

# WESTON WITH GAYTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting that took place on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 in Weston Village Hall at 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Colin Critchlow (Chair) for part of the meeting, Councillor Mrs G Wray, Councillor K Barber, Councillor Mrs H Hart, Councillor D Leake, Councillor A Hopkin, Councillor D Tams, Parish Clerk Mrs A Kingston.

2 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor J Griffiths (Vice Chair), Councillor C Gilberts, County Councillor John Francis, Colin Critchlow (Chair) for the latter part of the meeting.

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 14 NOVEMBER 2017 - MINUTES

**1781 RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) Meeting held at 7:30pm on the 14 November 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as proposed and seconded by Parish Councillors Tams and Hart.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**1782.** There were no declarations of interest.

### UPDATE ON ACTION LIST

**1783.** There were no updates to report.

**1784.** A full copy of the action plan, with progress updates, is available from the Parish Clerk. Please email [parishclerk@westonstaffs.org.uk](mailto:parishclerk@westonstaffs.org.uk)

The Chairman requested a discussion regarding the purchase of Christmas Lights for the tree outside the Village Hall. This was not an agenda item but expenditure for the lights was included in the finance report at item 1808.

### CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

**1785.** When the village Christmas lights were switched on at the start of December they were found not to be working and a Councillor purchased new lights along with the hire of a cherry picker to enable installation. Whilst both councillors and many residents agree the lights look wonderful and are an asset to the village, this expenditure was not agreed at a formal meeting of the Parish Council and as such, the Clerk advised that standard parish council practice in relation to decision making and the terms set out in the Weston with Gayton Parish Council finance regulations had not been followed. The Councillor had, in the opinion of the Clerk, in this instance acted outside of their powers. The advice and response of the Clerk was not agreed with by some members of the council who requested the following statement be minuted.

**“As you now must all realise, I was fuming when I read the correspondence (email) from another Councillor, having gone out of my way considerably, the lights were installed, and as numerous people have posted, look great.**

**I did not appreciate the tone of the other councillor’s comments, the comment that I and other councillors, have acted illegally. This is not true and smacks of libel.**

**I agree that procedure was not followed, but this is far from being an illegal act.**

**Five councillors agreed (via email) in order that we could get the lights up as soon as possible, and if we had called an extra ordinary meeting, the outcome would have been the same with at least five councillors in support.**

**An additional cost would have been incurred as the Parish Clerk would have to be paid for**

attending the meeting etc.

All this to one side, the Chairman has the authority to spend up to £500 on emergency repairs to existing equipment. The lights have been attached to the tree for three years and as such qualify for this category.

I am fully aware of my own and other Councillors responsibilities towards the residents of this village both financially and with regard to safety etc. I do not appreciate being 'told off' in a patronising way by another councillor."

*The above statement was presented by a Councillor at the meeting who requested it was included as part of the minutes.*

Councillor Critchlow left the meeting. Councillor Hart took over as Chair

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTICES**

**1786.** SLCC Branch meeting Uttoxeter 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017. **RESOLVED** the Clerk to attend.

**1787** Stafford Borough Council have released an updated version of their Validation Criteria and Planning Guidance in relation to planning applications. The updated document can be found on their website at <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/live/Documents/planning/Validation-Guidance-and-Local-Validation-Criteria.pdf>

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**1788** A member of the public provided an update on the condition of two footpaths which have benefited from some clearance in Weston. The first leading up to the metal bridge adjacent to the railway line and the second leading to Hixon airfield.

## **REPORT FROM STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

**1789** Councillor J Francis was not in attendance to provide a report.

## **REPORT FROM STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

**1790** Councillor Mrs F Beatty was not in attendance to provide a report.

## **REPORT FROM VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE**

**1791** A break glass key box has been provided in the committee room for the fire escape door.

## **DEVELOPMENTS**

**1792** Planning application reference 17/27482/HOU at 4 Furlong Close, Weston, Stafford. The Parish Council have no objection to this application.

**1793** Planning application reference 17/27483/HOU at 4 Ferrers Road, Weston, Stafford. The Parish Council have no objection to this application.

**1794** Planning application reference 17/27341/HOU at Holly Bank, Vicarage Bank, Gayton. The Parish Council have no objection to this application.

**1795** Councillor Leake provided an update on the planning meeting relating to the installation of the telecom mast on the A51. Councillor Leake attended and represented the PC at the meeting. The decision was taken to approve the installation in the proposed location.

## **TREES AND CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA**

**1796** There has been no response from the sign writers. **RESOLVED** –Councillor Hopkin to cancel the order. Parish Clerk to bring a minimum of three alternative quotes to the next meeting for approval.

## **HIGHWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY**

**1797** Repairs to the footpath on the Green have been completed.

**1798** The Saracen's Head Angling Club have informed the PC that they will undertake some path clearance along the path from Gayton Brook to Church Cottage. The PC would like to extend thanks to the Angling Club.

**1799** Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Consultation was discussed and completed. **RESOLVED** Clerk to submit PC responses by the 25<sup>th</sup> December.

**1800** An interactive map showing the locations of footpaths and numbers of rights of way can be found at <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/RightsofWay/Footpaths-bridleways.aspx>

### **FLAGPOLE**

**1801** Four parishioners who are not on the PC have volunteered to undertake a fundraising exercise for the new flagpole in the new year. The PC would like to thank them in advance for their support.

### **DRAINAGE AND GULLY CLEANING**

**1802** The drains identified at the previous meeting in Green Road, Old Road and Ferrers Road were all reported to Staffordshire County Council Highways but were not deemed to be of concern and will be cleaned in the future as part of the routine programme. The reported collapsed drain on the A518 near St. Andrew's Church now has a work order raised against it and should be repaired within 60 days. The blocked drain on the A51 opposite the old police house has also been reported.

### **DOG FOULING IN GAYTON**

**1803** Agreed to defer to the January meeting. **RESOLVED** Councillor Hart to work with Councillor Gilbert in the interim to see if any action such as leafletting can be undertaken.

### **FIREWORKS – DISPLAY TIMINGS**

**1804** The recent fireworks displays at Weston Hall were noted. **RESOLVED** Clerk to request Weston Hall to provide advance notice of forthcoming displays so residents can be notified.

### **LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

**1805** Following a request from Stafford Borough Council, the PC completed a survey assessment of services and facilities for both Weston and Gayton.

**1806** The PC discussed the Stafford Borough Council Call for Sites consultation with regard to requesting certain areas within or around the village be considered as designated 'Green Space'. Consideration should also be given as to whether any sites in Weston or Gayton be appropriate to be considered for future development. **RESOLVED** Clerk to request an extension to the deadline to after the January meeting to allow more time for Councillors to give the issue due consideration. Agreement of identified sites and boundaries to be made at the January meeting. **RESOLVED** Councillor Leake to circulate a copy of the map, and all councillors to return their views and identified areas to the Clerk by 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

### **BUDGET SETTING**

**1807** The proposed budget was approved and agreed including an increase in costs for Civic Amenity Visits and Playground Inspections. However following the recent briefing on the impact of the General Data Protection Regulations, which come into force in May 2018, and recent hacking of the current PC website, it was felt money should be included in the budget to enable the purchase of a new website and email addresses for Councillors and the Clerk. **RESOLVED** final agreement of the budget to be deferred to the January meeting. Clerk to obtain costings for a new website.

### **CLERK REPORT**

**1808.RESOLVED** that the PC approve the below payments listed on the monthly Statement of Accounts/Receipts and Payments.

- Ground Maintenance Contract - £646.20
- Admin and Clerk expenses - £39.45
- Alan Hopkin Remembrance Sunday Refreshments - £19.86
- Alan Hopkin Christmas Lights - £75.00
- Hire of a cherry picker - £120.00

- MAC Groundwork footpath repairs - £2100.00

**1809 RESOLVED** that the PC approve the monthly Statement of Accounts/Receipts and Payments

**1810** The Clerk requested permission to register for internet banking. **RESOLVED** by unanimous agreement to allow the Clerk to register for internet banking. Banking forms were completed for submission.

**1811** Clerk informed Councillors that the previous external auditors Grant Thornton had made a request for the personal contact details of all Councillors. The Clerk has responded to query the legal basis for this request prior to submitting any personal details.

**1812** The Clerk informed Councillors the meeting schedule for 2018 had been completed with meetings scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month excluding August. **RESOLVED** – the proposed dates were agreed.

**1813** The Clerk and Councillor Hart provided feedback on the recent briefing regarding the General Data Protection Regulations, which come into force in May 2018. Much of the detail regarding compliance is still to be worked out, and further information will be brought to the PC as it becomes available.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

**1814** The PC have received a complaint from a local resident regarding leaves from the Green blowing into their garden. The complaint was noted.

**1815** An invitation has been extended for Weston to consider taking part in the 2018 Best Kept Village competition. The PC do not wish to take part for 2018.

**1816** The PC received an invite to the Mayor's charity appeal quiz night.

**1817** The PC received an email from a local resident requesting the PC consider the provision of Grit Bins in Weston. **RESOLVED** to add to the agenda for the January meeting.

#### **DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

**1818** Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at 7:30pm in Weston Village Hall

**HILARY HART  
ACTING CHAIR**