

COMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11th March 2020 - approved

Present

- Elena Softley (ES) – Chairman
- Alan Revell (AR) – Vice Chairman
- Michael Green (MG)
- Deborah Phillips (DP)
- Denise Cripps (DC)
- Cllr Bishop
- Julia Sharpe - Clerk
- Members of the Public – None

29/20 - Apologies

John Hunt and Cllr Hudspeth

30/20 - Questions from the Public

A question regarding the cutting of Chatterpie Lane hedge was received and discussed.

Action – Clerk to contact land owner.

31/20 - Register of Interests

The Chairman – item 17

32/20 - Minutes of the last meetings

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 12th February 2020 were read and signed as correct.

33/20 - Clerks report and progress on actions

- Little Lane Footpath – The PC would like to thank the person who cleared the path
- Lighting at Combe Halt – E-mail sent to GWR awaiting response
- Oak tree sapling – no response from VH&RG
- Great British Clean Up – posters distributed. Clerk to collect litter pickers from Ubico
- OCC works update -The Clerk reported that many of the potholes had been filled, Akeman Street footpath had been cleared and the Akeman Street turn had been repaired – all other works outstanding.
- Swan Bridge – visibility / large lorries – E-mail to land owner waiting response
- Play park – The Clerk said that there were no issues to report
- Emergency Plan update – awaiting response from potential volunteers prior to circulation
- Town and Parish Councils meeting with WODC – DP to attend.

34/20 - Report from County Councillor

Cllr Hudspeth was unable to attend the meeting. His report had been previously circulated and there were no questions arising.

35/20 - Report from District Councillor

Cllr Bishop reported that the WODC budget had been accepted and passed keeping WODC the second lowest taking authority in England whilst retaining all services, facilities – including free parking and all grants and allowances. The Council Tax for Band D properties will have a £5 increase.

36/20 - Planning Applications

None

37/20 - To Approve Payments and Note Sums Received

Payments	Gross	VAT
J. Sharpe – January (SO)	£224.24	
TSOHOST – website annual renewal	£63.14	£10.52
OPFA – annual membership	£42	
OALC – annual subscription	£153.50	£25.58
P. Merry – post maintenance	£25	
Received - Nil		

38/20 - Speedwatch Update

The Chairman reported that the grant application had been unsuccessful but that she would resubmit it in the new financial year.

Action: Chairman

39/20 - Village Design Statement Update

DP thanked everyone who participated in the recent questionnaire survey that formed part of our local consultation for the Village Design Statement. We had responses from over half of the households in the village, giving us a total of 169 questionnaires.

Analysis of the questionnaire showed that people loved the wide-open views across the countryside, the wooded approaches to the village, river walks, the dark night skies, and the generally well-kept appearance of Combe. The church, the stone cottages, the village green with its oak trees, and the traditional Cotswold buildings at the heart of the village stood out as particularly special.

One of the clearest messages from the findings was how much people value, and wish to protect, green open spaces within the village. This included not only the larger green areas, such as the village greens, Alma Grove field, the recreation ground, the church yard etc., but also the smaller spaces and verges that make up the open character of our village and provide a haven for wildlife.

People were less happy with the impact of traffic and parked cars on the village's appearance. Overall, there was support for traffic calming measures. Respondents were realistic about the possibility of future housing development, but if this happens, most people would prefer affordable housing, built on a small scale, and in sympathy with the existing character of the village. The preservation of hedges and traditional dry-stone walls was seen as integral to the distinctive character of the parish.

The questionnaire survey completes the local consultation phase that leads up to the preparation of a Village Design Statement. Members of the steering group will meet with WODC planners in early April to discuss the next steps.

A report that pulls together the survey and informal consultation findings will be placed on the Parish Council website.

40/20 – Gigaclear update

DC said that the walk around the village with Gigaclear representatives had been positive and many of the issues had been resolved. Cabinet size details and contact details had been received. Gigaclear is planning a public meeting early April and the work is expected to begin in May.

41/20 – Web-site Accessibility Requirements

The Clerk reported that the current website does not comply with accessibility regulations. Two quotes had been obtained for a replacement and a query with WODC was outstanding. The design and content were discussed and it was generally felt that the website should be limited to contain all of the statutory requirements at this stage.

Action: Clerk to obtain third quote and to outline requirements.

42/20 – Coronavirus

The Parish Council response to the outbreak was discussed. It was agreed to place an item on the website, the clerk to update the list of vulnerable people in the village and for councillors to be in regular contact to be able to respond as necessary when called upon to do so.

Action: Clerk to update website and the emergency plan with volunteers and vulnerable persons list

43/20 – Annual Parish Meeting

The WODC Climate Change Officer is unable to attend. It was agreed the DP would report on the findings of the VDS questionnaire.

Action: Clerk to send out invitations to all village organisation

44/20 – Funding for VE Day Celebrations

A request for funding towards the village celebrations for VE day were discussed. AR proposed that £500 be made available for the event, MG seconded the proposal. The majority were in agreement and a Resolution was made.

Action: Clerk to notify working party

45/20 - Urgent Correspondence

None

46/20 - Next Meeting

The next meeting of Combe Parish Council will be on Wednesday 8th April at 7.30pm in the Reading Room, Combe