

**BOXWELL WITH LEIGHTERTON
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
4th DECEMBER 2023
at
Leighterton Primary School at 7.00pm
MINUTES**

Councillors Present: Colin Alden, Chairman
Duncan Hyde, Vice Chairman
Simon Gale
Martin Weaver
Felicity White, Clerk
Tony Slater, District Councillor, Grumbolds Ash

1. The Chairman welcomed the Councillors, together with Tony Slater, the District Councillor, Gumbolds Ash.
2. Apologies - none received
3. The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 8th September, 2023 were approved and signed by CA.
4. Update on Matters Arising and Actions:
 - 4.1 SG provided an update on the minor repairs to the Pond wall. The person due to assist has, unfortunately, been ill and unable to help. However, SG had spoken to the stonemason for whom Angus Savage works; it has been advised that the capping is not removed/replaced as this will cause further problems. Therefore, the dry stone-waller has recommended that the capping is left as it is but replace stones in the two areas where they have become dislodged. This will avoid disturbing the wall. **Action:** SG
 - 4.2 Further to the last meeting, CA was in touch with Jane Bullock, who edits the monthly Newsletter and has included items in respect of the Parish more broadly. He is proposing to speak to the farmers in order to include something more informative about the farming year and the village more generally starting in the New Year. MW also provided some thoughts on content, which will be discussed further. **Action:** CA and MW
 - 4.3 SG updated the meeting on the Parish Plan following the well attended meeting in October. The proposed Questionnaire is almost ready and it is proposed that Google forms will be used. However, he will also print off some copies for those who either don't have access to Google or feel more comfortable completing a paper Questionnaire.
The Questionnaire has been designed to include ranking of specific questions, free text fields and 'free flow' boxes. He proposes to circulate to the PC for comment by 8th December, before broader distribution to the village. Once the Questionnaire is finalised, it will be used to inform a Community Design

Statement.

Action: SG

4.4 The Park/Play area: CA provided an update as follows:

4.4.1 The swings, which had been broken, have had the chains and seats replaced.

4.4.2 The Wicksteed inspection of the Play area is due to take place on the 19th December.

4.4.3 The concrete litter bin in the Park does not have a liner and is not on the District Council's rota for emptying. Therefore, CA and DH generally empty and clean it. It had been proposed that a steel liner was obtained but when TS learned that the Park was rented from the GCC, he offered to obtain the name of a contact to (a) see whether the bin could be replaced and (b) it could be added to the rota for emptying by the Council.

Action: TS

4.5 CA referred to the fact that if, for example, a wall falls down or some other matter arises, he receives several phone calls, despite the fact the matter might be being dealt with. He suggested that the PC had a number of signs made with wording such as "*This matter has been reported to the PC. Action is being taken*". MW offered to mock up some laminates, which could be used by CA or other members of the PC.

Action: MW

5 Financial Report:

5.1 Following the resignation of Jenny Ursell, CA provided a brief financial report:

The Treasurer's Account currently has a credit balance of £2,439.09.

The Savings Account currently holds a balance of £6,967.20

The major outgoing for the month had been the repair to the swings, at a cost of £536.32 to which the Amenities Committee had kindly donated £446.93. In addition, funds have been spent on the website hosting.

5.2 CA referred to JU stepping down and although she still kindly acts as RFO, CA stressed the necessity to appoint a new person to the role. MW said that he would look at what is required and take over the role, but cannot commit to do so until the New Year. CA and MW to meet in the New Year to discuss further.

Action: CA/MW

6. Planning Applications

DH referred to recent planning applications:

6.1 Poole Farm development, which was subject to a meeting of village residents in early November and has received 10 comments in support of the proposals as set out by the CDC. FW referred to concerns raised about the security of the site and her subsequent email and letter to Jill Matthew, Rural Estate Manager, Gloucestershire on 3rd November. Neither an acknowledgement or response has been received and FW will follow up.

Action: FW

6.2 Stone Farm Barns has applied to convert an outbuilding and build a garage and hard stand. Several objections have been raised.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 FW reported that the trees ordered for the Park/Playground as part of Gloucester Council's Ash Dieback and Replanting scheme will be delivered by the Nursery at the end of February/beginning of March. This includes 175 whips for new hedging in the Park/Play area plus saplings to 'future proof' existing Ash trees which have not yet succumbed to Dieback.

7.1.1 The GCC has requested an illustration of where the planting is due to take place and also assurance that the whips and saplings will be watered and cared for. MW offered to provide a planting plan. Since the meeting this has been completed and been submitted to the GCC.

7.1.2 CA had requested a Planting party via the last Newsletter and SG advised that Dawn Gale and Clare Dixon had offered to help; he will ascertain the dates which suit them before we revert to the Nursery with a delivery date, which is likely to be at the end of February/beginning of March.

Action: FW/SG

7.2 Defibrillator/phone box refurbishment is required. CA will be seeking volunteers to help scrub down and repaint. In the meantime, he will obtain some ideas of costings.

Action: CA

7.3. Ancillary to the above, MW asked whether it had ever been proposed that the phone box or bus stop could be converted into a library. However, as the phone box is used to house the Defibrillator, the bus stop would be an excellent alternative. It was discussed whether Planning permission would be required to add a door and convert it; in addition, someone would be required to maintain it. MW to investigate further.

Action: MW

7.4 Several comments had been received about (a) the state of the roads (potholes, primarily), (b) traffic speeds through the village and (c) random parking by people visiting Westonbirt Arboretum. It was concluded that the following actions could be taken:

a) Anyone can and should report potholes via "Fix my Road" and, in fact, reporting should be encouraged.

b) DH offered to have a word with the school and request that a note was put in a newsletter to parents. However, it was subsequently decided to wait until the receipt of the completed Questionnaire to the Parish Plan in order to ascertain whether this formed part of the feedback.

c) It was proposed that some signs should be obtained, similar to those used in villages near Westonbirt, and used to deter visitors from parking on farm lanes, randomly in The Street and elsewhere in the village blocking driveways, especially during the Autumn.

7.5 The 2023 BwL Precept was £1,700 and, having recently been asked to provide a 2024 figure, TS strongly recommended requesting an increase linked to inflation when responding to CDC. CA to pursue. **Action:** CA

7.6 TS explained that it is his intention to attend as many PC meetings as possible during the course of a year. There were two items he wished to bring to the attention of the PC:

(1) He issues a monthly newsletter which includes items CDC or one which he wishes to stress as well as more generic matters. He will send a copy to FW for wider distribution to the PC. **Action: TS**

(2) He asked whether the PC had had any interaction with the Rural Heritage Fund and explained that they will consider funding for a variety of matters, e.g. building a village hall. It was agreed that it would be worth investigating further.

8. Date of next Parish Council Meeting:

28th February 2024 at 7.30pm