



Figheldean Parish Council

(Draft until signed at next meeting)

Minutes of meeting 29th January 2024 at Village Hall @7.30 pm

Present

Cllr Tina Cole Chair
Cllr Darrell Amison
Cllr Nick Tissot
Cllr Angela Briggs
Cllr Ian Blair- Pilling (WC)
Rachel Ure Clerk

Questions from the public.

PCSO Will House attended the meeting and introduced the Wiltshire Police Community Commitment that has recently been established by the relatively new Chief Constable, Catherine Roper. The Community Commitment clearly identifies what the expectation is of the neighbourhood policing teams and what, as a community, we can expect from them.

PCSO Will House handed out copies of the Community Commitment which will be made available within the parish, via our website, social media and notice boards.

Action: Clerk to ensure the Wiltshire Police Community Commitment is available within the parish.

In terms of how the Community Commitment will directly benefit Figheldean, the following points were noted:

- There is an expectation that Neighbourhood Policing teams will attend public meetings/community events regularly. The Figheldean coffee morning was identified as a suitable event for them to attend (future dates to be provided to PCSW Will House), as well as Figgle Fest.
- That the Neighbourhood Policing team will carry out intelligence led patrolling at least once a week, this is particularly important for Figheldean in the summer around the River Avon and Gunville and it was agreed that continued engagement on this issue with parishioners would be welcomed.

PCSO Will House left the meeting.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
1	Apologies Cllr James Kelly	
2	Declaration of Interests Nil	
3	Minutes of the meeting: 27th November 2023 These were agreed as a true reflection of discussion and signed by the Chair.	



	<p>It was agreed that the minutes for the extraordinary meeting on the 8th January 2024 will be agreed via email.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Matters arising / Outstanding Actions</p> <p>Ablington Woods – Risk Assessment. The draft revised Risk Assessment for works carried out in Ablington Woods was received from Cllr Kelly. It was noted that a section needs to be added to the Risk Assessment about potential risk to the individuals carrying out any required works and that correct safety equipment and PPE should be used/worn to mitigate. The Risk Assessment will also need signing.</p> <p>There remains a few smaller low risk dead trees to process toward the spring. Deadwood at ground level is encouraged and currently missing from Ablington wood, so communication to the Parishioners not to take processed wood for burning may help to re-establish a more healthy eco-system.</p> <p>Action: Cllr Kelly to update the Ablington Woods Risk Assessment to include risk and mitigations to individuals carrying out required works, and to ensure that it is signed.</p> <p>Action: Cllr Kelly to review and revise Risk Assessments for grass cutting and maintenance work within the Parish.</p> <p>Cllr Cole noted that the report provided by Cllr Kelly refers to bi-annual inspections of Ablington Woods but corrected that this should be every three years.</p> <p>Speed Reduction Update – covered under Wiltshire Councillor Report</p>	<p>Cllr JK</p> <p>Cllr JK</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Wiltshire Councillor Report – Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling</p> <p>Highways matters. The 40mph trial in Netheravon started in October 2023 and is, so far, a success. Additional SIDs will be introduced gradually. Ongoing work is taking place with achieving some improvements for Harefield Crescent and a site meeting will take place soon.</p> <p>The introduction of additional traffic measures for Figheldean is ongoing. The highways team have advised that the work to install improved signage and road markings is with the contractors and will be complete by the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Flooding. Wiltshire Council are investing more efforts in this area. There is a schedule in place for clearing gully's which will commence soon, Figheldean is on this list.</p> <p>Cllr Briggs advised that she has continuously reported the blocked drains/gully's via the Wiltshire App and it keeps getting deleted as the issues are not on a highway and therefore not treated as a priority. Cllr Blair-Pilling requested that Cllr Briggs advises him of the details of the issues she has raised, and he will investigate further and raise on behalf of Figheldean. He confirmed that the issues raised should not be deleted.</p> <p>Action: Cllr Blair-Pilling to investigate why tickets raised about blocked drains in Figheldean have been deleted from the Wiltshire App.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council Budget. Further information had already been distributed to Councillors. Wiltshire are in a strong position and investing in areas such as highways and drainage, as well as a project with the Department of Education on support and resources for children with SEN.</p>	<p>Cllr Blair-Pilling</p>



	<p>VisitWiltshire. Figheldean Parish Council had been made aware of a withdrawal in funding, by Wiltshire Council, for VisitWiltshire and asked Cllr Blair-Pilling for more information on this decision. Cllr Blair-Pilling advised that this was a budget decision made last year as they didn't feel that VisitWiltshire was delivering value for money and they are reviewing the structure and providing for promoting tourism in Wiltshire, with more of a focus on individual towns rather than Wiltshire as a whole.</p>	
6.	<p>Chair Councillor Report – Cllr Tina Cole</p> <p>Cllr Cole provided the below report and advised Councillors that she would like to distribute the content of her report to the Parish via our website, social media and parish magazine. The purpose of this is to communicate to Parishioners how the Parish Council have been able to achieve only a small increase to the precept for 2024/25.</p> <p><i>“It’s the time of year when we have had to consider our finances and most importantly the precept that we all pay. This is the amount added to your council tax which funds the Parish Council’s responsibilities on your behalf. For example, we are responsible for: grass cutting and general maintenance throughout the parish including the upkeep of our playing field, tennis court, children’s play park, Ablington Wood, dog bins, skips and signage. Plus, we pay rental to the MOD for the waste ground car park beside the village hall which on its own is £600 per annum.</i></p> <p><i>With inflation running at around 3.5% and our contractors increasing their charges accordingly it was felt that we had to look at increasing our precept request for the first time in three years.</i></p> <p><i>With careful budgeting and the successful negotiation of fixed term contracts with our contractors I’m pleased to say that the increase has been kept to 1%. This will mean a Band D property will pay just an extra 87p per year from April this year. (2024-2025).</i></p> <p><i>Please know that our parish councillors work hard behind the scenes and along with their responsibilities they liaise with outside bodies like the Police, MOD, environment agency and Wiltshire Council for us and all do their role voluntarily. Only the parish clerk claims a small wage. With this in mind, I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all parish councillors for their time and dedication to this village. Your commitment is greatly appreciated.”</i></p> <p>Action: Clerk to distribute the Chairs report via the Parish Council website, social media and parish magazine.</p>	Clerk
7	<p>Other Organisation Reports</p> <p>The Village Hall is currently being re-decorated. Phase one is complete and phase two has started. The Main Hall itself won't be touched.</p> <p>Cllr Tissot asked for an update on the mast that is positioned near the Village Hall. Cllr Cole advised that there is no change currently and any income from the mast is being invested back into the Village Hall to encourage more bookings.</p>	



	<p>It was agreed that the Village Hall Chair and Treasurer would be invited to the Parish Council AGM so that the Parish Councillors can better understand the situation with the mast.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to invite the Village Hall Chair and Treasurer to the PC AGM to discuss the current situation with the mast.</p>	Clerk
8	<p>Councillor Reports</p> <p>Cllr Nick Tissot Planning. Cllr Tissot is in contact with The Outcomes First Group regarding the progress with the School. There is no further update at this time, planning permission is in place and they are working on a project plan for the completion of the works.</p> <p>Cliffend – no change currently but there is a period of three years for the work to be completed.</p> <p>Cllr Darrell Amison River Avon. Cllr Amison will be meeting with the representative from The Wessex Rivers Trust on the 9th February to visit the river and establish the next steps in terms of stakeholder engagement and the survey that will take place with regards to possible water vole relocation. At the same time Cllr Amison will inspect the bridge to establish if any maintenance or more detailed inspections are required.</p> <p>Emergency Plan. Work on a Community Emergency Plan for Figheledean is developing well with Simon Briggs as taking on the voluntary role of Emergency Co-ordinator. Simon has met with the Local Resilience Forum lead for Wiltshire and has a really sound understanding of the scope of the plan. The main areas the plan will cover are be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow; • Ice; • Floods; • Storms; • Power & utilities outages; • Pandemics. <p>There are two areas of scope in which the plan would be put into operation. First being where an incident is below the threshold where external resources would be required. The second would act in support of other agencies and emergency response teams. The Parish Council would be looking to appoint two (voluntary) Deputy Emergency Co-ordinators to work with Simon and an advert will be issued within the Parish over the next few weeks.</p> <p>Simon will continue working on a draft plan ready for review by the Parish Council at the end of February. It is then planned that a community meeting will be held at the end of March / early April to call for a larger group of volunteers. Training for areas such as first aid and flood wardens will then follow.</p> <p>Once all of this is in place a table-top exercise will be held, with the emergency services present in the Autumn of 2024, in readiness for the following winter. All Councillors confirmed that they are in agreement with this approach.</p> <p>Cllr Angela Briggs</p>	



<p>Grit bins. Another survey has been completed and Cllr Briggs confirmed that none of the grit bins are empty. Cllr Briggs has identified a new, empty, grit bin that can be positioned near the school/Club where there is a blocked drain that can cause an ice risk in cold weather.</p>	
<p>Action: Cllr Briggs confirmed that she will submit the required information for Figheledean to Wiltshire Council regarding the gully clearances that will be taking place.</p>	
<p>Double yellow lines. It was discussed that there are two areas of the village that would benefit from double yellow lines: outside the school (especially due to the future re-opening of the school) and the bottom of Pollen Lane / High Street junction (parked cars in this area can make safe turning into Pollen Lane / the High Street difficult).</p>	Cllr Briggs
<p>Action: Cllr Briggs to progress the request, with Wiltshire Highways team, for two sets of double yellow lines to be introduced in Figheledean.</p>	
<p>Cllr Briggs advised she has received a complaint about the bus stop on the A345 and it being flooded. As this is Wiltshire Council's responsibility it will be reported via the Wiltshire App.</p>	Cllr Briggs
<p>Cllr James Kelly Cllr Kelly submitted a report prior to the meeting.</p>	
<p>Grass cutting. The perceived damage to the playing field was observed and recorded. It was deemed not to be deliberate, but as a consequence of very wet conditions and a wish to have the pitch cut before the next game. It was accepted that visually, it did not reflect well, however the field has recovered well within a few weeks.</p>	
<p>Gate repair. The council is invited to agree to the cost of repair to the pedestrian gate access from Pollen Lane onto the playing field (not to exceed £230). To be conducted by Graham Watson. Approved by all Councillors.</p>	
<p>Action: Cllr Kelly to instruct Graham Watson to proceed with the gate repair.</p>	
<p>MUGA. It is recommended to the council (if in agreement) to commit to the 5 year contract (at £475+VAT per year) with ETC Sports and have the repair completed (at no extra cost) on/after the start of the next financial year. This saves £400-600 on the repair alone, as well as a long term saving on the annual maintenance rate. Approved by all Councillors.</p>	Cllr Kelly
<p>Action: Cllr Kelly to advise ETC Sports that the Parish would like to proceed with the 5 year maintenance contract.</p>	
<p>Cllr Amison advised that he had attempted to clear some of the branches that are now growing over the top of the MUGA. It was agreed that Graham Watson would be asked to clear the overhanging and protruding branches back to 1 metre away from the fence.</p>	Cllr Kelly
<p>Action: Cllr Kelly to liaise with Graham Watson regarding cutting back the branches that are hanging over and protruding in to the MUGA.</p>	
<p>Cllr Amison also noted that one of the basketball hoops has broken. The Councillors agreed for Cllr Amison to price up replacement hoops/nets and to ask Graham Watson to replace them.</p>	Cllr Kelly



Private storage area on the old coach works. Cllr Kelly confirmed that he is in contact with the owner. Whilst he does not routinely use the site, it is not used for the purposes of accommodation.

It was noted that a parishioner has queried the sea containers that are visible on entry to the village. These are positioned on private land and therefore not within the Parishes remit.

A parishioner has suggested that a River Avon sign is purchased and displayed on the bridge. This was discussed but it was agreed not to progress this at this time.

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Clerks Report

The current forecast to year end is currently anticipating an underspend of £2,226.

A precept value of £20,358.52 has been submitted for the 2024/25 financial year. This represents a 1% increase and the impact on a Band D property would be an increase in council tax from £87.03 to £87.90.

It was agreed that a financial buffer of approx. £5,000 would be maintained to ensure regular payment of all services and for unforeseen events. For 2024/25 additional income will be invested in any resources/equipment needed to deliver the Community Emergency Plan.

It was agreed that a quote would be obtained for a cherry tree, to replace the previous tree that was positioned in Ablington by the phone box library.

Action: Cllr Cole to obtain a quote for a cherry tree.

Expenditure since last meeting – all approved

Expenditure	Amount	Detail
Bank charges	£16	
Clerk Salary	£624	
Bawdens	£500	Grass cutting
Ian Grimes	£83.49	Dog Bins + purchase of new gloves
Graham Watson	£320	Bins
Graham Watson	£260	Grass + paths
Hills	£94.32	VH bins collection
Direct IT Services	£16.80	
Parish Magazine expenses	£53.33	
Tennis Net	£162	
Total	£2,129.94	
Receipts	Amount	Detail
Parish Magazine Advertising	£450	Annual income
Netheravon FC	£60	Hire of VH Field
Figheldean Village Hall	150	Contribution to Car Park rent
Total	£660	

Current Bank Balance @ 29th January 2024 is £16,830.67

Cllr Cole



10	Other Parish Business Nil	
11	Date of Next Meeting 25 th March 2024	

Signed *[Signature]* Date 25/3/24