss and Jackson to continue to raise with B&NES the lack of road signage to Westfield.

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133. Chairman's report

The Chairman was pleased to see a return to face-to-face meetings. He raised the issue of increased dog fouling at the Trust Grounds. It was agreed to refer this to the Trusts Meetings that evening.

134. B&NES Councillors' reports

Cllr Moss reported

- A 2% rise in the general budget at B&NES plus a 3% rise in social care creating a 5% increase in precept.
- A proposal in the budget for a £4 million SEND Residential Unit at the Somer Valley Campus of Bath College.
- Grounds for enforcement is being investigated due to the fact that there is plenty of evidence that the top floor of Mardons is not being made available for office use, despite clear demand.
- A joint letter from himself and Cllr Fuller as Chair of the Parish Council had been sent to residents of St Peters Close, updating on the traffic problems. Residents would like double yellow lines at the entrance to the road.
- The state of the trees on the batch was raised. Cllr Moss to continue to chase enforcement and to pass details to the Clerk so that a letter can be sent from the Parish Council.

Cllr Jackson reported

- Proposed car parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock are going to Cabinet for decision shortly.
- She had attended a parking and clean air zone webinar at B&NES
- At a webinar on the West of England Transport Strategy she had stated that Westfield needs to be included in the proposed improvements to the A367.
- The capacity of the bus services was noted.
- Mendip planning applications in this area were likely to go ahead.
- Bristol overspill in this area is affecting Bath student accommodation.
- Radco is being demolished on 22nd April.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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Signed Dated