

WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2011

Present

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

61) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed District Cllr's Ann Bown & Mick Lerry & 7 members of the public to the meeting.

62) Apologies for Absence

These were received in respect of County Cllr John Edney & District Cllr Ian Dyer.

63) Declarations of Interest in Item on the Agenda

The Chairman explained the position regarding the Wembdon Recreational Development Group (WRDG) with respect to the Code of Conduct & the advice received from the Monitoring Officer.

The Chairman, Cllr N Harrison & Cllr D Bingham then declared a personal interest in respect of the agenda item 'To consider reopening discussions with the WRDG'. Cllr J Jackson also declared a personal interest in the same agenda item as her husband is a member of the WRDG.

64) To Note the Views of Wembdon Residents in Respect of Items on the Agenda

Although the Clerk had received written notification by one resident stating that he wished to speak in respect of a number of agenda items no one came forward to address the meeting.

65) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18 July 2011 were agreed & signed.

66) Casual Vacancies on the Parish Council

The Council had received confirmation that they were authorised to co-opt 2 new members to fill the vacancies. One Councillor would be co-opted to represent the Wembdon Ward & another to represent the Bridgwater Victoria Ward.

Notices inviting interested persons had been displayed on the notice boards & the website with a closing date of 26 September.

The Chairman confirmed that he intended to follow the same procedure as used previously with candidates being invited to meet with Councillors prior to the start of the October meeting.

The Clerk informed the meeting that he had already received notifications of interest from 2 parishioners.

67) Sub-committee Membership & Roles & Responsibilities

The Chairman stated that as a result of the recent resignations & the demands placed on some of the sub-committees he believed a re-organisation of the membership of each sub-committee was required. Following advice from SALC it would also be necessary to create 2 new Committees, Staffing & Appeals.

Councillors agreed that the following sub-committee membership

- Finance – Cllr M Solomon, Cllr J Riddle &
- Planning – Cllr Solomon, Cllr N Harrison, Cllr D Bingham & Cllr T Brown
- Playing Fields & Common – Cllr Riddle, Cllr J Jackson & Cllr R Western
- Highways – Cllr Riddle, Cllr Jackson & Cllr Brown
- Footpaths, Verges & Litter – Cllr N Harrison, Cllr Jackson & Cllr Western
- Communications – Cllr Bingham, Cllr T Thayer & Cllr Jackson
- Allotments – Cllr Thayer & Cllr Harrison
- Land Acquisitions – Cllr Harrison & Cllr Thayer
- Staffing – Cllr Solomon, Cllr Harrison & Cllr Jackson
- Appeals – Cllr Riddle, Cllr Brown & Cllr Thayer

The roles & responsibilities of each sub-committee were approved.

68) Playing Field & Adjoining Leased Land

68.1) Monthly Inspections

It was RESOLVED that the Council would accept a quote of £15 per inspection from GB Sport & Leisure in respect of them undertaking monthly inspections of the playing field & equipment. It was, however, subject to the Council agreeing the checklist to be used. It was also determined that it would be reviewed after 6 months to ensure that the Council was receiving value for money.

68.2) Painting of Equipment

The Council, having previously agreed that some items were in need of repairing, accepted a quote of £480 to apply 2 coats of metal paint to the following items

- Entrance Railings
- Playing field Sign
- Cradle Swings
- 2 x Benches
- Basketball Board & Post

Cllr Western agreed to oversee the work.

68.3) Adjoining Leased Land

It was RESOLVED that on the grounds of health & safety that 4 rail post & fencing would be erected on either side of the footpath crossing this land in the vicinity of the original kissing gate & the area of the recent fire at a cost of £285.

68.4) New Signs

Subject to guidance/advice from S.D.C. Officers Cllr Jackson would present the Council, at the next meeting, with proposals for 3 new signs in the playing field. Cllr Jackson would also be looking at the positioning of at least one extra litter bin in the playing field.

68.5) Goalposts

Issues surrounding the erection of the goalpost had now been settled to the satisfaction of the Council & the Clerk was authorised to pay the outstanding balance of £62.

68.6) Playing Fields Awards

The Somerset Playing Fields Association had awarded the Parish Council 3rd place in the Playing Field of the Year Competition 2011 & had presented them with a certificate & cheque for £25 at their AGM held on 8 September 2011.

69) Allotments

Proposals received from the owners of the adjoining field to the allotments (Palmer's Field) for the erection of new fencing along their boundary line were approved by the Council.

Cllr Thayer informed the meeting that repairs to the track were to be undertaken, free of charge, by BAM Construction in February 2012.

70) Production of a Parish Newsletter

Councillors approved the production of a newsletter on, hopefully, a bi-monthly basis. It would consist of one side of A4 coloured paper with the other side set aside for local advertising, which the communications sub-committee would be responsible for finding. Councillors would be responsible for distributing it. The Chairman on behalf of the other Councillors thanked Cllr Jackson for the work she had undertaken already in producing the first draft copy.

71) Wembdon Recreational Development Group

The Chairman explained that following a resolution passed by the Council in October 2010 (**minute 77 11 October 2010**) the Council had not held any discussions with the WRDG & he believed that this should now be reconsidered. The Council was therefore asked to consider the following proposal

'In view of the fact that the public meeting called for by the petitioners in respect of proposals for the Green Wedge, in October 2010, has not taken place this Council now considers it appropriate to reconsider its position. It therefore RESOLVES to look at all options for the Green Wedge and agrees that it is now appropriate to meet formally with the WRDG.'

Both District Councillors noted their concerns to members of the Council who were also members of the WRDG not to vote on this proposal because of possible prejudicial interest claims. The Chairman, however, reiterated the understanding he had regarding the WRDG & The Code of Conduct (**minute 63 above**). A vote was taken & 7 Councillors supported the resolution with one Councillor abstaining.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the WRDG would therefore be invited to the October meeting to make a presentation to the Council.

72) Reports from Meetings Attended

72.1) S.D.C. Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman reported on his attendance at the Scrutiny Committee meeting which had been arranged after the S.D.C. had been presented with a 1400 name petition, also handed to Parliament by Bridgwater MP Ian Liddell-Grainger, saying that EDF Energy should not be allowed to start work on the new plant until a bypass had been built to relieve congestion in Bridgwater.

Following many contributions from those attending the following resolution was passed

This committee recognises the overwhelming community support expressed at this meeting for a Northern Bridgwater by-pass.

The Scrutiny committee urges EDF not to submit a Development Consent Application to the IPC until such time as EDF have robustly and comprehensively assessed traffic impact and means to mitigate it, including a truly comparative assessment of a Northern By-pass and online improvements, to the satisfaction of the Local Authorities. The assessment should align with the NATA/Webtag methodology stipulated in Department of Transport Guidance.

In the absence of this robust assessment of transport options by EDF, the Council should contribute financial and officer support to the completion of such a study working with the Highways Agency, Somerset County Council and West Somerset Council as appropriate. It

should be completed in the most comprehensive level of detail that can reasonably be achieved prior to the submission of a Development Consent Order application for Hinkley Point C. It is recommended that this study should form the basis of a decision by the Council on highway matters, when the Council sets out its position to the Infrastructure Planning Commission in a Local Impact Report.

This work should commence immediately.

72.2) Quantock Parish Cluster Group Meeting

The Chairman reported that the main issue discussed at the meeting was the traffic issues associated with the planned building of Hinkley Point C.

72.3) Meeting with Ian Liddell-Grainger M.P.

The Chairman & Cllr Thayer had attended this meeting along with representatives from other Parish Councils, which had been arranged to discuss the issues surrounding the development of Hinkley Point C.

Highways issues were to the fore with particular concern being raised that it was probable that construction of the new power station would be well under way before construction of a bypass commenced & of course EDF saw no need for a bypass anyway.

A further meeting was to be arranged at which the preparation of a letter to the relevant Ministers & Prime Minister would be considered.

72.4) Bridgwater Cluster Group Meeting

The Chairman reported that in view of the electoral boundary changes the Cluster Group was now considering whether Wembdon should be considered to be part of this cluster rather than just being an observer. If this was agreed Wembdon would then have access to further RLT3 money in respect of land within Wembdon.

73) Correspondence

73.1) Electoral Review of Somerset

The meeting was informed about the review currently taking place & the consultation that had just commenced. Initial proposals from the Local Government Boundary Commission indicated a reduction in the total number of County Council wards, down from 58 to 55.

73.2) Land Adjacent to the Churchfields Development

The Clerk read out a letter from a resident of Florence Court seeking its support in opposing the possible development of the green triangle, which had been designated a children's play area & was identified by S.D.C. as a LEAP. In particular the letter highlighted the Wembdon Vision results in respect of housing development in the village.

As the letter had been received after the preparation of the agenda it was not possible to consider the request at that meeting. The Chairman indicated that the letter could be considered as part of the debate on the whole area.

73.3) Local Funding of Services 2012-13

S.D.C. had indicated that Parish/Town Councils would be asked to take on the cost of further local services & the impact on Wembdon was likely to be the grass cutting of verges. The Clerk had requested specific details to enable the Parish Council to determine the additional costs that it may have to incur.

73.4) Vacancies on the Sedgemoor Standards Committee

3 Parish/Town Councillor vacancies existed & volunteers were being sought. Nominations

from Town/Parish Councils were not required, however a supporting letter from a Council would add weight to any application. There was no volunteer forthcoming.

73.5) Future Meetings

EDF Hinkley Point New Build Community Forum – 15 September. The Chairman & Cllr Western were due to attend.

Community Council for Somerset AGM – 20 September. The Council would not be represented.

SALC Area & Annual Meetings – 24 September – no attendee

CPRE AGM – 8 October – Cllr Western was possibly available to attend this meeting.

73.6) Other Correspondence

Various magazines received since the July meeting were placed in the correspondence folder.

74) New Notice Boards

Cllr Brown presented 3 possible options for the placement of 1 or more notice boards to serve the Bridgwater Victoria Ward of Wembdon. He had also approached Taylor Wimpey to see if they were prepared to fund the purchase & installation of at least one notice board. A response was awaited.

Councillors approved the purchase of at least one new notice board. The siting of these was, however, subject to approval from County Highways as 2 of the proposed sites were on verges on the NDR.

75) Planning

Councillors were concerned at the proposals within the National Planning Policy Framework & in particular the perceived threat to the ‘Green Belt’ & agreed to voice its concerns to Ian Liddell-Grainger M.P. & to support the C.P.R.E. campaign against the proposed framework.

It was believed that an appeal was to be submitted in respect of the refusal to grant planning permission for the building of 400/450 houses on Cokerhurst Farm.

51/11/00010 – The Old School House, and Lambourne, Blakes Road, Wembdon. Formation of alterations to access.

Permission granted.

51/11/00011 – Barn A at, Grabhams Farm, Moore’s Lane, Wembdon. Erection of extension to side elevation.

Permission granted.

51/11/00012 – 38 Wembdon Rise. Erection of three detached dwellings, two detached garages & formation of access.

Permission granted.

51/11/00013 – 40 Wembdon Rise. Change of use and conversion of dwelling to 2 one bedroom flats, improvements to access & parking.

Permission granted.

51/11/00014 – 14 Greenacre. Erection of single storey extension to east elevation.

Permission granted.

51/11/00016 – 80 Wembdon Rise. Installation of electronic communications apparatus cabinet.

Permitted development.

51/11/00017 – 2 Inwood Rd. Installation of electronic communications apparatus cabinet.

Permitted development.

51/11/00018 – 80 Wembdon Hill. Installation of electronic communications apparatus cabinet.

Permitted development.

76) Finance

76.1) Annual Audit

The audit of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011 had been concluded. The external auditor had comments on the fact that the Council had exhausted its surplus by the years end. However, this had already been addressed by the increase in the precept.

76.2) Current Balance

Balance 18 July 2011		£9630.32
Less		
Salary & Income Tax	£ 994.32	
Clerk's Expenses	£ 50.77	
Ground Maintenance	£ 775.00	
Election Costs	£1639.09	
Installation of Water Meter	£ 235.96	
Moore Stephens (Audit)	£ 342.00	
Aon Limited (Insurance)	£ 11.07	
Dunn Simpson (Allotments)	£ 180.00	
School Crossing Patrol Donation	£ 375.00	
Playing Field Inspection	£ 82.80	
S.D.C. (Crossacre Repairs)	£ 350.00	
Erection of Goalposts & Fencing Repairs	£ 186.00	<u>£5220.01</u>
Balance at 12 September 2011		£4408.31

76.3) Payments Due

The following payments were approved

- Clerk's Expenses £22.99
- Ground Maintenance £355.00
- St George's Parish Centre (Room Hire) £8.00
- S.C.C. (Room Hire) £218.40
- S.D.C. (Dog Bin Emptying) £1337.84
- 2 x Grit/Salt Bins £328.65
- Goalpost installation (balance) £62.00

76.4) Donation to Sedgemoor Citizens Advice Bureau

It was RESOLVED that a donation of £100 would be made.

77) Matters Raised by Councillors

77.1) Repairs to Boundary Wall in Church Road

Cllr Riddle raised concerns about the condition of a wall in Church Road. It was agreed that the Chairman would raise this with the owner.

77.2) Wembdon Rise Footpath

In view of the fact that works were due to be undertaken on the footpath a question was asked whether the camber on the path could also be addressed as this had caused problems previously. The Chairman reported that these Concerns had already been raised with Highways.

77.3) Speedwatch

Cllr Thayer reported on his meeting with a representative of the local speedwatch team. Recently the team had noticed an increase in speeding in the village & in one 45 minute period they had recorded 8 drivers speeding. Cllr Thayer reported that the team planned on undertaking speedwatch activity 2 to 3 times per month.

77.4) Long Service Awards

The Council approved the purchase of 4 commemorative plates to honour the long-service of 4 former Councillors.