

WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present

Chairman - Cllr M Solomon, Cllr J Riddle, Cllr T Thayer, Cllr D Bingham, Cllr J Jackson, Cllr N Harrison & Cllr T Brown

78) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed Alyn Jones from S.C.C; County Cllr John Edney, District Cllr's Ann Bown, Ian Dyer & Mick Lerry & 19 members of the public to the meeting.

79) Apologies for Absence

None had been received.

80) Declarations of Interest in Respect of Agenda Items

There were none.

81) The Views of Wembdon Residents in Respect of Agenda Items

The Clerk informed the meeting that no one had requested to address the Council in respect of agenda items.

There were, however, requests from the meeting to ask the Chairman questions relating to the proposals for the Green Wedge, which the Chairman allowed.

Cllr Ann Bown asked the Chairman whether anyone on the Council had met recently with the developer who owned most of the Green Wedge. The Chairman informed the meeting that he had held separate meetings with the Chairman of The Wembdon Village Hall and Playing Fields Charitable Trust & also with Harley Cook, S.D.C. Playing Fields Strategy Officer, but as a Wembdon resident & not as a member of the Parish Council & no other Councillor had attended any such meeting.

Cllr Bown stated that concerns had been raised with her regarding the change from the WRDG to the The Wembdon Village Hall and Playing Fields Charitable Trust & added that she was concerned people were beginning to lose faith in the Parish Council.

Cllr Mick Lerry observed that The Trust needed to consult widely with the Parish Council & the community. Residents needed to have the opportunity to express their views individually or via District or County Councillors.

Cllr Ian Dyer relayed his concerns over the perceived lack of transparency, so far, in the process.

In response to a further question the Chairman indicated that there would be a public consultation meeting to consider plans for the Green Wedge if a planning application was submitted.

Another questioner asked if the project was to proceed would it need to have the support of the Parish Council. The Chairman explained that the District Council would be the determining authority on a planning application.

Cllr D Bingham defended the present Council from what he felt were unwarranted attacks on the present Council & listed actions it had taken since the local elections in May. One parishioner reacted angrily to this stating that the response implied that the previous Council had done very little. At this point the Chairman moved on to the next business.

82) Co-option of New Parish Councillors

The Chairman explained, in detail, the process that would be followed in determining which 2 candidates were to be invited to join the Council. If necessary there would be a series of votes until one candidate received a majority of the votes available. As Chairman he had an original vote & also a casting vote, if needed, although he hoped not to have to use it. The same process would then be followed again to select the 2nd candidate. The Chairman informed the meeting that the process was in accordance with guidance from The Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) & also the Sedgemoor District Monitoring Officer. Following the first vote Terry Thake was co-opted on to the Council to represent the Bridgwater Victoria Ward. There then followed another round of voting & Lorraine Burge was co-opted on to the Council to represent the Wembdon Ward. Both were then invited to join the Council immediately.

The Clerk informed the meeting that following the resignation of Cllr Rodney Western a further vacancy had arisen. The normal process was being followed & the Council did not, currently, know whether they would be able to co-opt again or if an election would be required.

83) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 September 2011 were agreed & signed.

84) Report from the Police

There was no report. The Chairman, however, informed the meeting that in recent weeks he had recovered a large number of nitrous oxide capsules from the playing field & he had reported this to PC Tony Freeman.

85) S.C.C. Highways Presentation in respect of Hinkley Point C

Alyn Jones informed the meeting that he was coordinating the S.C.C. response to the highways proposals put forward by EDF.

EDF would, very shortly, submit the Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) who would initially consider whether the consultation had been adequate. Once the IPC had determined that the application was valid the application would become available & at that point the Council would need to inform the IPC that they wished to respond.

S.C.C. has stated that the EDF had not prepared an adequate transport assessment. S.C.C. had made it abundantly clear that EDF must consider a Northern Bridgwater bypass but they had failed to do so.

Mr. Jones informed the meeting that S.C.C. was very aware of the views of the community. In answer to questions asked Mr. Jones stated the following

S.C.C. had taken the IPC case team around the routes to be used during the construction of Hinkley Point C.

S.C.C. was hopeful that when the DCO was submitted a bypass assessment would be included although they hadn't seen anything yet.

EDF was constantly changing the expected number of traffic movements during the construction of Hinkley Point C but had failed to make the data available.

The planned start date was 2013. The height of the development would be from 2016 & construction was due to be completed by 2021.

S.C.C. will assess the proposals & determine what is right for Bridgwater.

There were general concerns that EDF would not produce an adequate bypass study.

S.C.C., S.D.C. & West Somerset District Council were undertaking their own study on the impact of a bypass.

Mr. Jones informed the meeting that the EDF proposals for the Quantock Rd roundabout & the Wembdon Rise junction had not been signed off by S.C.C.

Once the application was submitted EDF had committed themselves to a number of exhibitions to explain their plans.

On behalf of the Council the Chairman thanked Mr. Jones for his detailed presentation. He reiterated the Council's objections to all the current highways proposals that affected Wembdon & that the Council, like other local Councils, supported the building of the Northern Bridgwater bypass.

86) Cokerhurst Farm – Appeal against Refusal to Grant Planning Permission for Erection of 400/450 Dwellings

The Chairman reported on the findings of the Inspector in respect of the Core Strategy with particular regard to Cokerhurst Farm in which he stated that the land was not needed until around 2021.

Cllr Neil Harrison explained to the meeting the appeal process & read out the Parish Council's proposed response.

Members of the public raised other concerns including contaminated land & part of the land being a burial site. Other issues raised had already been highlighted by the Council in its original objections to the planning application.

Cllr Harrison noted the issues raised & confirmed that they would be considered prior to the Council submitting its formal response, which would then be made available on its website www.wembdon.org

87) Reports from Councillors in Respect of Meetings Attended

87.1) Quantock Cluster Group Meeting

The Chairman reported that the following items had been discussed at the meeting held on 5 October 2011 – Hinkley Point C, A39 congestion & accidents, the Steart Peninsula & a consultation document on the S.D.C. budget priorities for 2012/13, which highlighted a further reduction in services.

The Clerk informed the meeting that following correspondence with S.D.C. it was unlikely that the Council would be required to fund additional local services in the 2012/13 financial year.

87.2) Code of Conduct Training

As a result of the Chairman & the Clerk attending this event the Chairman recommended & the Council agreed that a training session should be arranged for all of the Parish Council.

88) Correspondence

88.1) Petition from Parishioners

The Clerk reported on the receipt of a petition signed by 361 Wembdon parish residents urging the Parish Council to oppose the proposed housing development on the land adjacent to the Churchfields estate, sometimes identified as the green triangle.

The Chairman stated that he did not wish to see a piecemeal approach to this issue, which was linked to proposals for the Green Wedge, but wanted the Council, at a point when plans were presented, to be able to assess its own position with all the information to hand. District Cllr Mick Lerry supported this approach & stated that he believed it was the responsibility of the Trust to initiate consultation.

The Chairman indicated that, when the matter was considered by the Council, he would not take part in the process.

88.2) S.D.C. Budget Briefing

Cllr's Jo Jackson & Tony Brown indicated that they may be able to attend this event.

88.3) Road Sweeping & Salt/Grit Bins

The Clerk had received correspondence regarding roads that weren't swept by S.D.C. & this had been referred to S.D.C.

Other correspondence asked about the possibility of the Council positioning at least one further salt bin in the village. The Council had agreed to monitor the success or otherwise of the 2 bins now in place before considering the purchase of others, but residents needed to recognize that the Council had limited funding & would need to prioritise its expenditure in this area.

88.4) Hinkely Point B Stakeholder Group Meeting

Cllr Harrison agreed to attend the meeting being held on 28 October 2011. Both he & Cllr Dan Bingham indicated that they would be prepared to act as the Council's representative on this committee following the resignation of Cllr Western.

88.5) Somerset Electoral Review

It was noted that the initial consultation would run until 14 November 2011.

88.6) Dogs in the Playing Field

The Council had received correspondence urging the Council to ban all dogs from the playing field & other correspondence objecting to the notice stating that dogs had to be kept on a lead whilst in the playing field.

Cllr Jackson on behalf of the Council stated that the request to keep their dogs on leads was not new & dog owners had to recognise that the health & safety of the children using the playing field had to be addressed. With regard to any ban this was not straight forward as there was a right of way through the playing field. Furthermore such a restriction had to be covered by a byelaw. Enquiries were being made & a further report would be given at the November meeting.

88.7) Clerk's Resignation

The Chairman reported on the Clerk's resignation, effective from 31 December 2011. An advertisement was to be placed in the Bridgwater Mercury & it was hoped that a new Clerk would be appointed in time for the December 2011 meeting.

88.8) Other Correspondence

The following items were placed in the correspondence folder

- 2013 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies – proposals for the South West
- Decommissioning Report & Hinkely Point B Station Report
- Queens Diamond Jubilee taking part guide
- Volunteer Network newsletter
- Hinkley Point C Connection Project newsletter
- SALC Area & AGM Summary & guidance on how to respond to planning applications

89) New Notice Boards

Cllr Brown informed the meeting that Taylor Wimpey had agreed to fund the purchase of a new notice board. The positioning of it had not been determined but it was likely to be close to their Wembdon Grange development. The Council agreed that another should be placed,

preferably, at the entrance to Trinity Way. It was hoped that final positioning could be determined at the November meeting.

90) Allotments

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would write to the owners of Palmers Field for an explanation as to why the positioning of the new fence was different to what had been agreed previously.

91) Planning

51/11/00019 – 1 Church Road, Wembdon. Crown lift 3 lower limbs to Evergreen Oak (T1) in order to increase clearance from property & highway.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/11/00020 – Greenway Garage, Quantock Rd. Use of land to site a portacabin and portaloos to be used to continue business of garage/shop/filling station, while repairs to fire damaged business are carried out.

No objection from the Planning sub-committee.

51/11/00021 – Barn A at, Grabhams Farm, Moores Lane, Wembdon. Erection of extension to North elevation.

Referred to the Planning sub-committee.

51/11/00022 – Barn on land to the East of, Moores Lane, Wembdon. Change of use & conversion of barn to dwelling.

Referred to the Planning sub-committee. This was the 3rd time that this application had been submitted & on the 2 previous occasions the Council had supported or not objected to it.

51/11/00023 – St George's Primary School. Renewal of temporary Planning Permission for a modular building for use as a classroom.

Referred to the Planning sub-committee.

92) Finance

Councillors authorised the following payments

- Ground Maintenance £355.00
- Play Equipment Painting £480.00
- New Fencing & Repair to Allotments Gatepost £433.00
- Salary & Income Tax £994.31
- Clerk's Expenses £51.93

The Clerk informed Councillors that the first repayment on the loan to purchase the allotments £1363.33 was due to be paid on 20 October 2011.

Balance at 12 September 2011		£ 4408.31
Precept		£12500.00
Bank Interest		£ 0.83
S.P.F.A. Award		£ 25.00
		£16934.14
Less		
Clerk's Expenses	£ 22.99	
Ground Maintenance	£ 355.00	
Hire of Parish Centre Room	£ 8.00	
S.C.C. (Room Hire)	£ 218.40	
S.D.C. (Dog Waste Bin Emptying)	£2675.70	
Goalpost Fixings	£ 62.00	
Grit/Salt Bins	£ 328.65	
Sedgemoor Citizens Advice Bureau	£ 100.00	£ 3770.74
Balance at 10 October 2011		£13163.40

93) Matters Raised by Councillors

93.1) Stone wall in Church Road

The Chairman reported that a builder had been asked to look at the condition of it.

93.2) Playing Field

It was agreed that the playing field sub-committee would consider whether the large swings & other equipment/benches required re-painting.

93.3) Sub-committees

It was agreed that as a result of the co-option of 2 new Councillors the membership of the existing sub-committees would be reviewed at the November meeting.