

PARISH OF WARBOYS

Minutes of the **Annual Parish Meeting** for the **Parish of Warboys** held on 7th April 2016 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs M P Bucknell, Chairman of the Parish Council in the Chair.

Ten other Members and the Clerk of the Parish Council
County Councillor M R Tew and District Councillor P L E Bucknell
Mrs E Mead, Practice Manager, Moat House Surgery
Mr T Patel, Wards of Warboys chemists
Approximately 45 members of the public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Parish Councillors Ms L A Gifford, J A Parker, R A Payne and J C Price.

MINUTES

Upon being moved by Parish Councillor Dr Withams and seconded by District Councillor Bucknell, the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th April 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th April 2015.

HEALTH PROVISION IN WARBOYS

The Chairman welcomed Mr T Patel of Wards of Warboys Chemists and Mrs E Mead, the Practice Manager of the Moat House Surgery, who had agreed to speak on a variety of issues relating to health provision for the residents of Warboys.

As the owner of the chemists in both Warboys and Somersham, Mr Patel informed the meeting that he was committed to providing a high standard of provision in the local community. He referred to the introduction of the electronic prescription arrangements which had been introduced in February and was saving staff time at both the chemists and the surgery. The numbers on the scheme were growing and it appeared to be working well.

Mr Patel mentioned that there had been cuts in funding to pharmacy services for a number of years and that a further more severe cut was anticipated which was likely to affect staffing levels. However he pointed out that the pharmacies most at risk were the ones in urban areas where there were several outlets in close proximity and this was

unlikely to result in any significant change in areas such as Warboys and Somersham. Under the circumstances he encouraged patients to sign the petition in the chemists objecting to the proposed cut.

In response to a number of questions, Mr Patel advised that the drugs budget was being reduced and that the chemists and the surgery were being encouraged to prescribe more generic drugs rather branded products as the latter were more expensive. Although patients often preferred branded products as this was the medication with which they were familiar, Mr Patel suggested that generic products were equally good and often better because they were more of more modern development.

In terms of the recycling of unused drugs, Mr Patel advised that these could not be re-issued even if returned to the chemists unopened as he could not guarantee their safety. Any products that were returned were destroyed as there was no mechanism in place for them to be recycled.

Mrs Mead on behalf of the Moat House Surgery also referred to the benefits of the electronic prescription service and she updated the meeting on personnel changes at the surgery. A further change with effect from the beginning of April was an ability for patients to have access on-line to some of their personal medical records.

Mrs Mead advised that the National Health Service was under great pressure both in terms of funding and the medical needs of patients. All three of the hospitals locally were struggling to cope with patient capacity which was resulting in more issues having to be dealt with by local medical practices. At the Moat House Surgery, Mrs Mead reported that one third of the patients registered had a long term illness of some nature which resulted in great pressure on the practice.

The meeting was advised that the new appointments system introduced twelve months previously was working well and meant that the doctors could prioritise on the urgency of patient illnesses. Although between 50 and 100 telephone calls were regularly received for appointments on Monday mornings, the target was for patients to receive a return call from one of the doctors within 30/45 minutes. Receptionists were now also trying to filter calls to ensure that the most urgent cases received priority and some 50% of calls could now be dealt with over the telephone as opposed to arranging an appointment that previously would have been the norm.

Nevertheless Mrs Mead reported that many people failed to appear for appointments and she quoted as an example a week in March when 22.5 hours of pre-booked appointments had not been attended. She asked everyone at the meeting to convey the message in the community that the failure to attend or cancel appointments impacted on the ability of the surgery to cope with patient demand.

In response to questions, Mrs Mead welcomed a suggestion for the surgery to use the medium of the Warboys Diary to communicate important messages such as the time wasted in non-attended appointments. With regard to the discussion nationally of longer opening hours promoted by the Government, Mrs Mead advised that the surgery had opened on Saturday mornings previously but this had not been popular. As surgeries were now working to capacity both in terms of staffing and funding, she suggested that the only way that this might be feasible was for surgeries in a particular locality to group together to cover the extended hours.

With regard to the planned development in Warboys, Mrs Mead replied that the surgery should be able to cope but this would be dependent on the health of the incoming residents. Additional funding did follow an increase in patient numbers but was subject to an 18 months delay. However in the case of Warboys, Mrs Mead pointed out that the accommodation at the surgery was at capacity and there was no room to expand.

In terms of the traffic flows at the surgery car park, Mrs Mead advised that the possibility of a one way system had been investigated previously but this had been discounted because of the proximity to the junction with Popes Lane and the fact that the trees adjacent to the car park were protected by preservation orders which prevented them from being felled.

At the end of the discussion, the Chairman expressed the thanks of those present to Mr Patel and Mrs Mead for their attendance and the reassuring information that they had provided about the services offered in Warboys. She explained that the community were grateful to both the medical practice and the chemists for the high standard of service that they provided and she remarked how fortunate residents were to have access to such excellent facilities.

Mr Patel and Mrs Mead then left the meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman expressed her appreciation for the high level of attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting and presented her report summarising the main activities that had been undertaken by the Parish Council over the previous year, together with other matters of significance. A written report had been circulated at the meeting and publicised in advance on the Parish Council's website, with the Chairman highlighting various issues of particular significance.

The Chairman thanked the Members of the Parish Council for their efforts over the past year for the benefit of the community, stressing the time commitment which they gave voluntarily. She also thanked the staff of the Parish Council for their support and expertise. Attention was drawn to the honour bestowed on Warboys residents, Captain Victor Lucas RN who had been High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire over the past year and Councillor Peter Bucknell who had served as Chairman of Huntingdonshire District Council since May 2015

The Chairman referred to a number of notable events over the past year, including the well-deserved award of the French Legion of Honour to Mr Vic Steward, the march through the village and performance by the Band of HM Royal Marines at the invitation of the High Sheriff, a well-attended WWII 70th anniversary concert at the Manor House which had raised over £1,000 for the High Sheriff's awards scheme for young people, the Royal British Legion Women's Section and the Red Cross, and the Mayday Madness event attended by over 800 people that had raised £6,800 for village organisations. She also referred to the Feast Week Band Concert, the official opening of outdoor exercise equipment at Adams Lyons, the installation of the new Rector, Rev Garry Dawson-Jones, the children's summer book reading scheme presentation and the well-attended Christmas Lights Switch-on. Attention also was drawn to the forthcoming Beacon Lighting ceremony to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday

Turning to the Parish Council itself, the Chairman reported that this had been another busy year, with the installation of replacement notice boards costing over £2,000, installation of a seat at the cemetery funded by Warboys 55 Plus group, modification of an additional 5 lighting columns in the High Street for Christmas lighting displays costing over £1,000; essential repairs to Parish Centre roof costing almost £2,000 and the installation of outdoor fitness equipment at Adams Lyons playground and additional play equipment at Orchard Close playground. The Chairman advised that the Connections Bus for youngsters had continued on Friday evenings with the cost largely offset by grants, a Timebank scheme was anticipated to start in Warboys shortly, soil improver was being distributed to Warboys residents and allotment holders, hanging baskets would be displayed at a number of business premises, a mural painting would shortly be undertaken at the shelter near the Clock Tower and road closures were now being undertaken for the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial and the Christmas Lights switch-on, as well as the usual Feast Week funfair visit.

The Chairman reported that some village organisations were thriving and very popular, whereas others were finding it difficult to attract volunteers. She mentioned that interest was being shown in the formation of a new Horticultural and Craft Society Committee with the possibility of a resumption of the annual show. She also thanked Mick Mitchell for his efforts in editing the Warboys Diary which continued to be a well-read source of vital community information.

Attention was drawn by the Chairman to the impact of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 which included over 250 new dwellings in Warboys, some of which had already received planning permission. However she also referred to the closure of employment opportunities locally with the bankruptcy of Reclaimed Appliances at the Airfield Industrial Estate and the recent relocation of Gladwins vehicle repair workshop in Church Road. In a similar vein, the Chairman drew attention to a number of vacant properties in the High Street, including the Youthie building that the County Council had been unwilling to dispose of at reasonable terms, Newmans Stores which had been an eyesore for over 20 years and the former Steward's Hardware had stood empty for several years with no news as to when it would be converted for use as a Spar store.

The meeting was informed that the Parish Council continued to press for improvements to local roads. Despite regular complaints about traffic speeds in the village and ongoing requests for assistance, no volunteers had come forward to form a local Speedwatch team. However following problems with road conditions on Puddock Hill in the winter of 2014/15, the Parish Council had agreed to fund the reinstatement of the gritting of the hill by the County Council which would cost £1,350 in an average winter.

The Chairman reported that vandalism and anti-social behaviour had been a major problem over the past year, with damage to play equipment at Adam Lyons and Jubilee Park, a CCTV camera at Parish Centre and Christmas lighting, graffiti on play equipment and a recently installed notice board, several shed burglaries and oil on play equipment at Orchard Close. Litter also remained a major problem not only in the village but on roadside verges. It was reported that the Connections Bus Project on the Library car park for 2 hours on Friday evenings during term time had proved very popular with youngsters. Although the bus cost over £10,000 per annum, grants had been obtained from various sources to offset the expenditure by the Parish Council.

The Chairman expressed her appreciation to County Councillor Mike Tew and District Councillor Peter Bucknell for their attendance at the monthly meetings of the Parish Council and their hard work and expertise in helping the community. She paid tribute to all Members of the Parish Council and reminded members of the public that they were welcome to attend meetings of the Parish Council and raise issues at the Open Forum that followed each meeting.

Captain V Lucas thanked the Chairman and the Parish Council for their support in hosting the band of the Royal Marines prior to their march through the village and for arranging the presentation of the Legion of Honour to Mr V Steward. He also asked a question regarding the progress of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to which District Councillor Bucknell responded.

COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Written reports were submitted by County Councillor Tew and District Councillor Bucknell, copies of which were circulated at the meeting and had been published on the Parish Council's website.

District Councillor Bucknell referred to the Government's announcement of the East Anglia Devolution Deal and reported that this had been rejected by Cambridgeshire County Council in favour of greater powers for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough alone. The matter would be discussed by the District Council in May.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Clerk presented the provisional financial statement for the Parish Council for 2015/16, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

As at the preparation of the report, the Clerk reported that the balances were estimated to be as follows:-

Earmarked reserves	£214,051
General Fund	£ 23,118

with the earmarked reserves comprising –

Allotments	£105,019
Open spaces/ play	£ 24,222
Landfill site fees	£ 14,194
Replacement Parish Centre	£ 60,000
S 106/CIL	£ 616
Timebanking	£ 10,000

A projected surplus was forecast for 2015/16 of £2,396. Grants and donations towards expenditure totalling £32,017 had been obtained during the year and insurance claims had resulted in the reimbursement of £3,187 towards damage to equipment. In terms of expenditure, two major schemes had been undertaken involving the installation of

additional play equipment at Orchard Close playground costing £13,391 and outdoor fitness equipment at Adams Lyons playground costing £22,938.

In view of the additional expenditure anticipated in 2016/17 and the likelihood that the Parish Council would be asked by the County and District Councils to fund more local services if they were to continue, the Parish Council's Council Tax precept had been increased by 5.5% for a Band D property.

In reply to a question, the Clerk explained that a Government grant of approximately £6,000 intended for the Parish Council as a result of recent Council Tax changes had been withheld by the District Council for their own expenditure.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A number of questions were raised by those present at the meeting.

A member of the public drew attention to the parking of a vehicle in Fenton Road between the junctions with Mill Green and Bencroft Lane which he suggested was a danger to highway safety as it obscured the view of oncoming traffic for motorists emerging from Bencroft Lane. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had been notified of the problem and that this would be included on the agenda for the meeting of the Parish Council in May as the County Council as highway authority were only prepared to make a traffic regulation order to prevent parking if the cost was met by the Parish.

A resident of Forge Way expressed concern at the practice of some motorists in parking on dropped kerbs which meant that, as a user of a wheelchair, he sometimes could not gain access to the opposite footway after crossing the carriageway. District Councillor Bucknell undertook to raise the matter with the County Council and the Police.

NEXT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Chairman thanked those present for attending and informed everyone that the next Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 20th April 2017.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Chairman.