

WEST KNOYLE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk – Mrs. L. C. Wood

Minutes of a meeting of West Knoyle Parish Council held on Tuesday, 28th November 2023 at 7.30 pm in West Knoyle Village Hall.

Present: Councillors Paul Yates (Chairman), Marcus Randall (Vice-Chairman), Tony Davis, Alex Davies & Paul Vita.

Also Wiltshire Cllr. George Jeans until 8.07 pm

Public Session

Paul Yates spoke as a member of the public relating to a planning application that was on the agenda as he was the applicant and would be declaring a pecuniary interest and leaving the meeting whilst the matter is considered by the Parish Council. Paul Yates explained that this was a retrospective application as the mobile home was already in place and allowed someone to be on site to help him with the husbandry & rearing of the chicks on the field and also for security purposes. Paul Yates invited questions from councillors on the planning application but members had no questions to ask.

167. Apologies for absence

None received

168. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Paul Yates declared a pecuniary interest in planning application PL/2023/09032 and said that he would be leaving the room whilst this matter was discussed.

169. Minutes – RESOLVED to approve Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 12th September 2023

170. Matters Arising from previous meetings

a) Minute No. 153d) Clerks Vacancy – the Clerk reported that the vacancy had been advertised on local social media groups pages and in Mere Matters but there was no response. She had recently placed the advert online on Indeed and 4 people had expressed an interest although one had since withdrawn. It was agreed to explore the Indeed candidates and the Chairman said that he would be happy to conduct interviews with the current Parish Clerk subject to availability (evenings would be better). If these were not successful, however, it was agreed to post an advert in the Blackmore Vale Magazine at £67 + VAT. With regards to storage of paperwork, Cllr. Paul Vita said that he would be prepared to store a small 2-drawer filing cabinet in his garage.

171. Planning

a) To consider the following planning application:

Application No:	PL/2023/09032
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Proposal:	Siting of temporary mobile home for a rural worker.
Site Address:	Land North of The Street, West Knoyle, Warminster, Wilts
Planning Register Link:	https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk/pr/s/planning-application/a0i3z00001BDjr3

Cllr. P. Yates left the room whilst this matter was discussed.

Cllr. M. Randall in The Chair

It was pointed out that the planning authority would almost certainly issue a temporary licence for this mobile home for, say three or five years.

With a unanimous vote of those present it was RESOLVED to recommend that the planning authority approve the above application.

Cllr. P. Yates in The Chair

b) Wiltshire Council Local Plan Consultation – report on Local Plan Consultation events. The Clerk said that she had been along to the local event in Tisbury and had read a lot of the consultation documents. She confirmed that the housing requirement for the Mere Area which includes the surrounding villages is 145 homes in the period 2020 – 2038 but of that 145 most of them have already been delivered or have an extant planning permission applied to them (yet to be built). So, any new development is likely to be infill and sustainability is going to be key with concern being expressed that the infrastructure in the Mere area is not suitable to support large-scale development.

172. To receive report from Wiltshire Councillor

Cllr. Jeans reminded members that the Area Board meeting was being held in East Knoyle Village Hall tomorrow evening and was going to be attended by all Wiltshire Council's senior highway officers and cabinet members for Highways and he strongly urged councillors to attend, especially considering the state of the roads in West Knoyle.

It was agreed that the Parish Councillors Paul Yates & Alex Davies would judge the Xmas Lights in the village for the Xmas Light Competition by 20th December. Cllr. Jeans had the shield which would be presented to the winner just before Xmas.

As the Parish Council was considering its budget figures for the next financial year tonight, Cllr. Jeans reinforced the need for 25% contribution for any LHFIF requests and also for any local Area Board grants.

173. Footpaths, Highways, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway & Footpath issues for Parish Steward – Cllr. Davis said that he had been in contact with the Parish Steward on his scheduled visits to West Knoyle. The Clerk pointed out that the Parish Stewards were now employed by the new contractors, Milestone Infrastructure, rather than Ringway. The new contract had caused some issues and delays in rolling out the contract work.

Cllr. Randall raised a question about stiles and the responsibility for stiles on footpaths and whether or not dog-friendly stiles could be provided. The Clerk confirmed that the landowner/occupier is responsible for maintaining structures on public rights of way in a safe and usable condition but is not required to make stiles dog-friendly. Some parishes and villages will have a group of volunteers who maintain footpaths and will ensure that gates & stiles are dog friendly or accessible to certain groups.

There was a brief discussion about permissive paths & public rights.

174. Play Area

a) To report on issues relating to tree branch from adjacent site falling on play area – the Clerk confirmed that she did manage to get hold of the Woodland Trust the day after our last meeting who gave assurances that the tree branch would be cleared from the play area with immediate effect. Although it wasn't done immediately, it was dealt with after a couple of weeks and this happened before the Play Area Inspection was carried out. The Clerk wondered whether it would be prudent to get someone in to check the zip wire following the fallen branch but members confirmed that it was only the very tip of the branch that had hit the zip wire which would have had very little impact in terms of weight or damage and Cllr. Randall confirmed that the wire was intact and robust. The Clerk confirmed that she had been back in touch with the Woodland Trust, asking them if they would carry out a tree inspection of the trees that could fall within distance of the play area but was still awaiting a reply to this correspondence.

b) To consider RoSPA Play Area Inspection report and make task sheet – the Clerk confirmed that the RoSPA inspection had been carried out on 3rd October 2023, report had been submitted and although there was not a large number of ‘high risk’ items, there were issues with some of the equipment which was now rather old and could probably do with replacing. The report does say that the access bridge from the roadway is slippery and should have anti-slip strips fitted and the other bridge has decayed timber which needs to be replaced. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman agreed to look at the bridges & roadside barriers with a view to buying sleepers, posts and rails along with anti-slip strips to replace the rotten materials.

c) Signage for Play Area – The Clerk apologised but said that she had not had a chance to get prices and images for the meeting.

175. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments: To approve the following payments:

L. C. Wood	Salary 2023/24 – Q2 30.9.23	£220.00
HMRC	PAYE – Q2	£ 55.00
Cash	Petty cash reimbursement (Postage & Travel) 1.12.22 - 30.11.23	£48.63
Rob Pearce Ground Maintenance	Grass cutting – play area	£70.00
Playsafety Ltd	Annual RoSPA Play Area Safety Inspection	£123.60 (Already Pd.)
M. J. Abbott Ltd	Health & Safety (hazard warning tape)	£7.80

b) Report on latest bank reconciliation – the Clerk reported that the bank reconciliation stood at £17156.50

c) To discuss ideas for expenditure of CIL receipt (see Minutes of last meeting) – the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had received £3344 and we had a suggestion to spend the money on another seat outside the village hall. However, the Clerk said that the CIL receipt should be used on infrastructure or serve a demand that the development has placed upon the village & it was therefore felt that using the money on replacing failing equipment in the play area would be more appropriate. The Clerk suggested that a quotation be requested to replace the failing equipment & it may be necessary to use the CIL money as seed money to apply for a grant. Cllr. Randall said that the play park in Dinton has used a lot of recycled plastic which would be better given the wet nature of the ground.

d) Annual Budget – to consider annual budget figures for 2024/25 – Draft figures attached – It was agreed to budget an extra figure for the possible provision of computer and software for the new Clerk as it shouldn’t be assumed that a new Clerk would be happy to use their own equipment.

There were discussions about adding funds to purchase new play equipment and drainage for the play area. However, it was felt that this would need much more discussion and would likely to require grant funding. Agreed to increase precept to £5400 which is a 10% increase and broadly equates to the inflation increase during the last year.

e) Precept – RESOLVED to approve & submit the Precept request on Wiltshire Council for 2024/25 of £5400

176. General Items

a) Update on SID repair - Cllr. Randall confirmed that he had collected the SID last week. No-one seemed to know if it was battery operated or solar powered. It was agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would take a look at the SID and see if they think they can set it up. Cllr. Randall mooted the idea of adding another SID so that there is one at each end of the village but Cllr. Davies thought that they would be a waste of money as drivers don’t take any notice of them. The better option would be to get the speedwatch scheme back up and running.

177. Date of next meeting – it was agreed to hold the next meeting on Tuesday, 26th March 2024

Meeting closed at 9.22 pm

Members are reminded that the Parish Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.