

WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2007

Present

Mr Webb (Chairman), Mrs Lumber, Mrs Riddle, & Messrs Perry, Solomon, Harris, & Bagg.

88) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the Parish Councillors & PCSO Nick Mizon to the meeting.

89) Apologies for Absence

These were received in respect of Cllr Ann Bown, Mr Brown, Mr Western & County Cllr John Edney.

90) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting dated 12 November 2007 were agreed & signed.

91) Report from PC Tony Freeman

PCSO Mizon offered Tony's apologies to the meeting.

As a result of a distraction burglary in the village PCSO Mizon had distributed warning postcards. A garage in the village had been broken in to twice.

A large amount of graffiti had appeared recently, including houses on the Notaro development. The name of a possible suspect had been provided & enquiries were continuing. Sedgemoor District Council had been contacted regarding several areas where graffiti had appeared & they were due to remove it shortly. Wessex Water had also been contacted regarding graffiti on the pumping station in Church Road & this was due to be removed before the end of the year.

92) Matters Arising

92.1) Area Working Panel

Mr Solomon had attended the meeting on 29 November on behalf of the Parish Council & reported that it had been well attended. It appeared that the panel had now effectively distributed all of its budget & the Parish Council would now need to consider alternative funding sources if they were to re-new the bridge at the NDR end of the playing field.

At the meeting it was reported that County Highways had purchased 20 flashing speed signs & planned moving them around various roads. It was requested that the NDR be considered as a possible site for one of them.

There had been a presentation on bus services, which appeared to state that the poorly supported routes were under threat.

92.2) New Notice board

Several possible sites had been considered, however none seemed to currently attract many passers by.

It was RESOLVED that in principle a new notice board should be erected in a suitable site near the new developments. However, before a final decision was made a further site visit would take place to determine the most suitable place for it.

92.3) Additional Dog Waste Bins

It was agreed that this would be considered further at the January meeting.

92.4) Street Lighting – Church Road

The Clerk had undertaken some initial research in to environmentally friendly street lighting. He had contacted an expert in this field but to date had received no response.

92.5) Verges – Homberg Way & Sunken Road

County Cllr Edney had sent a written report to the Clerk. The cutting of the verges was now the responsibility of S.D.C. although the grassy areas around the trees & shrubs were still the responsibility of the developer. The verges would now be cut regularly.

It had been planned to repair the sunken road at the junction of Homberg Way & Wembdon rise by the end of November. Unfortunately poor weather conditions had delayed this.

92.6) Play Areas off Homberg Way

S.D.C. had reported that progress had been made on the outstanding maintenance issues to allow adoption of the open spaces to be achieved & a meeting was being arranged with Somerset County Council to progress matters on the adoption of the footways & cycle ways.

The most important outstanding issue related to the commuted sum to be set aside for the maintenance of the open spaces to be transferred to S.D.C.

93) Correspondence

93.1) Wembdon St George's School PTA

The Parish Council had RESOLVED, on this occasion, not to make a donation towards the bazaar held at the School.

93.2) Somerset a Landscape for the Future

The Parish Council would not be represented at the consultation events being held at the beginning of January 2008.

93.3) Safer Somerset Awards

The Parish Council did not wish to make any nominations.

93.4) Cleansweep Programme

S.D.C. was undertaking another schedule of works & Wembdon was programmed for this week.

93.5) Other Correspondence

The following was placed in the correspondence folder

- A Consultation Paper on Trust Status for the four Bridgwater Secondary Schools

- Results of the Parish Councils Highways Survey & details of the road treatment programme during the winter
- The Clerk - November edition
- The minutes of the Bridgwater Cluster Group meeting dated 6 August 2007
- Somerset Matters newsletter

94) Report from Cllr Ann Bown

Cllr Ann Bown had supplied a brief written report.

The lighting fault in Briggs Close had been repaired & the developer had agreed to remove the graffiti that had appeared whilst the lights were not working.

There had been some recent flooding on the rhyne running alongside Homberg Way, which hopefully had been dealt with.

95) Reports from Sub-committees

95.1) Footpaths

It was reported that Gypsy Lane was being finger posted.

95.2) Playing field & Common

Mr Harris reported that the hedge in the playing field had been cut with the exception of behind the two seats. It was agreed that if the fence was in good order behind the seats the hedge would be removed completely so that it did not encroach on the seating area.

It was RESOLVED that the timber slats on the seats in the playing field & the damaged one on the Common would be replaced.

Mr Harris reported that the repaired basketball post was now ready to be erected.

The fence adjacent to Reedmoor rhyne had been repaired. It was noted that children were using it as access to an overhanging branch that they climbed on.

In the absence of a firm proposal from the WCA it was RESOLVED that they be asked to restore the fence opened on Village Day to its original condition within 6 weeks & not to use it as access on future Village Days.

Approval was given for the purchase of 2 Willow trees.

The tarmac repairs to part of the Common, authorised at the November meeting, were due to be carried out as soon as the weather permitted.

A large hole had appeared in Church Road & it was agreed that County Highways be asked to undertake repairs.

95.3) Parish Plan

Mr Bagg reported that he was waiting for feedback from S.D.C. in respect of the proposed questionnaire. There had been some feedback in respect of the content of the front page of the questionnaire & that it might be January before matters were resolved.

95.4) Allotments

Mr Harris reported that the trackway leading to the allotments was in need of repair. Mr Harris was asked to obtain some quotes for the repairs & report back to the Parish Council. It was agreed in principle that a skip be provided at the allotment so that a general clear up could take place.

96) Planning

The Clerk reported on the new system for submitting planning applications that was due to come in to force from 6 April 2008.

Several Parish Councillors had attended the presentation in respect of the proposed re-development of the Gerbers factory in Wembdon Road.

51/07/00016 – Wembdon Reservoir, Sandford Hill, Wembdon. Change of use & conversion of redundant water reservoir to twelve dwellings & formation of parking.
The Parish Council has objected to this application.

51/07/00017 – On land to the East of, Moor-Hen Farm, Perry Green. Retention of extension to stable & horse riding arena.
No objection from Parish Council, however, they do have concerns about the potential increase in highway traffic.

51/07/00027 – St George’s C of E VC Primary School. (Tree Preservation Order Regulations) Crown thin by 15% lowest branches over School playing area.
Permission granted.

51/07/00028 – 4 Silverdale Close, Wembdon. Erection of single storey rear extension.
No objection from planning sub-committee.

51/07/00029 – The Lodge, Perry Green. Renewal of Planning Permission 1/51/04/38 for the erection of bungalow on site of mobile home.
Submitted to planning sub-committee.

97) Finance

Balance at 12 November 2007		£15009.11
Ground Maintenance	£265.00	
Magnets for Notice boards	£ 33.96	
Dog-Waste Bin Emptying	£134.80	
Backboard for Basketball post	£ 25.17	
Parish Plan	£112.05	<u>£ 570.98</u>
Balance		£14438.13

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made

- Ground Maintenance £265.00
- SLCC Annual Membership £80.00
- Fixings for Basketball Post £12.35
- Fencing Repairs £129.25

A donation to Age Concern Somerset would be considered at the January meeting.

The Finance sub-committee had undertaken a review of the financial records to date from 1 April 2007 & highlighted the fact that all invoices needed to be addressed to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council approved the pay rise to the Clerk in accordance with the new nationally agreed rates of pay & noted that the pay rise was backdated to April 2007.

The Finance sub-committee had met to consider the precept for 2008-09 & was recommending a precept of £14,000. This took account of Income & Expenditure to date & the likely expenditure over the remainder of the financial year, an increase in the number of Band D houses within the village, known increases in set expenditure during 2008-09 & the fact that due to financial pressures the annual amenity grant received from S.D.C. was under threat. If approved the new precept would mean an increase of around 80pence for each Band D property. The sub-committee was also recommending that no new major projects be undertaken until the results of the proposed Parish Questionnaire were known. Minutes of the meeting were made available to the full Parish Council. It was RESOLVED that the precept for 2008-09 would be set at £14,000, which still meant that it would remain one of the lowest precepts, per household, within Sedgemoor District.

98) Any Other Business

98.1) Verge in Church Road

Mr Harris was authorised to purchase several small ornamental trees for the verge by Greenacre to compliment the shrubs to be planted by S.D.C. replacing those previously damaged by them.