

DONNINGTON AND MUXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at Turreff Hall, Donnington on 12th December 2016

Present: Councillors: Mrs L Dugmore (Chairman), N Dugmore, Mrs L Edwards, M Edwards, Mrs R Gregory, C Mason, V Rainsford, J Lavery, A Lawrence and J Thompson.

Also Present: R Morgan (Clerk), Jim Collins (Assistant Director Telford & Wrekin Council: Education & Corporate Parenting) and Liz Smith (Telford & Wrekin Council Manager of School Catchment Areas), PCSO A Hall (Donnington Youth Panel), Ms C Scott and Ms L Galley (Muxton Action Group), Mrs V Allen and Residents of Muxton.

16/12/138 Apologies: Councillors Mrs E A Clare, J Haigh and D Hayward.

Resolved – that the apologies are accepted.

16/12/139 Declaration of Interest: As per Register.

16/12/140 Public Session:

There were no questions/comments from those present not relating to the proposed changes to the school catchment areas. The Chairman stated the Council will suspend the meeting after the presentation for questions to be put to Mr J Collins and Liz Smith.

16/12/141 Proposed changes to School Catchment Areas

The Chairman welcomed Mr Collins and Liz Smith who then gave a presentation on the proposed changes to school catchment areas within Telford & Wrekin. Telford & Wrekin Council (T&Wr) has authorised a consultation on proposed changes to the catchment areas which included Muxton. The consultation has already started and the Local Authority has to consult for six weeks, not including school holidays, so the consultation would finish at the end of January 2017. The questions raised at this meeting would form part of the consultation and be included in the report to the Cabinet responsible. No other decision has been made other than to agree to consult with the public. Over the last five to seven years T&Wr has been building new schools in Telford, two of which have not been built on the sites of former schools. Due to the number of new developments in Newport, Donnington and Trench and land identified for development in Muxton consideration has to be given to future school placements. Muxton currently has Burton Borough School as its attendance school. Telford Priory School (TPS) is within three miles of Muxton and the proposal is that Muxton becomes the school catchment area for TPS. This means that Muxton children will have priority to attend this school. Currently 30% to 40% of children in Telford do not attend their catchment area schools and in future Muxton residents can nominate other schools should they wish to. From September 2018 TPS will become the main school for Muxton. Children already attending Burton Borough School will continue going here and T&Wr will ensure it will continue to provide transport for them. If parents choose another school for their children other than the one for their catchment area then they will be responsible for getting them there. There is also pressure on Council budgets and savings can be made on transport. With regard to primary schools, children from Muxton attend Lilleshall Primary School and vice-versa.

The Chairman stated that due to the housing developments in Newport and Muxton, some of which have received consent, some not, it appears that Muxton becoming the catchment area for TPS is to free up space at Burton Borough School for Newport children.

Resolved – to suspend the meeting to allow residents to ask questions and discuss their concerns.

Ms C Scott and Ms L Galley spoke on behalf of the Muxton Action Group and raised the following points:

- Effects this will have on the children and the school.
- Whilst T&Wr state they are making savings on transport it will still be providing it for children from Muxton already at Burton Borough School.
- Parents want to ensure their children are able to receive the best education. It is a matter of choice and proposed that Muxton becomes a dual catchment area for both TPS and Burton Borough School. T&Wr is failing on school standards and TPS exam results do not match those of Burton Borough.
- Safety of children walking to TPS from Muxton. It is a long walk which will be dark during winter time and will also take them along high hedgerows and through dark underpasses. Modern families where both parents work are unable to escort their children to school. It is even more difficult when one sibling is at one school and another sibling is at a different school.
- Additional car journeys will increase traffic on already busy roads, increase emissions into the air and enhance car parking problems.
- Changes to catchment areas should be made when the proposed developments are built and not before.

In response to a question Mr Collins stated that it was not known how many children would go to TPS as it was down to parental choice and the number of houses that would be built by 2018 was also unknown although Telford is currently the fastest growing area in the region.

Concerns were also raised regarding:

- The reduction of parental choice regarding which school their children went to.
- Shouldn't the walking route to school be investigated for safety before the end of the consultation – Mr Collins stated that he would discuss the issue with T&Wr Highways Department as a matter of urgency and obtain a response before the end of the consultation. Officers will film walking the route at different times of the day. T&Wr widened the footpath in Madeley when the new school was built here. Highways will ascertain if footpath widening is required from Muxton to TPS.
- With the new developments in Wrockwardine Wood, Trench and Donnington will there be enough places available for children at TPS? How will potential growth affect TPS? – Liz Smith stated that 300 pupils can be accommodated and there are currently 181 places available at the school. Currently between 90% and 93% of parents get their first choice school for their children.
- Due to the anticipated growth there are proposals for two new primary schools in the area when the pressure is on secondary schools – J Collins stated that population growth puts greater pressure on primary schools, but in the case of Newport, due to the number of new homes, the pressure is on Burton Borough. The two other secondary schools in Newport are selective and therefore do not come under the admissions code.
- If a sibling was already at one school would another sibling have priority attending the same school? There are examples of occasions where this has not happened and some parents have been told they would not have priority – Liz Smith stated that they would have higher priority.

- Differing standards of schools – Mr Collins stated that school fortunes change very quickly and two years is a long time in improvement terms. He wants everyone to be able to go to a good school and whilst TPS is not yet as good as Burton Borough everyone is working hard to raise its standards especially considering it is a relatively new school.
- There is no acknowledgement from T&Wr for online surveys after submission – Mr Collins stated that he would investigate and ensure, in future, that they are acknowledged.
- The proposed scale of development in Muxton indicates that a new secondary school will be required otherwise there will be a crisis and shortage of school places.
- There are already capacity issues on buses and the Officer from T&Wr did not know anything about school transport.
- A dual catchment area for both primary (Lilleshall and Muxton Primary Schools) and Secondary Schools (TPS and Burton Borough) was suggested and deemed to be a very good proposal.
- Upon request Liz Smith stated that she would get Councillor N Dugmore the numbers requested of children currently attending TPS.

The Chairman thanked Jim Collins and Liz Smith for taking the time to talk to the Council and thanked the residents for their contribution to discussions.

Resolved – to discuss 16/12/153 Youth Council as the next item.

16/12/153 Youth Council

Due to the withdrawal of youth services by Telford & Wrekin Council, Councillors were asked to consider setting up a Donnington and Muxton Youth Council in order to provide the youth of the area a means through which they can express what it is they want to see in the area and how they think it can be improved. Whilst the format will change slightly from the current Youth Panel to a Youth Council the support required would be provided by the Parish Council. The Youth Council through the Parish Council could work with the Borough Council's Community Officers and be able to apply for certain grants.

Resolved – to support the concept of a Donnington and Muxton Youth Council and to have one Councillor as a representative on it. The Chair requested that she be made an ex-officio of this Council. The Clerk is to liaise with T&Wr Community Officers in order to set up Donnington and Muxton Youth Council.

16/12/142 Minutes

To confirm the following Minutes of the Council:

- Parish Council meeting held on 14th November 2016.
Resolved - that they are confirmed and signed as a true record
- Planning Committee meeting held on 21st November 2016
Resolved - that they are confirmed and signed as a true record

16/12/143 Matters Arising from Minutes

Councillors received updated information of actions contained in the Minutes thereof:

Local Plan – The inspector will now review T&Wr Local Plan by 30th January 2016.

Gladman Development Muxton – T&Wr lost the appeal so both applications will now be reconsidered by the Planning Inspectorate.

Wildflowers on Granville Roundabout – the high cost of providing wildflowers is because the work is labour intensive.

16/12/144 Expenditure Transactions

Each Councillor received a copy of the Expenditure Transactions for November 2016.

Resolved – that the expenditure transactions for November 2016 are ratified and accepted as a true record.

16/12/145 Income Received

Each Councillor received a copy of the income report for November 2016.

Resolved – that the income received report for November 2016 is accepted as a true record.

16/12/146 Financial Budget Comparisons

Each Councillor received a copy of the financial budget comparisons as at 30th November 2016.

Resolved – that they be confirmed and signed as a true record.

16/12/147 Bank Reconciliation

Each Councillor received a copy of the bank reconciliation as at 30th November 2016.

Resolved – that the bank reconciliation as at 30th November 2016 is accepted as a true record.

16/12/148 Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC)

Councillor Mrs R Gregory informed Council that it is looking highly likely that the LLC will become a Community led building. A meeting with T&Wr is to be held next week to discuss the options and to ascertain what money is available from the Borough Council. As the LLC is used by many outside the area it was suggested that other Parish/Town Councils are approached to help provide people to assist with administering the building. A report on the meeting will be provided at the next Parish Council meeting.

Councillor C Mason informed Councillors that Sandra Boyd (Community Regeneration Officer T&Wr) is leaving T&Wr Council and thanked her for the work she has carried out in the area.

16/12/149 Church Walk, Donnington

Councillors were informed that work at Church Walk had currently stopped and Councillor C Mason stated he would investigate as to why and report back to Council. Councillor J Thompson stated that the constant delays must be very frustrating for neighbouring residents.

16/12/150 Bus Users Group

Councillor V Rainsford informed Council that at the last bus user group meeting a complaint was made to Arriva about the fact that people living in Muxton cannot get to Aldi, Wellington Road, Donnington by bus. This will be discussed at the next user group meeting. Councillor N Dugmore attended his first bus user group meeting and stated that it became apparent to him that whatever it was you requested you could not have. T&Wr provide more bus subsidies than any other Council.

Resolved – to invite Mr J Crowsley from Arriva to the next Parish Council meeting to discuss the issues with buses.

16/12/151 Clocktower Roundabout

Each Councillor received a copy of an email containing a report on the progress of work at the Clocktower Roundabout. It stated: “Long delays have been caused by Severn Trent Water following their failure to divert their water mains at several of the Growth Point projects including Clock Tower. It is now ready to divert their water mains, however to do so now would mean a road closure on Station Road and substantial traffic management on the roundabout itself.

Due to the detrimental impact on local businesses in the busy retail period on the run up to Christmas Telford & Wrekin Council has taken the decision to postpone the Severn Trent Water diversion work until the 3rd of January 2017. This will also mean that only minor work will be undertaken on the roundabout next week including street lighting and footway works. However, it is still anticipated that the completion of all the work on the roundabout will have taken place by the end of February 2017.

16/12/152 Budgets and Precept 2017/2018

Each Councillor received a copy of the recommended budgets for 2017/2018 set by the nominated working group following its meeting on 3rd October 2016. The Clerk informed those present of the reduction in the CTS Grant and, if there was to be no increase in the precept, would mean having to use £7,101.54 of the Councils balances. The Clerk also warned Councillors that in future increases to precepts may be capped. Confirmation was provided that the proposed precept would mean a 0% increase to the Council Tax Band “D” equivalent. The Clerk also informed Council that the grant to take over the library will be in this year’s accounts and it is expected that there will be some of the grant available to help offset the library running costs. The street lighting renewal programme is due to be completed in 2018/2019 so money from this budget can be dispersed elsewhere for 2019/2020.

Proposed by Councillor M Edwards, Seconded by Councillor C Mason that the budget is set at £167,305 which represents a 0% increase to the Council Tax Band “D” equivalent for this Parish Council on which the precept is based.

Proposed by Councillor C Mason, seconded by Councillor N Dugmore that £2,000 is used from balances to purchase a new Chain of Office for this Councils Chairman.

Resolved – that the budgets are accepted and that the precept for 2017/2018 is set at £167,305. The Council will offset any overspend by use of balances.

Resolved – that a new Chairman’s Chain of Office is purchased using £2,000 from current balances. Councillor J Lavery requested that his vote against this is recorded.

The Clerk was asked to investigate when the Community Fund will be received from Granville Road Solar Ltd.

16/12/154 Princess Royal Hospital

Councillors discussed a response from Jeremy Hunt MP and a letter received from Mark Pritchard MP regarding the future of services at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. Councillors thanked them for their response but felt that the information was now not up-to-date. The Clerk was asked to keep this as an agenda item for the next meeting.

16/12/155 Speed Limits Estate Roads

The Clerk informed Council of an email received from T&Wr in response to its request to implement 20mph speed limit on estate roads which stated:

“Your request is currently being investigated. A full report will be written following these investigations, taking into account the recent traffic count data for the area and accident history. Recommendations will then be put forward for consultation/approval.

With regard to enforcing the 20mph speed limit; all speed limits are backed by a Traffic Regulation Order. When changing a speed limit the aim is always to make these self-enforcing so they do not require intervention from the Police. However, if speeds are excessive the Police may choose to enforce but this would be a Police matter and not something that the Council can influence.”

16/12/156 BeActive Donnington

The Clerk informed Councillors of a recent meeting with Gary Insell of BeActive, Donnington and his request for this Council to assist with match funding for a grant from Sports England to enable BeActive to provide activities for those over fifty five. Other Parish/Town Councils have also been approached with this request.

Resolved – to invite Mr Insell to the next Parish Council meeting to discuss the request in more detail and to answer questions from Councillors regarding the scheme.

16/12/157 An invitation to join the National Highways and Transport Survey (NHT Survey)

Each Councillor received a copy of an invitation for this Council to join the NHT Survey and to elect a person to complete it on behalf of the Parish Council.

Resolved – that Councillor Mrs R Gregory is nominated, after volunteering, to complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council.

16/12/158 Good2Great

Each Councillor received a copy of an email received from Sally Themans (Good2Great) updating Councillors on the progress of the scheme within the Donnington area. It was proposed that a walkabout is arranged with Sally Themans to meet on The Parade, Donnington so that a detailed explanation can be provided about what they are doing to help businesses in the area.

Resolved – that the Clerk arranges a walkabout with Sally Themans on The Parade, Donnington with Councillors N Dugmore, Mrs R Gregory and J Thompson.

16/12/159 Agenda Items for the Next Council Meeting

Councillors requested that the following items be included for discussion on the agenda of the next Council meeting:

T&Wr Local Plan

Name/Identification badges for Councillors

BeActive, Donnington

Bus routes

16/12/160 Date of next meeting

The Chairman informed Councillors that the next Council meeting will be held on Monday 9th January 2017 at Turreff Hall, Donnington commencing at 7pm.

The Chairman wished everybody a Happy Christmas.

The meeting closed at 2100hrs.

Signed:

Date: