

WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Clerk, Tony Jay, 11 Wyvern Mews, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 3GZ.
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Minutes of a meeting of Wembdon Parish Council held at Wembdon Village Hall on 11th October 2021 that commenced at 7.30pm when the following business was transacted.

Present: Councillors M Solomon (Chairman), D Claydon, L Edwards, D Gliddon, P Major, M Phillips and A Reed.

District Councillor B Bolt. County Councillor M Caswell.

Parish Clerk: Tony Jay

152/21 To receive any apologies for absence.

Councillor K Searle has been granted a dispensation not to attend this meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillor R Webber.

153/21 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.

There were no declarations of interest.

154/21 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 13th September 2021.

It was resolved to approve the minutes (6 in favour, 2 abstention as not present at the meeting).

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

155/21 To invite public speaking.

No member of the public had requested to speak.

156/21 To receive the Clerk's report.

Councillor Edwards has volunteered to be the Parish Council's 'Climate Change Champion'. She will be attending a full day briefing early next year, along with the Clerk.

The legally required CCTV signs have been ordered at a cost of £643 plus VAT.

It is looking increasingly likely that the 2023 Parish Council elections will be brought forward a year and held on 5th May 2022. This will tie in with the

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elections for the new Unitary County Council. Purdah will begin on 29th March, so no decisions will be able to be taken during the April 2022 meeting.

The Chairman, Councillor Gliddon and the Clerk attended a conference on 7th October to learn how the new Unitary Authority will operate. All Parish and Town Councils will join a Local Community Network. Wembdon's network will include Bridgwater, and other local Parishes but the LCN boundary has not yet been set. A number of tasks and responsibilities currently carried out by SCC and SDC will pass to the LCNs, but these will not include highways or planning. There will be no financial implications for the Parish Council in the 2022-23 fiscal year, however the 2023-24 budget and precept will probably look quite different to the present.

The Clerk explained the legal position regarding Gypsy Lane, which is unregistered and has no owner. Our insurers state that if the Parish Council carries out any maintenance work in the lane, then a risk assessment must be written, and the times and dates of any work recorded.

The Parish Council's insurers have advised that every tree owned by the Parish Council will need to be inspected annually. If this inspection does not take place, then the trees will not be covered by our insurance. The Clerk is enquiring with arborists to obtain quotes for this work.

157/21

To receive a report from Councillor Gliddon on Highways.

The fingerpost by Skimmerton Lane has been refurbished and looks splendid and the other four very soon hopefully.

The new solar SID which was approved some months ago is due for delivery this week. Unfortunately, SCC contractors installed the wrong size post on Wembdon Rise, and this will delay the installation. The SCC Highways Officer has prioritised this with the contractors and a new four metre post should go in shortly. We will also need six large hose clips and a padlock at a cost of approx. £25-£30.

The bus shelter was damaged during bad weather recently and the contractor who refurbished the shelter has been out and repaired the panel. He has done this free of charge.

The highway flooding problem on Moore's Lane, just past Grabham's Farm, is being worked on by District Councillor Ian Dyer. The Parish Council has already agreed to contribute up to £500 towards this.

There was an accident involving a child at the zebra crossing on Wembdon Rise at the end of September at approximately 8:50 a.m. Police and ambulance were in attendance. Another near miss happened today with a woman halfway over the crossing. Calls for a light controlled crossing/pillar top/better lighting etc. are increasing.

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There have also been calls for the crossing patrol officer to be reinstated – we did offer to fund/part fund this a few years ago but the school was opposed to replacing the lollypop gentleman who retired. The Clerk was asked to write to the school Headteacher and the Chair of Governors to ask if they would be prepared to re-instate the school crossing patrol. If this is the case, then the Parish Councillors will consider contributing to the costs.

The works on Sandford Hill are “in the pipeline” but a delay is being experienced as our traffic engineer works part-time 3 days per week covering 50 parishes.

There will be new junctions on the A39 when the new housing estates are built. The Clerk was asked to contact Highways and County Councillors so that a plan can be put in place to reduce traffic using Wembdon as a cut through to avoid the inevitable delays caused by roadworks e.g., temporary 20 mph speed limit/one way system in Skimmerton Lane. This type of scheme was employed at Cheddon Fitzpaine/Monkton Heathfield during major works there.

158/21 To receive a report from Councillor Phillips on the Footpaths and Verges.

The hedges at two Wembdon addresses have been cut following the Clerk writing to the property owners as they were obstructing the pavements and street signs.

There are approximately seven dead elm trees in Wares Lane. Although the Parish Council does not own this lane, it has become an established practice that the Council pays for its general maintenance. It was agreed that these trees should be cut down at the Parish Council’s expense to prevent the possibility of injury to pedestrians if a tree fell.

There has been vandalism damage to signposts on footpaths mainly on the Green and the Parklands. The Police have been informed and they are investigating. The signs will be replaced at a cost to the Wembdon taxpayer.

The footpath on the Parklands which regularly flooded now does not flood following the drainage work that took place in the summer.

A length of footpath BW 34/4 from the bridge to the NDR is overgrown with brambles and nettles restricting the public right of way. The Clerk will report this to Clean Surroundings.

159/21 To consider the fitting of a handrail and steps on a public right of way in Moores Lane.

It was unanimously resolved to finance and organise the installation of the steps with a budget of up to £1,000.

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- 160/21 To receive an update on the proposal to upgrade footpath BW 34/4 into a joint cycle path/footpath.
- This is an ongoing project. Liaison is continuing with the landowners.
- 161/21 To receive an update on the Playing Fields and Common.
- A grant of £10,000 has been awarded to the council by a charity (True Colours) towards the cost of accessible swings. The total cost of the swings will be around £30,000.
- 162/21 To receive a report on the Parish Paper.
- The next edition will be published in the next week. Councillor Major has agreed to receive the copies of the parish paper and be the distribution point for the collectors.
- It was unanimously resolved to pay ten pence per copy to a RELIABLE young person to deliver copies of the parish paper if required.
- 163/21 To receive a report from Councillor Claydon on Allotments.
- A successful allotment AGM has been held. This was well supported by allotment holders. Some allotment holders have yet to pay their fees for 2021-22, which are now due.
- The capping repair work on the new allotment wall has been completed to a high standard.
- 164/21 To receive a report from Councillor Gliddon on SID results and Speedwatch.
- Councillor Gliddon gave the latest figures for all areas of Wembdon:
- Wembdon Rise (inbound from NDR) Average speed 24.34 mph; top speed 64 mph.
Wembdon Rise (outbound towards NDR) Average speed 24.13 mph; top speed 68 mph.
Wembdon Hill (going up, westbound) Average speed 25.3 mph; top speed 50 mph.
Wembdon Hill (going down, eastbound) *Average speed 25.3 mph; top speed 55 mph.
Wembdon Hill (by Skimmerton Lane inbound) Average speed 25.9 mph; top speed 60 mph.
Sandford Hill (inbound) Average speed 28.5 mph; top speed 67 mph.
Sandford Hill (outbound) Average Speed 32.48 mph; top speed 89 mph.
Church Rd (towards the church) Average speed 12.2 mph; top speed 40 mph.
Church Rd (away from the church) Average speed *16.0 mph; top speed 40 mph.

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(Most of these average speeds have fallen over the past 12 months except for those marked *)

165/21 To receive an update from Councillor Searle on the Village Hall Community Youth Project.

Bridgwater and Taunton College are now heavily involved in the project, which is progressing well. This is on course for a May 2022 opening.

There has been a lot of support from senior members of Wembdon Football and Cricket Clubs, who have volunteered their services. This is very much appreciated.

166/21 To receive an update regarding the Transport Forum and the EDF Forum.

The forum has met recently. EDF buses are now stopping on the NDR again. Combwich Wharf will be start operating in the next few months.

167/21 To receive an update on the plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

The planning is at an early stage. A number of local people and organisations are enthusiastic in becoming involved in the project.

168/21 To consider a request from a Parishioner to install a child's basketball net at the playground.

It was resolved not the install a child's basketball net at the playground. (5 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention).

169/21 To note all statutory payments made since the last meeting (see minute 181/20).

Payee	Detail	Amount £
Avalonian Landscapes	Maintenance contract	1417.00
Parish Magazine Printing	Parish Paper printing	464.00
Wembdon Village Hall	Room hire	250.00
Wembdon Village Hall	CCTV base station service	125.00
Wembdon Village Hall	Changing places toilet service	125.00

The statutory payments were noted.

170/21 To note the following non-statutory payments.

Payee	Detail	Amount £
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Tony Jay	Clerk's expenses September 2021	266.99
Avalonian Landscapes	Allotment strimming, path tidying, wasp nest treatment	235.00
Sedgemoor Tree Services	Tree removal at Parklands	327.68
Sedgemoor Tree Services	Tree removal at Gypsy Lane	1440.00
SDC	Disposal of pallets and chairs	64.80

The non-statutory payments were noted.

A budget update sheet had been pre circulated to members.

171/21 To approve the Parish Council's internal auditor for 2022-23.

It was unanimously resolved to reappoint Richard Young as the Parish Council's internal auditor.

172/21 To review the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

It was unanimously resolved that new procedures regarding the authorisation of BACS payments will be introduced. These will be included in a revised set of Financial Regulations which will be published on the Council's website.

173/21 To consider the impact of the changes to a Unitary Authority on the Parish Council.

The Chairman outlined the changes which will be taking place, and which will affect the way the Parish Council operates. Local Community Networks will be set up. More power will be devolved to Parish and Town Councils along with additional financial responsibilities in providing services.

174/21 To receive any matters of report.

There were no matters to report.

175/21 Date of next meeting: 8th November 2021.

End of minutes.