

ZEALS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 January 2022
Zeals Village Hall commencing at 7.00pm.

Note: These minutes do not constitute a true record until ratified at the next meeting of the Parish Council

Present: Cllrs Spencer (CS),(Chairman); Corbin (DJ); d'Ambrumenil (LD); Gray (JG); Hole-Jones (CH-J) and Patch (AP).

Apologies: Cllr Gibbons.

In Attendance: County Cllr G Jeans, G Edgar (Clerk) and 12 members of public.

Declarations of interest: DC (as a trustee of the Zeals Youth Trust) with regard to Item 48.

40. Open Forum: Prior to the start of the agenda items of the formal meeting the chairman invited questions and comments from the members of the public present. A resident spoke at length describing some disturbing anti-social behaviour taking place in and around the Portnells Lane, Westfields and playground areas where illegal activities have been taking place in daylight and in the early evenings, causing much distress to many residents. Following reports sent to various authorities, in particular, to the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner for our area, there has been a rapid response and actions are on-going. Another resident, acting on behalf of our Neighbourhood Watch, reported that they had also received similar complaints from residents. CS thanked them for their reports.

The Clerk reminded the meeting that residents are able to report problems on roads, highways, footpaths, verges or litter directly to Wiltshire Council via the council website or by phone on 0300 4560105.

41. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2021. It was proposed by JG and seconded by AP that the minutes presented a true and accurate record of proceedings: all councillors were in agreement.

42 Matters arising from the minutes:

- The Clerk has met with Mr Light to discuss grass cutting arrangements for the coming growing season.
- DC will soon be assessing the possible ash die back issues at Leaping Frogs.

43 Village Hall Insurance cover: The Clerk suggested that the hall may be under-insured. At present it is insured for £250k. According to the parish council's insurers, Community First Insurance, the sum stated on our insurance needs to include the rebuild cost including professional fees, debris removal and so on. A more appropriate insurance figure could be perhaps £400k, but this would increase the premium by the sum of £150 based on current rates. **Action:** After some discussion it was agreed that a local, reputable building firm should be asked to advise on this matter, and AP agreed to enquire on the parish council's behalf.

44 Mere Allotment Charity: Each autumn this local charitable organisation awards financial grants to people who are deemed to be in need of some financial support and live in Zeals: sums of the order of £80 are usually awarded to successful applicants. These bids are judged by a board of Trustees, and currently there are 2 vacant posts. Ideally the charity, as said by Cllr Jeans who is the 'board' chairman, would like these vacancies to be filled by residents from Zeals. **Action:** The Clerk to advertise the vacancies.

45 Cleaning and restoration of the War Memorial on the Green: DC had been in consultation with Henry Gray, an eminent local stone mason, about the whole Memorial being in need of being cleaned and restored in the near future. DC suggested that the project could take place over a period of several years and as the structure is Grade 11 listed, there is the possibility that there would be access to the War Memorial Trust and other possible grant giving trusts, which would, though, require some research in the first instance. Both DC and Mr Gray suggest that cleaning should occur before any restoration is carried out. Councillors were made aware of the likely costs of cleaning (£1,004), repairs to surrounding paving (£6,276), additional lettering (£1,058) and repairs to the base and plinth (£736). The general feeling was that work is needed, but, ideally, as the parish funds are limited, CS suggested in the first instance DC should aim to discover if any funding would be forthcoming from the War Memorial Trust for this important project. LD supplied a list of cleaning mediums which would enable the cleaning of the Memorial to be undertaken in the near future at a cost much lower than the above estimate. **Action:** DC agreed to enquire about possible grants and report back.

46 Hedgehog signs along the village roads: Several residents had approached MG about the possibility of the parish council either funding or subsidising the cost of signage to make drivers aware of hedgehogs frequently crossing the roads in the village. Apparently, these animals are classified as vulnerable to extinction and erecting signs around the village could both help the animal and slow down traffic too. CS suggested that we are unable to support this venture as our funds are limited and accounted for, and the signs would contravene current planning regulations. All councillors indicated their agreement.

47 Developments at Green Pastures: a) Section 106 application: the Clerk together with DC had submitted an application for release of S106 funds potentially available to the parish council, as had been agreed by all councillors at the last meeting, but for some reason Wiltshire Council believes that the application does not meet the set criteria. However, after further correspondence from DC, Wiltshire's officers are reconsidering this application. **On-going.**

b) Alteration of lease to incorporate Seeds4Success The ZYT intends to pass over the lease and running of Zeals Green Pastures (ZGP), which was first indicated in point 35 from November's parish council meeting, on 1 April 2022 to Seeds4Success (S4S). There will need to be some reworking and updating for some of the existing terms of the lease between the parish council (landlord) and the tenants.

Action: As indicated in a letter to CS from Mr Coad (a trustee of the ZYT), DC is reworking and updating some of the existing terms of the lease and will pass the amended document to the parish council's chairman.

c) Zeals After School Club

The ZYT have raised the funding (see below) for the new pavilion working alongside the parish council, and will be using the pavilion as a base to continue running the Zeals After School Club (ZAC) which serves pupils from primary schools within the parish and the local area.

In passing the tenancy and management of both ZGP and the pavilion over to S4S, the ZYT wish to draft an additional codicil to the lease, namely *'In recognition that Zeals Parish Council and ZYT have raised the funding for construction of the new pavilion the Zeals Parish Council and Zeals Afterschool Club and any direct successor will enjoy rent free use of the pavilion for the period of this lease and any extensions thereof. Zeals Parish Council will be able to appoint 2 trustees to Seeds 4 Success charity from the village whilst this lease is in force and Seeds 4 Success is active on the property.'*

Action: CS to add this to the lease.

d) Maintenance and Insurance requirements: In reply CS, welcomed the merger of ZYT into S4S, and, speaking on behalf of all councillors and, using the essential recommendations made by the Clerk (see point e below), confirmed that it is the intention of the parish council for any tenant to have rent- free use of ZGP and the pavilion, although the tenant would be required to insure and maintain the pavilion at no cost to the parish council.

Acting on behalf of the interests of the parish council, CS stated that:-

- (i) The tenants maintain and insure ZGP including the pavilion.
- (ii) The insurance policy must include Third Party Insurance.
- (iii) The parish council must be given a copy of the insurance policy including its Third Party element.

These points were made clear to the Trustee present and the S4S assistant manager also at the meeting..

e) Development of facilities on site: The trustees of ZYT (DC and Mr Coad) said that the Youth Trust wish to donate to Zeals Parish Council the full costs involved in providing the required electrical and water services, together with the construction of its concrete foundations for a new pavilion to be erected for community uses. This pavilion will become the sole property of the parish council, to be recognised as one of its assets. The donation of funds will, however, be dependent on the parish council allowing the Seeds4Success charitable organisation to become leaseholders of Zeals Green Pastures playing field, i.e. the long term tenants on this land which is owned by the parish council, and S4S will need to have free use of the grounds and the pavilion for organising and holding activities for youngsters and groups from within Zeals and its surrounding areas.

Proposal: It was proposed by LD, seconded by JG that this was acceptable to the parish council and supported by all councillors present.

The Clerk reminded the meeting of the correct procedures that needed to be followed in order for any VAT paid to be eligible to be reclaimed from such donations, (see VAT Notice 749 issued in Government guidance to local authorities and similar bodies, reference point 6.3; and by advice given by the National Association of Local Councils 'Accounts and Claims' points 48 to 59, especially 49 and 54);

- Any purchase must be made in the name of Zeals Parish Council and any invoice must be sent to the parish council's clerk using the council's standard address.
- Any donations from ZYT must be banked on receipt.
- Clerk to arrange for any payments to be made after cheque clearance.
- Any VAT paid can be reclaimed afterwards as the parish council retains ownership of the purchases and uses it for non-business purposes.

48 Financial matters: Payments for approval-a) to Clerk for December and January salary £373.44 b) to Clerk for Office payment £16 c) to Clerk for stationery items £14.10 d) to IV, S and R Thomas £323 (265+58vat) for verge and hedge cutting e) Using the funding donated from ZYT to the Parish Council, to SJH Carpets and Flooring £2,953.50 for installation of flooring at the pavilion on Zeals Pastures

It was proposed by CH-J and seconded by LD that all payments are approved, and all councillors were in agreement.

f) Following the meeting a reputable, local building firm informed the Clerk that the estimated costs involved in re-building the Village Hall would be nearer £400k and that its current insurance value of £250k was too low. CS subsequently proposed that the insurance is increased. LD seconded and all councillors, with contacts made by electronic mail, were in agreement. Therefore, to Community First Insurance trading £74.37 for the extra insurance.

49 Any other business: CS requested that the Clerk sends once again a letter of complaint to Mr Paul Shaddock, the new Highways Engineer at Wiltshire Council, stressing the urgent need for repairs to be carried out on the two build-outs within the traffic calming scheme that were damaged almost 2 years ago. **Action:** Clerk to write an official letter.

50 Date and time of next meeting: Agreed to be Thursday 17 March at 7pm in the Village hall.

Closure of meeting: 8.25 pm

Signed:Chairman. Dated: