

WINWICK

*Best Kept Village
in Cheshire – 2000*

C/o Winwick Leisure Centre
Myddleton Lane
Winwick
Warrington
WA2 8LQ



PARISH COUNCIL

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8 May 2019

To Members of Management Committee
(Councillors M Matthews, S Gordon, P Gosney, A Iddon and one vacancy)

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the Management Committee will take place on **Tuesday 14 May 2019, at 7.30pm**, at Winwick Leisure Centre.

Yours sincerely

Julian Joinson
Clerk to the Parish Council

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when the item is reached.

The Clerk is available prior to the meeting to provide advice and/or to receive details of the interest and the item to which it relates.

Declarations are a personal matter for each Member to decide. Whilst the Clerk will advise on the Code and its interpretation, the decision to declare, or not, is the responsibility of the Member based on the particular circumstances.

3. **Minutes**

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 9 April 2019.

4. **Action List**

A schedule is provided of actions arising from previous meetings.

5. To consider any non-confidential matters in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference.

(1) Community & Leisure Centre - reports from the Finance Officer; Centre Bar Manager and/or Clerk:

a) Update Report (*excluding any sensitive commercial information or individual staffing matters, which will be dealt with under Part 2*).

(2) Playing Fields Boundary Inspection (the inspection may take place after the closure of the formal meeting)

6. Chairman to move Part 2

Part 2

In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Council may, by resolution, exclude the public (and press) from the following part of the meeting on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution (including the need to receive or consider recommendations or advice from sources other than members, committees or sub-committees) and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

7. Minutes - Confidential Annex

To receive the Confidential Annex to the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2019.

8. To consider any matters in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference.

(1) Community & Leisure Centre – confidential reports from the Finance Officer; Centre Bar Manager and/or Clerk:

a) Update Report (*NB. Non-confidential information will be discussed in Part 1 of the meeting*).

(2) Employee Matters - reports of the relevant Officer.

Note: Members of the Parish Council are welcome to observe the meeting but will be asked to leave at the point in the process when individual HR matters are discussed

Winwick Parish - Management Committee 9 April 2019

Present: Councillors Matthews (Chair) and Iddon

WPMC 57 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence received.

WPMC 58 Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

WPMC 59 Minutes

In respect of Minute WPMC52 – Action List, Clare Jones, Interim Finance Officer, reported that she was attempting to contact a contractor to attend to the central heating flue issue. On the matter of the playground equipment she had received a quote for the repairs from one playground contractor. However, she might be able to obtain a lower quote from a general maintenance company to carry out some of the non-specialist repairs, which could reduce the overall costs. The Chair reminded officers that the work needed to be completed before the Easter holidays when the playground equipment was more likely to be in use.

In connection with Minute WPMC53(A) – Quotes, further information on the roofing quotes would be provided at Agenda Item 5(1)(a). One quote had been received for the flooring issue, but given the urgency of the roofing matter, priority was being given to that project.

Decision – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

WPMC 60 Action List

Members considered a schedule, which outlined actions and referrals from previous meetings.

Actions 1 and 2 – The playground equipment repairs were in hand, as reported above.

Action 3 – The Leisure Centre Manager had now produced some discount vouchers for coffee purchases.

Action 4 – The Playing Field boundary vegetation inspection should be deferred until the Committee meeting in May and be included as a formal Agenda Item.

Action 5 – Three draft logos were circulated for initial comments. Members

were not particularly impressed with any of the designs, although some preferences were expressed for designs 1 and 2.

Councillor Iddon suggested that work need to be undertaken to give the Centre a face-lift before its rebranding. The Chair indicated that a number of Members of the Council were concerned about the financial position of the Leisure Centre and its long term future. He indicated a strong desire to enhance the Committee's control over the operation of the Leisure Centre. In particular, it was felt that the decisions of the Committee were not being implemented at a sufficiently fast pace and that, as a result, the same issues were being reported time and time again. That assertion was supported by Councillor Iddon also. However, it was noted that the Leisure Centre Manager was performing well, given that it was not a full time post. Members remained concerned that the financial situation was not sustainable in the long term and the solution might be 'to think outside of the box'. If some tangible progress could be demonstrated, that would be a step in the right direction. The Chair commented that the Committee needed to harness some of the energy from the staff engagement day and also let the Manager manage, while the Committee kept a firm eye on the potential risks. Overall, it would be useful to:-

- Ensure that staff understood that the Committee was the de facto management body and that they worked for the Committee.
- Include some user representation on the management body, although care would need to be taken around the timing of this extension and the individual memberships.
- Ensure that the people who used the Centre fully paid for its services, such that it was not a burden on the Council Tax payer.

Councillor Iddon reiterated her point about the overall appearance of the Centre, which might be a hindrance when trying to compete with other similar community venues. It was noted that the Alder Root Golf Club was doing well with events and that younger people often attended. Members speculated as to whether the threat of closure of the Centre would rally more people to use the facilities. The Chair reiterated that new customers were required, existing customers might need to pay more and that overheads needed to be more rigorously controlled. There was a feeling that the Leisure Centre had lost its connection to the local community and that a user group, or co-optees serving on the Management Committee could help to re-establish that link. Councillor Iddon commented that local people who could promote the Centre to other residents would be invaluable.

A lack of ideas and innovation was holding back the Centre from achieving its maximum potential. For example, a small investment in tables and table cloths could provide an attractive space for coffee drinkers - a 'coffee corner'. However, there was a sense that staff did not always use their initiative and act. Councillor Iddon pointed out that there had been no notices in the notice board since Christmas.

It was suggested that some colour versions of the logo designs be developed

and submitted to the Council for further consideration.

Action 6 – It was agreed that no further action be taken in relation to the Council Tax Support Allowance.

(Action to be deleted from log)

Action 7 – The system of regular reporting of stocktake reports had not yet been introduced. Ms Jones would discuss this matter shortly with the Leisure Centre Manager. The Chair indicated that there might still be stock issues to resolve. He commented that stocktake reports should be fairly static. A good stocktake report should provide the baseline for the normal position, whereas a poor stocktake report might indicate some unauthorised loss of stock.

Action 8 – The confidential annex to the minutes of 8 January 2019 had been completed and approved by the Committee at its last meeting.

(Action to be deleted from log)

Action 9 – Reporting systems had been put in place for DWP Fraud and Error Service enquiries.

(Action to be deleted from log)

Action 10 – The back of the Leisure Centre had been cleaned with a hose pipe, but the front patio had not yet been jet washed. Ms Jones agreed to remind the Deputy Centre Manager. Councillor Iddon reported that the outdoor furniture also needed restoration. Re-varnishing was suggested. Some planters and weed killing were also recommended, as well as low maintenance border plants facing the playing fields. Members queried to what extent the gardener was given specific tasks to complete. Ms Jones responded that she had carried out a walk-around with him last summer. It was suggested that the gardener should be given some instruction upon each visit. The Chair reiterated the point that the Centre needed to look more welcoming.

Generally, it was noted that people had different visions for how the Leisure Centre could be improved. The current bar clientele were predominantly 'men drinking'. A broader appeal would be an advantage. However, that would be difficult to achieve in the light of cheap off-sales from supermarkets. Traditional pubs, like the Swan, could provide an improved offer because of their character. However, the Leisure Centre would never have the appearance of the Swan and must secure a different market. The site, overlooking the playing fields, was a distinct asset and parents watching their children play, or others watching outdoor activities, could be targeted.

Overall the Committee wished to exercise greater control over the operation of the Centre. In particular, Members would find it useful to receive financial projections for future events, such as the quiz nights and Easter Egg event.

Decision –

- (1) To note the schedule of actions and referrals from previous meetings and the verbal updates provided.
- (2) To request the Finance Officer/ Leisure Centre Manager to provide some colour versions of the logo designs for submission to the Council for further consideration.
- (3) To request the Finance Officer to instruct the gardener to speak to Councillor Iddon prior to carrying out his work on each visit, to enable key tasks to be identified and discussed.

WPMC 61 Non-Confidential Matters Raised in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference

(A) Community and Leisure Centre Performance Reports

The Interim Finance Officer provided a report which showed the financial position at the Leisure Centre for March 2019, which represented the full year position subject to any adjustments required. Ms Jones, Interim Finance Officer, and Mr Morley, Leisure Centre Manager were in attendance to highlight key elements of the report.

Income Information

Bar Takings Cumulative

A graph was provided showing budgeted and actual bar takings as at March 2019. Based on a budget of £10k income expected each month, the bar takings for March ran at £1.2k under target (£3.4k under breakeven). The bar was £5.8k over target for the year to date, compared to £7k in February 2019. The Leisure Centre Manager had been looking into why certain days/evenings were low on income and was revising rotas and looking to fill gaps.

Events and room bookings for parties continued to be promoted to improve bar sales.

Analysis was ongoing for the percentage breakdown of bar sales by month and reports on figures from April 2019 onwards would have individual monthly targets for bar sales.

The Chair asked about the overall losses for the Leisure Centre for the year. Ms Jones did not have exact figures to hand, as those needed to be calculated manually. The Chair indicated that it would be difficult for him to continue to serve as Chair of the Committee without the Centre showing some sort of improvement. Mr Joinson, Clerk, reported that the figure for losses reported to Council on 26 March 2019 was £32k. However, the financial position had been stabilised, as the overall figure was similar to last year. Councillor Iddon suggested that the final outturn figure for the year would be

closer to £35k. Ms Jones commented that the Leisure Centre Manager was looking at cost savings and the fact that staff were currently opting out of the pension scheme would help the financial position. She reminded members that she was due to present the accounts in a revised format at the next meeting.

The Chairman outlined a five point plan for improvements at the Leisure Centre, as follows:-

- Charge existing users more;
- Attract new business inwards;
- Control costs;
- The Committee to have proper management control over the operation of the Centre (the Chair, Finance Officer and Leisure Centre Manager to meet the day after Committee meetings, if the Leisure Centre Manager was unable to attend the formal meeting);
- Establish a users group, with a carefully selected membership.

Mr Morley indicated that some of the above suggestions were already being implemented, including bringing in the rugby club to increase revenue for the hire of pitches and improve bar sales; new business could be secured by knocking on doors; a plan had been developed which could potentially make savings in the region of 20k, but some difficult decisions need to be taken; and regular meetings with the Committee and Finance Officer would be welcomed. It was noted that one long serving member of bar staff might be in the process of leaving shortly.

The Chair indicated that councillors representing those wards south of the M62 were growing increasingly reluctant to subsidise the Centre, which was predominantly used by those in the Winwick ward. Mr Morley asked if the Committee would be satisfied with a programme to reduce the deficit by around £5k each year until the Centre returned to profit. Members agreed that £5k was a realistic target.

Members asked if existing users were unhappy with the service offered by the Leisure Centre. Mr Morley indicated that users were happy, but that it would be useful to engage further with them. Ms Jones reminded members that prices had been raised last year and that care would need to be taken if increasing prices further. The Chair indicated that his main concern was that the price of buffets and room dressing needed to fully reflect the time and cost of set up, cleaning and waste disposal. There should be a sufficient mark up on those services to make them profitable. Mr Morley reminded Members that some venues did not charge at all for room hire in order to secure bookings and that the Centre would need to be competitive so as not to lose trade. Ms Jones commented that it should be possible to mark up the cost of buffets and the hire of a DJ without significant loss of trade. The Chair reminded Members that losses of £35k per annum were not sustainable. The sale of the Leisure Centre and Playing Fields land, for example, to a developer for community housing could eliminate any current and future liabilities. Councillor Iddon suggested that it would be very difficult for the

Centre to break even, although its financial health could be improved gradually.

Repairs and Maintenance

Mr Morley reported that a jet wash machine had now been obtained and that the patio area could be cleaned. Of greater concern was the fact that the roof of the Leisure Centre continually leaked. The situation was very demoralising. It was noted that there was a repairs and maintenance budget and that this had not been fully spent in 2018/19. As at 26 March 2019 £3,652 had been spent from the budget of £6,000. However, there might be additional allocations to that heading since that date. Notwithstanding the above, a quote received for the roof replacement was significantly greater than that amount (over £80k). Mr Joinson indicated that the expenditure could be capitalised, so that it was paid over a period of say 10 years, which should be the lifespan of the asset. However, the Chair indicated that it would be difficult to justify extensive capital investment in a facility that was losing a significant amount of revenue each year.

Ms Jones indicated that alternative quotes had been received for repair of 44m² over the kitchen and recladding the tower, or slightly more for the same roof repairs but with removal of the tower (both quotes under £10k). It was noted that use of the 2019/20 repairs and maintenance budget for the roof repairs would leave nothing else for any further issues that arose during the year, such as toilets and till repairs. The Chair indicated that it would be important to communicate with users why money was being spent. The alternative, to close the Centre, would be a difficult decision politically. Councillor Iddon suggested that other Council priorities also need to be reviewed, such as the litter picker service. The Chair indicated that there were some improvements that could be made to that service, but essentially it was a parish-wide service from which all Council Tax payers benefited. The number of complaints about street tidiness had fallen significantly since the introduction of the service.

Cash Takings

A table of cash takings for bar sales for the weeks commencing 25 February 2019 to 25 March 2019 was presented, together with a list of events which had taken place throughout the period. The table showed that bar sales were strong at weekends and for birthday parties, funerals, etc. Tea/coffee sales were not included in those figures. The green boxes highlighted where takings had been over the breakeven point for the day. A more detailed schedule, which included tea/coffee sales, room hire and ticket sales was also provided.

Members considered whether or not there was a case for closing the bar on Monday evenings. Mr Morley commented that that would be a difficult decision to take. Other clubs such as Newton Sports Club were closed on Monday to Wednesday. The Chair suggested a community focus for Monday evenings. Mr Morley suggested that a discount of the first four weeks at half

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price could be employed to attract potential new users. Councillor Iddon commented that groups who were likely to utilise the bar should be targeted, as a number of existing groups hired rooms but did not make use of the bar after their sessions. The Chair suggested a 'Real Ale Mondays' theme. Mr Morley added that realistically Monday would be a slow day.

Coffee Sales

Regarding the coffee sales, as previously reported, to break even the Centre needed to sell 6 cups per day. A monthly breakdown of tea/coffee sales was provided, which showed consistent sales following initial growth. In March 2019, 11 cups per day had been sold, compared to 10.5 cups in February 2019.

Room Lettings Cumulative

A graph was provided showing budgeted and actual lettings income as at March 2019. Room lettings ran £0.4k under budget for March 2019 (£0.3k over breakeven). The year to date figure was running under budget by approximately £2k in total (£1.5k under in the previous month). However, the current year to date figure was £7.5k above the breakeven point. As reported under the Bar Takings sub-heading, work was on-going to promote the use of the Centre and if the website content was optimised and the marketing system began to deliver results, there should be an improvement in room hires. Ms Jones noted that a cheque had just been received today which would improve the current lettings financial position.

Payments Made

A list of payments made to 9 April 2019 was presented, as follows:-

Payee	Description	Sum
Electronic Payments authorised on 1 April 2019		
Bliss	-	£914.12
Maxigiene		£72.00
Styles		£192.00
P Healey		£471.00
Wigan Beer		£422.78
Direct Debits paid on 1 April 2019		
BT Group	-	£233.59
BNP Paribas	-	£266.84
WBC	Rates	£770.00
British Gas		£2,001.67

Weekly Room Information

The electronic booking system was now being utilised by all staff to enable room bookings to be taken over the bar.

Quotes

Quotes had been obtained or were being sought for the following projects:-

- Roof repair (as discussed under Repairs and Maintenance above);
- Playground equipment (as discussed under Minutes above); and
- Planning consultancy (see WMPC 62 below).

In respect of the planning consultancy quote, Peter Black (Blackfryers Consultants) had been approached directly, since he had already carried out work for the Council previously on this matter which was effectively being extended.

Items from Previous Agendas and Progress

As discussed earlier in the meeting, the new logo remained outstanding, but a number of draft designs had been provided.

Issues of Note

There were a number of staffing related items due to be discussed, which might need to be taken in Part 2 of the meeting.

Outline Business Plan for the Leisure Centre

Mr Morley provided a document which outlined some thoughts on the future of the Centre. The document included information on the staffing establishment, rotas, hours worked, sickness and the Council's duty of care. The proposals could potentially result in the Centre operating in the black by 2021. The core document was confidential and not in the public domain.

Mr Joinson confirmed that staff were not on contracted sick pay and would only be entitled to statutory sick pay.

Ms Jones commented that the advert for the Finance and Bookings Administrator post was now in the public domain. It was understood that the post might appeal to an existing member of staff. Accordingly, it might not be necessary to go through a full recruitment exercise. The Chair advised caution in that there was a risk of losing focus on lettings administration if the role was undertaken by an individual who also had responsibilities for the bar. However, there were some potential opportunities to utilise the administrator post to serve coffees before the bar staff came on shift.

Decision –

- (1) To note the update report.
- (2) To authorise the Leisure Centre Manager to experiment with the Centre's offer on Monday evenings to attempt to increase trade at that time.

- (3) To support, in principle, the outline business case provided and to request the officers to refine the document, to enable staff to be consulted on its content, subject to (4) below.
- (4) That a formal business case be provided to the Council for approval, prior to commencement of any consultation process and that the report be provided in Part 2 of the meeting, as necessary.

WPMC 62 Possible engagement of Planning Consultants to advise the Council on the draft Local Plan

Members were reminded that the Council, on 26 March 2019, had delegated to the Committee the power to determine whether to engage existing planning consultants to carry out further work on the draft Local Plan. Ms Jones commented that quotes had been received from Blackfryers Consultants, as follows:-

- Meeting with residents (1 day) £500 + VAT
- Produce report (1 day) £500 + VAT
- Meet Warrington Borough Council planners ($\frac{1}{2}$ day) £250 + VAT

The Chair indicated that it was anticipated that Poulton-with-Fearnhead would contribute 50% of the costs. Councilor Gosney should be in a position to confirm that council's offer.

Decision – To agree to commission the first day of work from Blackfryers Consultants, i.e. meeting with residents, subject to ratification by full Council and to Poulton-with-Fearnhead agreeing to pay half of the costs.

WPMC 63 Review of Issues Arising from the External Auditors report for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

Ms Jones commented that she was in the process of typing up some notes regarding the external audit.

Decision – To authorise Ms Jones and Mr Joinson to liaise to provide a response to the auditors' observations on the final annual accounts 2017/18.

WPMC 64 Exclusion of the Public (including the Press)

Decision – That members of the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by the need to keep the information confidential.

WPMC 65 Minutes - Confidential Annex

The Committee considered a Confidential Annex to the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019.

Decision – To approve the Confidential Annex to the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019, as now presented.

WPMC 66 Confidential Matters in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference

(A) Community and Leisure Centre Performance Reports

There were no matters raised under this heading.

(B) Employee Matters

Members reviewed the issues identified in the confidential minute above to assess whether the Manager's and Committee's actions had been appropriate and proportionate under the circumstances.

Decision – To note the staffing matters reported as set out in the confidential Annex to this Minute.

(Further information is included in a confidential minute to this section.)

WINWICK PARISH – MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – ACTION LIST / REFERRAL LOG 2018/19

No.	Issue	Minute No.	Date of Raising	Referred To	Referral Date	Response Date	Comments	Progress
1	To Ask the Bookings/Finance Administrator to obtain quotes in relation to the playground repairs.	WPMC.29(2)	13/11/18	Finance Officer / Bookings/Finance Administrator	13/11/18	-	In progress	
2	To authorise the Finance Officer to arrange for the repainting of the spiro wheel directly.	WPMC.29(3)	13/11/18	Finance Officer	13/11/18	-	In progress	
3	That Members carry out a walk around Myddleton Lane Playing Fields in April 2019, to check the general condition of the ground and vegetation.	WPMC.36(3)	08/01/19	All Members	09/04/19	-	To be carried out in May 2019. See Agenda Item	
4	To request the Finance Officer to provide regular stocktake reports to the Committee.	WPMC.45(A)(3)	06/02/19	Finance Officer	-	-		
5	To authorise officers arrange for the jet-washing of the patio by the cheapest suitable method.	WPMC.55(B)(2)	12/03/19	Finance Officer/ Leisure Centre Manager	-	-		
6	To request the Finance Officer/ Leisure Centre Manager to provide some colour versions of the logo designs for submission to the Council further consideration.	WPMC.60(2)	09/04/19	Finance Officer/ Leisure Centre Manager	-	-	Black and white versions were provided in 09/04/19	
7	To request the Finance Officer to instruct the gardener to speak to Councillor Iddon prior to carrying out his work on each visit, to enable key tasks to be identified and discussed.	WPMC.60(3)	09/04/19	Finance Officer	-	-		
8	To authorise the Leisure Centre Manager to experiment with the Centre's offer on Monday evenings to attempt to increase	WPMC.61(A)(2)	09/04/19	Leisure Centre Manager	-	-		

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	trade at that time.							
9	To support, in principle, the outline business case provided and to request the officers to refine the document, to enable staff to be consulted on its content, subject to (4) below.	WPMC.61(A)(3)	09/04/19	Finance Officer/ Leisure Centre Manager	-	-	Officers were working up financial models	
10	That a formal business case be provided to the Council for approval, prior to commencement of any consultation process and that the report be provided in Part 2 of the meeting, as necessary.	WPMC.61(A)(4)	09/04/19	Chair/Finance Officer	-	23/04/19	The Chair provided a draft business case document at Council on 23/04/19	
11	To agree to commission the first day of work from Blackfryers Consultants, i.e. meeting with residents, subject to ratification by full Council and to Poulton-with-Fearnhead agreeing to pay half of the costs.	WPMC.62	09/04/19	Chair	-	23/04/19	Council on 23/04/19 agreed to commission the full package offered by Blackfryers Consultants and to seek 50% of the cost from Poulton-with-Fearnhead	
12	To authorise Ms Jones and Mr Joinson to liaise to provide a response to the auditors' observations on the final annual accounts 2017/18.	WPMC.63	09/04/19	Finance Officer/ Clerk	-	-	A draft response has been produced	

Progress Legend

-  Completed
-  Complete – Immediate review programmed
-  Progressing to target
-  Issues (exception)
-  Early progress / just started
-  Not started (lower priority)

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