

# WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Clerk, Tony Jay, 11 Wyvern Mews, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 3GZ.  
Email [clerk@wembdon.org](mailto:clerk@wembdon.org) Telephone 07741 461982

Minutes of a meeting of Wembdon Parish Council held virtually on 11th January 2021 that commenced at 7.30pm when the following business was transacted.

Present: Cllrs M Solomon (Chairman), D Claydon, L Edwards, D Gliddon, J Hall, M Phillips, A Reed, and K Searle.

County and District Councillors:

Parish Clerk: Tony Jay

1/21 To receive any apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr R Webber.

2/21 To receive declarations of any pecuniary interests on items relating to this agenda, which have not been previously declared in the Councillors register of interests.

No declarations were received.

3/21 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

It was unanimously resolved to approve the minutes.

The Chairman signed the minutes as being a true record of the meeting.

4/21 To receive the Clerk's report.

A request for signs to be installed at the entrances to Perry Green was submitted to the SCC Traffic Management team in November. The suggested signs would read 'Perry Green. Please drive carefully'. A reply has been received which states:

'The traditional black on white village name plates as requested below are typically signed on the public highway for villages, towns and cities/counties. Perry Green is not an area large enough that would fall into any of these categories above therefore we would not consider it.'

The Clerk has requested whether the signs would be permitted if the Parish Council were to pay for the signs and their installation, but no reply has yet been received.

The Parish Council is still waiting for decisions from SCC regarding;

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- i) the applications for approval for the installation of a gate/barrier at the Parklands and the retention of the chicane on Wares Lane.
- ii) The adoption of the entrance to the Village Hall.

5/21 To receive an update from Cllr Hall on the Playing Fields and Common.

One of the litter bins on the playing fields has been vandalised and needs replacing. This bin is regularly targeted by miscreants. The Chairman suggested that the bin be replaced with a steel 'vandal proof' bin.

It was also reported that a litter bin is needed at the bus shelter at the foot of Wembdon Hill.

It was resolved to purchase two steel litter bins, one to be fitted in the playing fields and one in the vicinity of the bus shelter. The precise location of the bin by the bus shelter will be decided when it is delivered.

The Chairman will investigate the cost of having new bins embossed with a plate stating 'Wembdon Parish Council'.

Cllr Searle gave an update regarding the Village Hall Community Youth Project. The upper room at the Village Hall has never been completed due to funding constraints, and the intention is to turn this into a room which can be used as a young people's space in the evenings, and potentially a meeting / conference room during the day. The daytime use would generate revenue which could be used in part to financially support the youth club.

An initial project team meeting has been held, and ten volunteers have come forward including tradesmen. The initial cost of the work is anticipated to be between £20k to £25k as a lift would need to be installed to make the room fully accessible. Sponsorship avenues are being explored.

This would be a Village Hall project but is viewed as a facility which would benefit our whole community, which the Parish Council strongly supports.

6/21 To receive a report from Cllr Gliddon on Highways.

Two streetlights on Wembdon Hill have been recently repaired. The new Moores Lane road sign has been installed. Road works will be carried out this week on Wembdon Hill, which will be closed for five days.

7/21 To consider a response to the email received from Alyn Jones, Director of Economic and Community Infrastructure Operations, SCC regarding traffic issues in Wembdon.

The Clerk has written to the leader of Somerset County Council detailing the ongoing traffic issues in Wembdon, in particular the 'high end speeders' in

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the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing on Wembdon Rise. A letter has been received from Alyn Jones, who has replied on behalf of SCC. The tone of the letter is that Wembdon's traffic problems are small compared with many other similar sized parishes in the county, and that any measures to manage the speed of vehicles could not be supported financially by SCC.

It is proposed to include a four-page feature on the matter in the next issue of the Parish Newsletter. Permission will be sought from Mr. Jones to publish his letter in full. The Parish Council's efforts in trying to alleviate the problems of traffic flow and speeding in the village will be detailed.

County Councillor Caswell expressed his disappointment with the letter from Mr. Jones. His opinion that there is a traffic problem in the parish is unchanged. Cllr Caswell will give the Parish Council his total support in its efforts to deal with the problem.

8/21 To consider an email received from a parishioner regarding traffic concerns on Sandford Hill.

The Chairman suspended standing orders, and the parishioner spoke about his concerns. He explained that:

The B3339 has a maximum speed limit of 40 mph which not all traffic complies with. The section from Sandford Manor to Sandford Waters bus stop and the junction to Perry Green is extremely dangerous to many road users, particularly the blind spot at the bottom of the hill. There is a steep bank with no verge on this section of the road, so pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders cannot get off the road if they need to. Several accidents have occurred in this location. The road is too narrow for lorries to pass each other.

This is a cycle route between Bridgwater and Cannington, and pedestrians use the road to walk to and from the bus stop.

The parishioner suggested possible solutions as being:

- The speed limit could be reduced to 30 mph, but it is recognised that this may not be observed, and it does not address the problem of the blind spot.
- A white line could be painted on the road surface separating pedestrians and cyclists from motorists, as has been done at Creech St. Michael.
- A chicane could be installed, like the one in Cannington.

Motorists not familiar with the road will not know that they may be faced with a horse, bicycle or pedestrian on their side of the road when travelling down the hill. This makes a mockery of the route being an approved cycleway.

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The Chairman reinstated standing orders.

It was unanimously resolved that the Clerk should write to County Highways outlining the problem and requesting a site meeting to discuss a solution to the problem.

9/21 To consider the flooding problems in the lanes in Perry Green.

The Chairman explained the background to this problem. The responsibility for keeping the drains clear lies with the landowners. SCC Highways carried out the regular clearance work years ago, but this was stopped due to budgetary constraints, and some of the required work has not been carried out. The consequence of this is that some lanes and properties are at risk of flooding.

SCC Highways will not carry out this work, stating that the landowners should do it. A local farmer has volunteered to carry out the drain clearing work without charge.

It was unanimously resolved that the Parish Council will ask a local farmer to carry out the work, with the landowner's permissions, and the Parish Council will pay the fuel expenses incurred.

10/21 To receive a report from Cllr Gliddon on the Footpaths and Verges.

The footpaths in the parish are in good condition, although some of them in the rural areas are very muddy. This is encouraging, as it shows that they are being used. Dog fouling continues to be a problem on the pavements.

11/21 To consider the repainting of the railings and posts on the raised footpath in Church Road.

Three quotes have been obtained for this work, with the lowest being £200 from a painter/decorator who lives in the parish. Chris Lovell has agreed to carry out this work at this low price as his contribution to the village. The Councillors thanked Mr. Lovell for his generosity.

It was unanimously resolved to ask Chris Lovell to carry out the repainting of the railings and posts for the price of £200.

12/21 To receive a report from Cllr Hall on the Parish Paper.

The next edition is due to be printed in mid-February. There has been a lot of interest from businesses who would like to advertise in the paper. Features will include the Community Youth Project and highways / speeding matters in the parish.

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Future versions of the Parish Paper which are published on the Parish Council website will need to comply with the website accessibility regulations.

13/21 To receive a report from Cllr Claydon on Allotments.

There was nothing to report.

14/21 To receive a report from Cllr Gliddon on SID results and Speedwatch.

Between 4<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December, the SID was located on Wembdon Hill monitoring traffic driving westwards up the hill. The results showed a marked drop in average speeds from the same location in September 2020 when the average speed was 25.4 mph. In December this had dropped to 19.4 mph. This may be due to the large number of builders' vehicles parked on the hill during this period slowing traffic down.

The maximum speed recorded was 50 mph at 8.10pm on 7<sup>th</sup> December. On average, 1022 vehicles drove up the hill each day.

The SID cannot be moved and the Speedwatch team cannot operate during lockdown.

15/21 To receive an update from Cllr Major on the Website Project.

The new website is running for test purposes. Most of the snags have been ironed out. The difficulty will now be to form a small team to data populate the site during lockdown, so this task may have to wait for a while.

16/21 To receive an update regarding the Transport Forum and the EDF Forum.

The next meeting is due to be held later this month.

17/21 To note all statutory payments made since the last meeting (see minute 181/20).

Payee	Detail	Amount £
Water 2 Business	Allotment water services bill June – Dec 2020	159.12
Edward Martin Computer Services	Annual website management fee	780.00
Parish Magazine Printing	Newsletter	602.00
Avalonian Landscapes	Maintenance contract October and November	3000.00
VSA Admin	Administration support	148.60

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SDC	Dog and litter bin emptying at Parklands	242.35
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The payments were noted.

18/21 To approve the following non-statutory payments.

Payee	Detail	Amount £
RT Signs	Sign	54.25
Craig Neary	Bus shelter renovation and park railings work	765.00
Various	Fixed SID installation materials and smartphone for downloading results	135.20
Tony Jay	Clerks expenses December 2020 including 50% cost of book 'Arnold Baker Local Council Administration' £59.99 and 50% cost of Annual SLCC Subscription £117	298.11

It was unanimously resolved to approve the payments.

A budget update sheet had been pre circulated to members.

19/21 To consider matters of report:

Another two of the small trees at the Parklands have been taken out because they are diseased. The suppliers of the trees have been contacted. Steve Bull is going to cut back and treat the stump of the willow which had to be felled recently. He will then be working on the sleeper steps in the prairie orchard. The fitting of the low-level play equipment has been delayed due to the lockdown. New plants will be ordered and planted in the spring.

Five bird boxes have been carefully removed from trees by sawing through the screws. The boxes have been left on the ground or on a branch. This appears to be mindless vandalism and has been reported to the police. Fundraising is continuing for the new CCTV system at the Parklands.

Reports had been received from people in The Laurels of an intermittent noise which has been keeping people awake at night. This has been identified as coming from the outlet flap of a domestic boiler at a house in Wembdon Rise. The householder has asked the manufacturer to visit to identify and sort out the problem.

Unfortunately, the application to the Big Lottery fund for funding for accessible swings has been turned down.

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20/21      Date of next meeting: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

End of minutes