

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 10 JANUARY 2011

Present

Chairman, Cllr B Webb, Cllr K Perry, Cllr D Lumber, Cllr M Solomon, Cllr R Harris, Cllr J Riddle, Cllr Ann Bown, Cllr R Western, Cllr S Bagg & Cllr P Reed

119) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the Parish Councillors, County Cllr John Edney & more than 150 members of the public to the meeting. The Chairman stated that, in his view, this was the largest attendance he had witnessed at any normal meeting of the Parish Council & this was due entirely to the very strong feelings in the village regarding the Cokerhurst Farm planning application, which was to be considered that evening.

The meeting was informed that Nick Tait, Planning Policy Officer from Sedgemoor District Council, would also be in attendance to speak on the Cokerhurst plans & answer questions from the public.

The Clerk informed the meeting that due to the expected large attendance at the meeting Wessex Water had delayed the commencement of the road works at the NDR/Wembdon Rise junction & in Skimmerton Road.

120) Apologies for Absence

There were none.

121) Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

There were none.

122) Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13 December 2010 were agreed & signed.

123) Planning

123.1) Cokerhurst Farm Planning Application 51/10/00022

The Chairman welcomed Nick Tait to the meeting.

Following opening remarks from Cllr Ann Bown regarding her opposition to the planning application Nick Tait addressed the meeting.

Mr. Tait explained that he couldn't comment on the contents of the application as this was the responsibility of the planning department at S.D.C. & he would restrict his remarks to planning policy issues.

The Planning Policy Department considered the planning application to be premature for a number of reasons & the applicants had been told so.

The application was contrary to the current Local Plan, which expired at the end of 2011. Its replacement, The Local Development Framework (LDF), was still in draft & would only be determined later in the year. Whilst it was the view of S.D.C. that a development on Cokerhurst Farm would be required in the long term (the framework covers until 2026) to meet the expected housing needs of the Bridgwater area there was currently sufficient brown field sites available to meet the needs of at least the next 5 years & it was possible that others would become available meaning that any development of Cokerhurst Farm now or in the near future was premature. There had been a number of objections submitted regarding the LDF & in particular any development of Cokerhurst Farm & these would be considered

independently as well as an objection received from the prospective developers of Cokerhurst Farm wanting to bring forward the development on the farm.

Cllr M Solomon then addressed the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council & outlined the reasons as to why the Parish Council would be submitting objections to the planning application (**available at www.wembdon.org**). This was greeted with applause from the packed meeting.

The Chairman opened up the meeting to the public & overwhelmingly one Wembdon resident after another objected to the application. The Clerk reported that he had also received a large number of emails all opposed to the planning application.

The short timescale for responding to the application was raised several times & S.D.C. had responded to this by extending the date for the submission of responses to 26 January 2011.

Reasons for objecting to the application included, Highways issues, both on the A39 & through Wembdon. Using Inwood Road as a direct access to the development, the size of the development & the density of the housing, the impact on the school, the perceived need for the development. The impact on the character of the village, drainage concerns, the loss of agricultural land, noise & the loss of privacy.

County Cllr Edney assured the meeting that Somerset County Council would be looking very closely at the highways proposals within the application and he was certain that S.D.C. would take account of the views given at the meeting.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions & informed the meeting that the views given would be taken in to account by the Parish Council before they submitted their formal objections to the application. Those present at meeting were also encouraged to write to S.D.C. with their own objections to the application.

123.2) Other Planning Applications

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.

Granted Permission subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 relating to contributions for Education, Flood Defence Contributions, Off Site Open Space, Affordable Housing and for further negotiations on green travel.

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.

Granted permission

51/10/00025 – St George’s School. T3 (Oak ref 1268) Reduce Crown on SW side overhanging Brantwood Rd & children’s play area by 25%. T4 (Oak ref 1269) Reduce laterals overhanging children’s play area by 3-4 metres. T5 (Oak ref 1270) Reduce lateral overhanging children’s play area by 3-4 metres, reduce 2 No. large lateral overhanging roof of No 14 Brantwood Road by 2-3 metres. T6 (Oak ref 1326) Reduce laterals overhanging play area by 2-3 metres.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/10/00027 – 24 Wembdon Hill, Erection of single storey extensions to the front & rear elevations & insertion of roof light to main roof.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/10/00028 – Land to the East of, 57 Wembdon Hill. Erection of dwelling with integral garage & formation of access.

The Parish Council sub-committee has objected to this application.

124) Finance

124.1) 2011-12 Precept

It was RESOLVED that the precept for 2011/12 be set at £25,000. Whilst it was recognised that this was a substantial increase on the previous year it had to be noted that until now the precept set by Wembdon Parish Council had been one of the lowest in the district.

From 1 April 2011 the Council had to meet the cost of emptying a further 4 dog bins as S.D.C. had passed on this responsibility. It was also likely that the Parish Council would need to take on the responsibility of more verge cutting as both S.D.C. & S.C.C. were looking to make drastic reductions to this service. Furthermore 2011 was an election year & at the previous election in 2007 the Parish Council had to meet election costs exceeding £1,400. Finally the Council determined that they needed to rebuild its reserve as during the course of 2010 it had reduced to a level that severely restricted its ability to meet unexpected costs.

124.2) Authorisation of Payments due

The Council authorised the following payments

- Salary & Income Tax £994.32
- Notice of Meeting in Bridgwater Mercury £195.64
- Ground Maintenance £355.00
- Water Rates £21.17
- Clerk's Expenses £32.68
- New Gate, Fencing repairs & Ground works in the playing field £1268.00*
- Society of Local Council Clerks subscription £82.00

*£100 retained as works not completed.

It was also resolved that a donation of £100 be made to Age Concern.

124.3) Balance

Balance at 13 December 2010		£7226.87
Bank Interest		£ 0.98
Wayleave		<u>£ 19.31</u>
		£7247.16
Less		
Ground Maintenance	£355.00	
Clerk's Expenses	£ 73.46	
S.C.C. (village nameplate)	£296.92	
Rossiter/Roberts (land Lease)	£461.25	<u>£1186.63</u>
Balance at 10 January 2011		£6060.53

125) Land behind Greenacre

The points previously raised by the Council had been addressed and 2 further slight amendments to the draft lease agreement were approved. The lease was then signed by the Chairman & the Clerk. The lease covered a period of 20 years at an initial cost of £160 per annum.

126) Report from the Clerk

126.1) The Green Wedge

The Clerk had written to Joe Notaro seeking clarification of the terms under which he would gift the land he owned on the Green Wedge to the village.

126.2) Entrance to Crossacre

The Council would consider a donation towards the cost of the repairs to the road surface at its February meeting.

126.3) Land Owned by Persimmon

The developer had been asked what plans it had to tidy up the land that they owned adjacent to the NDR.

126.4) RLT3 Funding

The Council noted that the Quantock Parish Cluster Group had £27,776 available to it, some of which needed to be spent by 2015.

127) Correspondence

127.1) Forces March – May 2011

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should produce a poster advertising this event.

127.2) Royal British Legion Great Poppy Party Weekend

Town & Parish Councils were being asked to support this event by holding parties in the weekend 10-12 June 2011. It was agreed that the information should be placed in the correspondence folder & that the Council would make a decision at a future meeting.

127.3) The Provision of Road Grit & De-icing Materials

As a result of the Parish Councils stock being used & correspondence from residents it was agreed that the Council would try to obtain further supplies & ask Highways to explain their policy regarding the provision of salt/grit bins.

127.4) Other Correspondence

The following had been placed in the correspondence folder

- Information from SALC regarding The Localism Bill
- The minutes of the Quantock Parish Cluster Group Meeting held on 7 December 2010 (date of next meeting 15 March 2011, venue Otterhampton Village Hall)
- Hinkley Point C Connection Group Minutes dated 15 December 2010

128) Matters Raised by Councillors

128.1) Allotments

It was reported that the notice to advertise the sale of the land was imminent & it was therefore RESOLVED that this would be an agenda item at the February meeting.

128.2) Parish Clerk Vacancy

A sub-committee of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman & the Clerk would address this issue.

128.3) Dog Bins

Concern was raised that bins were not being emptied regularly, particularly the one on the allotment field & that the one at the NDR end of the playing field was still missing a lid. Both matters would be referred to S.D.C.

128.4) Church Road Railings

The temporary railings had blown across the road & needed attention. Highways would be informed.

128.5) Weight Bags

Several weight bags used to keep the roadwork signs in place had been left behind after the roadwork's had been completed & needed to be removed. However, as there were further works due to start in the village it was agreed that the Council should wait until these had been completed before approaching County Highways.