

Minutes of a Meeting of Wootton Parish Council held on Wednesday December 1st 2021 at 7.30pm

Present Tim Dalton, (Chairman), Angus Dalton, Jacqui Kinch, Dot Adams.
Public: Ruth and Richard Barratt, Jeremy Kneller.

1. Apologies: Ed Barker, John Burgess.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

These were approved unanimously and were signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

3. Financial Report

The current account stands at £4063.52. After deduction of today's payments of £48 the balance will be £4015.52. Forecast expenditure before the end of the year is £613.30. The balance at the end of the year will therefore be £3402.22, barring any other unforeseen expenses. Of this £46.57 will be unspent Transparency Code Grant from SPCA.

4. Authorisation of Payments

a) Mazars – late sending of Certificate of Exemption - £48 Cheque no. 000259

b) J Kinch – Calendar Expenses £35.96 Cheque no. 000260

The Clerk apologised with some embarrassment for the late sending of the Certificate. Apparently she was far from the only one!

These payments were proposed by Dot Adams, seconded by Jacqui Kinch and approved unanimously.

5. Community Woodland

Glenn Oliver had raised the possibility in developing this idea, but it seems that we would need to buy a piece of land from someone in the village. Other ideas were mooted: an avenue of trees, hedges, allotment. It was agreed this should go on the agenda for our March meeting.

6. Climate Emergency

It has been suggested that the village should get together to share and explore ideas to try and further mitigate our impact on this. Some ideas have already been put into practice, but there is always more to be done. It was agreed that there should be a meeting in March, with coffee/tea and cake.

7. Depot Site

Portaloo: There have been concerns about the portaloo located here. Angus pointed out that it was used by the general public visiting the village, not just 'Daltons'; but Dot and Jacqui said that as it was primarily for Daltons' customers it should be on the farm site. Angus agreed to remove the portaloo.

Trailer: Jeremy agreed to remove the trailer from the Site.

Interpretation Board: Jacqui will take the map to Sara.

8. Dog Poo Bins

The one outside The Smithy now has a lid and Ed is trying to sort out the others.

9. Alton Towers Traffic

The Clerk said she had done some homework on the ground as to why Alton Towers traffic

might be encouraged to come through the village, but could find no road signs which suggested this. It may be that The Towers offers satnav advice which is the cause. It was decided to take no action at present but to see what happened when the new season opened next year.

10. Reading Room

At our last meeting we touched on the issue of dampness on the internal wall over the fireplace. Tim has met with Paul Duffell to get an idea as to what remedial action we might take. The fireplace had probably been blocked up for Health and Safety reasons. There appears to be no ingress of water into the chimney breast and Paul thinks the problem may be a combination of the type and condition of the plaster linked to the general coldness of the room and the fact that it seldom gets heated during the winter months. The conclusion is that there may be merit in removing the plaster from just the fireplace wall in the corner of the room to establish whether matters are helped by allowing the wall to "breathe". The risk is that by taking the plaster off we might damage the plaster on adjacent walls and inadvertently give ourselves a bigger job. But on balance it was felt it might be worthwhile to do this but wait until the Spring when we have in mind a bit of a DIYSOS exercise using village volunteers, doing internal painting, sanding down and re-varnishing the windows, etc, etc.

The lean-to at the rear might have potential for conversion to provide toilet facilities. The notion of having a toilet, handbasin and water supply might give rise to greater use of the room in the future. We need to consider a possible internal access and obviously there will be a hefty financial impact if we decide to proceed. The PC has no formal agreement with the PCC at the present time, but if there is some chance of some grant funding, a partnership approach by the PC and PCC together might just work.

However, there are lots of questions to be answered eg regarding the possible use of the lean-to as a loo, including sewage etc, and this would need the PCC to be involved in giving approval, and such an arrangement would almost certainly necessitate a formal agreement between the parties to replace the current informal arrangement.

Action: Clerk to contact PCC to establish their views.

11. Carol Singing

Dave Blant will be away, so Jeremy offered to sort out music and speakers, and he or John Burgess will do the mulled wine, if Covid precautions allow.

12. Any Other Business

Back Lane: there has been more flooding after mud has been pushed into the culvert by large tractors. It was suggested that a working party with spades could periodically clear it.

Bench in the car park: this has been backed into again. Thanks were passed to Seth for mending it last time, but it needs some kerbing, eg a sleeper, to protect it.

Action: Angus offered to do this.

Notice Board: this is still in a bad way, and we need a new one.

Action: Jeremy will provide a quote.

Insurance: The Clerk said that Zurich wanted an assessment for the cost of a rebuild of the Reading Room.

Action: Tim will provide this.

13. Date of Next Meeting

March 9th 7.30pm