

Minutes of the Public Meeting held on Monday 11th July 2016 at 7.15pm
The Village Hall, Lingwood Lane, Woodborough, Nottingham

PRESENT: Cllr John Charles-Jones, Cllr Paul Berrisford, Cllr John Boot, Cllr Patrick Smith, Cllr Colin Starke, Cllr Jane Stone Cllr Jan Turton, Cllr Charles Wardle, Cllr Pat Woodfield.

IN ATTENDANCE: Averil Marczak (Clerk), 87 parishioners

APOLOGIES

Received from Cllr Andrew Gough and Cllr Margaret Briggs.

OPENING COMMENTS AND PRESENTATION

Cllr Woodfield explained that the purpose of the meeting was to consult regarding potential land purchase in the village to provide additional recreational facilities. A leaflet had been delivered to all households in the village, inviting residents to indicate whether they were for or against the proposal. The original deadline for the return of the leaflet had been set to enable WPC to report the results at this meeting, however, several people had indicated that they preferred to give their feedback after the meeting. Attendees were invited to return either the original survey sheets, or feedback sheets which would be available at the end of the session, and these responses would be counted up and the totals made known after the meeting.

Cllr Woodfield made a brief presentation regarding the land available for purchase. She explained that the 9 acre site offered a unique opportunity and that WPC's vision was to provide recreational facilities for the Woodborough of today and the future. If purchased the land would be converted and facilities would be put in place gradually over many years to come. WPC proposed to borrow money from the PWLB to finance the purchase, and would increase the precept to pay back the loan. Precise plans for usage of the site would be the subject of a further detailed consultation. It was noted that Savills had raised the guide price from £150,000 to £175,000, and were marketing the site as potentially suitable for future development; the purchase by WPC would prevent development of the village on this part of its southern boundary.

Cllr Charles-Jones talked about the impact that the loan might have on the precept. While there were many unknowns, WPC would commit to work within this precept, and seek grants as available and potentially use Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS.

Responses given by members of WPC or the Clerk to WPC are in italics

Q: What is the amount of the proposed loan and the term? *A: we can't be as open as we would like as it might prejudice the commercial position of the council in making its offer. The figures are based on a 40 year period.*

Dealing with the slope and drainage will make works very expensive. A significant amount of drainage work has been assumed. Grants may be available for buildings, works and facilities, although not for land purchase.

The precept was not designed for purchase of land. The Woodborough precept has gone up by 300% in 10 years. *The precept has gone up to make investments in the parish. The precept is only a very small element of the council tax bill (3.2%).*

Q: What is the view on the small field located between Middups field and the current playing field? A: *WPC is very aware of this.*

Q: Is the precept based on the maximum loan? A: *the precept amount on the leaflet should be the maximum needed.*

Q: What other increases might come through? A: *the policy is to apply RPI each year. This year an additional £12,500 was raised to put towards new play equipment (£17,500 from reserves was also committed towards new play equipment). Projects are village led, generally raised at April's Annual Meeting of the Parish.*

Cllr Patrick Smith spoke as a member of the public from the floor, having declared a pecuniary interest. The leaflet is a sales pitch and the risks may not have been identified. The statement regarding new housing is inaccurate, the total no. is 55. The proposed recreation field may not protect the land from development as parish councils sell land for development. There are flooding issues for residents as the field gets waterlogged and the drainage may be inadequate. Crops absorb water better than the proposed grass. The water table is very high so drainage will not help.

A: *there are mechanisms by which the field might be protected from development eg by putting the land in trust. A lot can be done to improve drainage, the ditch could be improved. Grass can absorb better than crops.*

Q: What is the PC doing to support the children of the village? The play equipment is a safety hazard and needs updating. The children's toilets should be refurbished. Preschool should be allowed to use the hall on Wednesday.

A: *the GREAT project is applying for funds to replace the equipment, but in the meantime the current equipment is inspected weekly to ensure that it is safe. The refurbishment of the children's toilets is in the plan. Preschool cannot use the hall on Wednesdays as we have another regular booking.*

Woodborough has never looked to the future. At Burton Joyce, there is a marvellous set-up.

Could the land be nominated as an Asset of Community Value? A: *this suggestion has been made by a parishioner and followed up with GBC. A nomination is unlikely to be successful, as there is no history of public use of this land.*

The comments against are "Project Fear" – it's always easier to do nothing. Facilities can be improved. Let's have a project that pulls the village together.

Access to the village is very limited. I don't want people coming from other villages.

Either a builder buys it, or we buy it.

We could end up owning lots of land and then not have the money to develop it.

This is a beautiful village and this is a golden opportunity to improve our sports facilities, which are substandard.

Owners of properties which back on to the land will not want noise, cricket balls etc

This land is not central (as stated) and to access it you need to pass through a residential area. These roads have not been built for that type of traffic.

GBC rejected this land for housing, primarily because of flooding but also because of narrowness of access.

Our current facilities are good. We didn't maintain the scout hut, and we are not maintaining the pavilion. This will spread the money more thinly.

The small field between Middups' field and the playing field is smaller so would be cheaper.

More information is needed, particularly regarding the small field.

The PC should try to secure the small field rather than the Middups' field. *Cllr Turton: I support this view.*

The dyke divides the two sites. The tennis club needs three tennis courts to participate in the league so. Let's look forward, someone stuck their neck out to build this Village Hall 40 years ago and every week I enjoy activities here.

More facilities are needed in the village, but this is not the right location.

Cllr Patrick Smith, speaking as a member of the public having declared a pecuniary interest: has the PC made contact with Taylor family, who offered some of their land for public recreational use? *A: the discussion between the Taylor family and the PC had been on the basis of the development of Taylors field for housing.*

CLOSING COMMENTS

Cllr Woodfield thanked the many attendees for coming, and invited people to give their feedback via the original leaflet delivered to their homes or via a feedback sheet available.