

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2010

Present

Chairman, Cllr B Webb, Cllr K Perry, Cllr D Lumber, Cllr M Solomon, Cllr R Harris, & Cllr S Bagg

57) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the Councillors, County Cllr John Edney, PC Tony Freeman, PCSO Nick Mizon & 8 members of the public to the meeting.

58) Apologies for Absence

These were received in respect of Cllr Ann Bown, Cllr J Riddle & Cllr R Western.

59) The Views of Wembdon Residents in Respect of Items on the Agenda

One parishioner spoke in support of the proposals for the Green Wedge, which had been displayed on village day and hoped that the Parish Council would also be in support of it. Commenting on the current vacancy on the Council he urged Councillors to make it more representative of the parish & in his opinion it should include young adults.

Another resident expressed the view that young people in the village felt disadvantaged & marginalized & criticised the Council for removing the goalposts from the playing field (**minute 45.1 July 2010**).

The parishioner supported the view of the previous speaker that the Council should be looking for a wider spread of people serving on the Council.

The Chairman in response acknowledged that it was an aging Council & that he would like to see younger people on it, however, despite his & others best endeavours it was very difficult trying to find anyone to volunteer to become a Councillor.

60) Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr B Webb, informed the meeting that in his view he no longer needed to declare an interest in respect of the Green Wedge agenda item as the land owned by his family would not form part of the proposals. 2 Councillors challenged this view.

Cllr K Perry informed Councillors that the declaration of interests is at the discretion of the individual member. The Chairman stood firm with his view and the Clerk was asked by the Councillors questioning this view to note their disagreement.

61) Minutes of the Meeting dated 12 July 2010

Following a lengthy discussion on the content of **minute 51** the following amendments were approved

- Line 13 – replace ‘other’ with ‘some’ (this was agreed after a vote of Councillors with a majority in favour)
- Line 20 – replace ‘WRVG with ‘WRDG’

The minutes were then formally agreed & signed.

62) Report from PC. Tony Freeman

PC. Freeman warned parishioners to be wary of someone touting for business offering gardening services etc. as they were not to be trusted.

It was also reported that a number of farms had been targeted for theft.

In response to a question PC. Freeman informed the meeting that most young people caught with alcohol in the playing field were from outside the village.

63) Report from the Clerk

63.1) Playing Field

- The Somerset Playing Fields Association had awarded Wembdon Parish Council 2nd prize & a cheque for £50 in the playing field of the year competition.
- Further work had been undertaken to rectify the drainage channels & the area was also seeded. There had also been further clearance work in the field behind Greenacre.
- The goalposts had been removed after a delay, caused by the contractor. The day after the decision was made Wembdon Junior Football Club had informed Cllr Western that they had been hoping to use the field for under 11 matches this season. Some objections had been received regarding the removals of the goalposts. It was agreed that a further inspection of the playing field would take place to determine if the field was now in an acceptable condition & Councillors would then consider the request from the junior football club & the re-instatement of the posts.
- Cllr R Harris was instructed to proceed with his proposal to replace the gate in to the toddlers play area, which would include a self-closing device as the original hinge had been vandalised & removed.
- The dog bin at the NDR end of the playing field had lost its lid again & SDC had been asked to repair it if possible.
- A part of the fence near the new footbridge has been damaged & this would also be checked to see what repairs were necessary.
- The RoSPA inspection report had been received & apart from concern with the drainage channels only a few small items of maintenance work were identified.

63.2) Entrance to Crossacre

A mutually convenient date for a meeting with all the interested parties had not yet been arranged.

63.3) Future Meetings

- Community Council for Somerset AGM, 15 September – Cllr M Solomon indicated his possible attendance at this meeting
- Mendip & Sedgemoor Community Support Funding Advice Evening, 23 September – Cllr Solomon attending
- SALC AGM & Area Meeting, 25 September – no attendee
- Quantock Parish Cluster Meeting, 27 September – Cllr Solomon attending & also possibly Cllr Perry
- Parish Council training on planning, 28 September – Cllr's Lumber & Riddle attending

63.4) Correspondence not on the Agenda

- Due to the length of the current agenda a decision on how to spend the RLT2 money available to the Council would be placed on a future agenda
- Precept Capping 2012-13. Correspondence regarding proposals to introduce precept capping on Town & Parish Councils had been noted by Councillors.
- Hinkley C Connection Group. Councillors indicated that they wished to be kept informed.
- Cllr Harris agreed to respond to the Review of 2009/10 winter highway maintenance services on behalf of the Council. He also agreed to look in to the provision of salt bags by County Highways for roadways that did not take priority when winter gritting was undertaken.
- It was agreed that a request received by 2 parishioners to place 3 items on the agenda had, effectively already been addressed

64) Presentation of Possible options for the Green Wedge

Cllr's Solomon and Bagg gave a presentation outlining the work of the WRDG. In this presentation the key points were as follows:

The WRDG were established by the WPC in July 2009 as a community group with a brief: *to investigate the feasibility of providing a village hall and improved recreational facilities in Wembdon*, which was one of several objectives incorporated within the Wembdon Parish Plan. The presentation noted that at the time of the establishment of the group, there were already plans being circulated for use of the RLT4 areas of the Green Wedge, owned by S Notaro, to be utilised as football pitches, the initial plan requiring an enabling development of some 20 or so social and open market houses along Church Road and a second variation of this moving those houses to the south side of the land along Homberg Way.

With this as background WRDG considered the key issues for their feasibility study to be:

- Where was suitable land available in Wembdon to establish a village hall and playing fields and
- What would such a project likely cost,
- Would there be sufficient support within the village to ensure the long term sustainability of these facilities and
- Could such facilities be funded?

Regarding the land, the critical factors were:

- Access,
- The costs of land works to provide playing fields,
- The availability of land and
- The planning status.

Four possible locations were identified - Cokerhurst Farm, rear of Blakes Road, North of Wembdon Hill and Wembdon Common/Notaro land. On the basis of costs of land preparation, availability of land and access, the first three sites were ruled out and the group focused on the possibility of utilising the Notaro land as the hub of a recreational development within the RLT4 area of the Green Wedge.

In reviewing the Local Plan it was noted that utilisation of this land was fully in accordance with SDC policy, the plan confirming: that the land had been allocated for playing fields and public open space, that it was particularly suitable as a base for Wembdon Cricket Club, that such a use would also benefit from the splendid backdrop of Wembdon Church and that wetter areas could be possibly improved as nature areas and public spaces for dog walking. Given this strong support from the Local Plan, the WRDG considered the ownership of the various packets of land. A major concern of the WRDG was that with the land being held by several owners, at some stage in the future there could be the possibility of an unmanaged piecemeal development of the site, each owner being allowed some small enabling development to release their individual packets of land for recreational purposes. Whilst deemed unlikely, this piecemeal development was viewed as the worst possible scenario. A preliminary proposal was thus prepared in January 2010 (and presented to a private meeting of the Parish Council) whereby the enabling development was placed on a small section of land adjacent to The Great Oaks Development. In February 2010 this was presented to the Planning Policy Manager at SDC but was rejected. The ownership and planning classification of all of the areas under consideration was then reviewed and it was noted that a part of this area, promised for several years to be developed into a children's play area, could be appropriate for the placement of a small enabling development which would release the Notaro land for the Wembdon community. This exchange provided the community with 11 acres of possible recreation land in exchange for a development, which would add a maximum of 14 houses to the existing Trinity Fields development on a site of approximately 0.7 acres. This proposal was considered by SDC for some months before a response was received in July 2010. The response stated that the SDC Major Projects Planning Policy Team: -

- Offered general support for the project as it met key Local Plan objectives
- Accepted the principal of an enabling residential development to facilitate the release of land for recreational and community purposes.
- Accepted the proposal that the land currently allocated in the Local Plan for a LEAP
- Can be reclassified as an extension of the Trinity Field development for up to a maximum of 14 houses.
- Requires that any access to such housing must be through the existing Trinity Fields estate road network.
- Noted concerns over traffic and that the project should provide good walking and cycling access and concerns over fundraising. It further noted that the currently in draft Council Core Strategy would provide greater support for the proposed actions.

With the SDC position now clear the WRDG then:

- Spoke to the landowners
- Selected and appointed an architect (following the recognised process approved by the major funding bodies)
- Prepared a master plan which incorporated the responses of discussions with the landowners,
- Completed preliminary cost estimates – these being £80,000 to prepare the outline planning application and a total project cost of £2M

- Held discussions with the major potential fund sources, including The Big Lottery Fund, LARC, the Football Foundation, the English Cricket Board, EDF and SDC
- Made preparations for public consultation on this initial masterplan.

WRDG displayed the initial masterplan at Wembdon Village Day where 400 people visited the stand. 100 people completed feedback/comment forms of which 84 were in favour of the project, 14 expressed no opinion and 2 were against. 73 people expressed no concerns and the remaining 27 expressed concerns, mainly on traffic and the location of the play areas.

A further community consultation is scheduled for 20th September.

Following this 13 months project, the WRDG now believe that it is feasible to meet the community's objective of expanding the village green, building a village hall and improving the sports and games facilities. Furthermore, discussions with the landowners and SDC Planning Policy Team showed that the site proposed could be made available and that initial community consultations demonstrate high levels of support for the project. They also believe that with full community support funding can be made available.

A proposal was thus made to the Parish Council:

That the Parish Council accept the ownership of the Notaro Fields (11.1 acres) in exchange for supporting the construction of up to 14 houses on the land between the existing Public footpath bordering the edge of the Trinity Fields development and the rhyme owned by the Land Drainage Board adjacent to the field owned by Mrs. Webb, (grid reference 51.136920, -3.013831), approximately 0.67 acres.

That the Council ensure that this whole area of land will be used solely for recreational and community purposes by exercising a Deed of Dedication which would specify permitted use activities on the land in perpetuity, and that the land and hall would be independently administered by a hall and playing fields trust with trustees appointed from the Wembdon community.

That the Council continues to encourage the Wembdon Recreational Developments Group to work on their ongoing project to establish the feasibility of providing improved recreational facilities and a Village Hall in Wembdon.

Following an exchange of views when it was stated by several Councillors that the new Standing Orders did not allow for proposals to be placed without notice before the Council & voted upon the Clerk was instructed to place the above on the agenda for the October meeting.

65) The Land Behind Greenacre

In view of the commercially sensitive nature of some of the aspects to be discussed it was RESOLVED that this item should be dealt with in private after the normal business had concluded.

66) Co-option of a New Parish Councillor

A proposal that Dr. Peter Reed be invited to fill the current vacancy on the Council was carried unanimously.

67) New Nuclear Power Station at Hinkley Point

The Parish Council agreed its response to the EDF 2nd stage consultation on the proposals for a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point & a copy of it would be placed on the Council's website www.wembdon.org.

A letter from the local MP was noted & it was agreed that a copy of the Council's response be sent to him.

68) Wembdon Allotments

The Council was still waiting for a full response to its formal offer to purchase the allotment field & it was agreed that all the allotment holders should be notified of the current situation.

69) Draft Policy Framework for the Devolution of Funding of Local Services to Town/ Parish Councils

The Parish Council noted the draft framework.

Councillors were informed that the additional cost to them for the emptying of dog bins currently paid for & provided by S.D.C. would, at current cost, be £1672 p.a.

70) Correspondence

The following was placed in the correspondence folder

- Local Councils Update – Councillors to decide at October meeting whether to subscribe to this publication
- Clerks & Councils Direct
- S.C.C. Annual Report
- Somerset Playing Fields Annual Report & Accounts
- South West Ambulance Service newsletter

71) Planning

51/10/00011 – 6 Wares Lane. Conversion of part of loft to living accommodation including alterations to roof & new chimney to East elevation & window to North elevation.

Permission granted.

51/10/00012 – 20 Lyndhurst Crescent, Wembdon. Erection of part two-storey, part single storey extension to North elevation (partly on site of existing garage/utility to be demolished) & first floor extension to West elevation.

Permission refused.

51/10/00013 – 18 Church Road. Application for non-material minor amendment to planning permission 51/08/00046 for the enlargement of first floor window in rear elevation, alterations to front door and internal alterations.

Permission granted.

51/10/00014 – Willow Tree Barn, Moores Lane, Wembdon. Erection of outbuilding.

The Planning sub-committee has raised the following objections

- **It would be a large noticeable structure in the countryside**
- **There is an anomaly between the description of the roof & the drawings, which indicates a completely different pitch. Further details had been received which the sub-committee would consider**

51/10/00015 – 19 Greenacre. Erection of two-storey side extension & single storey rear extension, partly on site of existing (to be demolished).

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/10/00016 – Old School House, Blakes Road. Erection of two-storey building to form 1st floor residential unit, ground floor garage/workshop with drive through access to the rear, providing parking for the existing residential dwelling – The Old School House, alterations to access & parking, demolition of existing garage.

The Planning sub-committee has objected to this application on the following grounds: - it would be an over development of the site & the proposed development is too close to a blind corner.

51/10/00017 – 1 Meadowlands Avenue, Wembdon. Erection of two-storey extension to side elevation.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/10/00018 – 76 Wembdon Rise. Widening of access, formation of turning and parking area.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/10/00019 – Highfield, Sandford Hill. Erection of double garage, partly on site of existing (to be demolished).

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

08/10/00157 – Gerber Foods Ltd, Wembdon Road. Demolition of existing building, erection of 215 residential units, change of use of an existing office to 1 residential property, associated public open space; children's play space, new road infrastructure, landscaping & associated works.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

23/10/004 – Land adjacent to Queenswood Farm. Outline planning application for the construction of school buildings (with associated areas of hard standing, sports pitches, artificial turf pitch, multi use games areas, engineering & landscape works) plus associated road improvements.

The Planning sub-committee has objected to this application on highways grounds & the associated foot & cyclepath network.

Local Development Framework – The Chairman & Cllr Solomon confirmed their attendance at the meeting being held on Tuesday 12 October 2010, which would form part of the consultation process that was due to commence on 27 September.

A further meeting with Engage Planning & the developers regarding Cokerhurst Farm was to be held on 22 September. The meeting was at the request of the developers.

72) Finance

The audit of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2010 had been completed with the auditors stating that there were no causes for concern

The following payments were authorised

- Auditor £334.88
- Clerk's Expenses £77.43
- Ground Maintenance £355.00

It was RESOLVED that a donation of £100 be made to the Sedgemoor Citizens Advice Bureau.

Balance at 12 July 2010	£6082.00
S.P.F.A. Prize	<u>£ 50.00</u>
	£6132.00

Less

Ground Maintenance	£728.00	
Clerk's Expenses	£ 42.08	
Salary & Income Tax	£994.30	
1 st Bridgwater (St George's) Scout Group	£ 50.00	
Repairs to Millennium Bridge	£300.00	
RoSPA Inspection	£203.29	
S.C.C. (Room Hire)	£436.80	
Removal of goalposts	£188.00	
Website Domain Names	£ 51.03	
Playing field Drainage follow up work	£470.00	<u>£3463.50</u>
Balance at 13 September 2010		£2668.50

73) Matters Raised by Councillors

73.1) A39 Issues

Cllr Solomon informed the meeting that he was one of the Quantock Cluster Group representatives attending meetings with S.C.C. regarding the A39.

73.2) Wembdon Speed Watch

Councillors requested an update from the speed watch team of their activities in the 3 previous months.

73.3) Dog Fouling Notices

Councillors agreed that the notice boards were an inappropriate place for these signs as the notice boards were required for the purpose of keeping parishioners up to date with constantly changing information.