

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 11th November 2019 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman

Councillors R J Dykstra, D W England, Mrs C Evans, Ms L A Gifford, S J Green, Mrs M H Harlock, R A Payne, P S Potts, Mrs J E Tavener, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

County Councillor T V Rogers

District Councillor G J Bull.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs J M Cole, J A Parker and Mrs S C Wilcox

138/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that Lord Mawhinney who, as Sir Brian Mawhinney had represented Warboys as the member of Parliament for the North West Cambs constituency from 1997 to 2005, had passed away on 10th November. Members were reminded that he had been an active supporter of the campaign to stop hazardous waste being deposited at the Warboys Landfill Site and had been a very prominent constituency MP who was often in Warboys at local events and surgeries.

Members stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect in memory of Lord Mawhinney.

The Chairman commented on the success of the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial on the previous day which had been attended by Mrs P Walkinshaw DL, officers from RAF Wyton and many members of the community. The Chairman expressed her appreciation to all those who had helped in any way to make the event such a success, including the Clerk and Handymen for the road closure, members of the Council for acting as marshals for the parade, Councillor Ms Gifford and her bell ringing team and the scouts and other uniformed organisations for the impressive display of poppies on the railings around the War Memorial garden and at the Jubilee Clock Tower.

Finally, the Chairman informed Members of the announcement earlier that day that Mr J Ablewhite had resigned with immediate effect as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire. It was understood that an interim appointment would be made pending the election date for a new Commissioner in May 2019.

139/19 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Payne and seconded by Councillor Green, the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

140/19 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Green declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute No 147/19 (David Wilson Homes Development – Open Spaces) as he owned a property on the development.

141/19 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 14th October 2019:-

(a) Lighting of Clock Tower Shelter

Further to Minute No. 120/19(a), Councillor Green reported that he had been unable to make any progress with the proposed illumination of the Clock Tower shelter.

(b) Cycle Racks

Further to Minute No. 120/19(h), the Clerk reported that he would be meeting the contractor engaged to create an opening in the perimeter wall at Wards of Warboys for the installation of a cycle rack later in the month with a view to the work commencing shortly thereafter.

(c) Electric Charging Points

Further to Minute No. 120/19(j), the Clerk reported that a presentation had been given earlier in the month by an officer of the County Council on a scheme for the installation of electric charging points for vehicles. The presentation had been attended by representatives of the Parish Council, Greener Futures and the Community Association. Members were advised that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Council to facilitate discussion on whether to apply for a grant for the installation of charging points in Warboys.

(d) Bellway Notice

Further to Minute No. 120/19(n), the Clerk reported that he was awaiting a further response from Bellway Homes with regard to the placing of a notice on the Weir railings advertising their development south of Farriers Way.

(e) Street Lighting

Further to Minute No. 123/19, Members were informed that there still remained an outstanding issue regarding the transfer of the electricity supply for the Parish

Council's street lighting from the County Council to Total Gas and Power but this was in the process of being resolved by the ESPO Energy Team.

(f) Bollard at Jubilee Clock Tower

Further to Minute No. 134/19, the Clerk reported that he was still trying to arrange for the repair of the fixing plate for the bollard missing from the Jubilee Clock Tower.

(g) Remembrance Sunday Arrangements

Further to Minute No. 137/19, the Chairman drew attention to posts that had appeared on two of the village Facebook accounts by persons criticising the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial on the previous day and in particular the fact that the two minutes silence had been observed as part of the service earlier than 11.00 a.m.

However the Chairman also referred to the very positive comments received from the Deputy Lieutenant, RAF officers and the Royal British Legion about the arrangements. It was pointed out that the two minutes silence was held officially at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month and not on Remembrance Sunday. Members agreed that a response should not be posted on Facebook in response to the comments which would be unlikely to placate the complainants and only lead to further comment. The posts would be taken into account in the planning of the Remembrance Sunday arrangements for 2020 which would be the seventy fifth anniversaries of VE and VJ Days.

142/19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14th October 2019 be received.

143/19 ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 4th November 2019 be received.

144/19 LEISURE AREAS COMMITTEE

Further to Minute No. 125/19, Members' attention was drawn to Minute No. 11/19(a) of the Leisure Areas Committee when it had been reported that it would not be possible to re-profile the climbing wall mound at Adams Lyons Playground as there was insufficient space adjacent to other items of play equipment. The Clerk indicated that he would be

investigating the replacement of the timber retaining sleepers which had rotted with recycled plastic sleepers and for the work to be undertaken by V J Dyer & Sons.

Further to Minute 120/19/(i), attention also was drawn to an update that had been given at the Leisure Areas Committee meeting with regard to the scheme to dredge the Weir (Minute 11/19(b) refers. It was anticipated that the work would be undertaken in January, subject to progress by the contractors on other schemes which were weather dependent. In response to a question by Councillor Payne, the Clerk confirmed that he had contacted A F Blakemore & Son Ltd to ask that employees of the SPAR did not park their cars in the High Street adjacent to The Weir while the work was being undertaken. The company had passed the message to the Area Manager to brief the staff accordingly.

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure Areas Committee held on 4th November 2019 be received.

145/19 POLICE REPORT

Attention was drawn to the information on crimes recorded in the Parish which were contained in the weekly update provided by the Police and forwarded by the Clerk to Members.

Councillor Ms Gifford reported that a post had appeared on Facebook that someone had been shot by an air rifle in the vicinity of Woodlands on the previous day and that the Police had been informed. Councillor Mrs Wyatt also reported damage to her car from an air rifle pellet on Hallowe'en.

146/19 NO. 66 HIGH STREET

Further to Minute No. 120/19(b), the Clerk and Councillor Willis reported on a meeting with District Councillor Bull and officers of the District Council's Conservation Team to discuss the situation with regard to 66 High Street, a listed building that had been vacant for over 20 years in the centre of the village. Members were informed of the options available to the District Council in seeking to achieve progress with the owner on the refurbishment of the premises.

Although unsightly, it was reported that the building was weather tight and that the surroundings were reasonably well maintained which limited the action that could be taken by the District Council. As works had been undertaken to the listed building that had not been authorised by the planning permission granted for its conversion to flats in 1995, it was thought that enforcement action could be taken. Officers were investigating the costs involved in preparing an enforcement notice which District Councillor Bull reported would have to be taken into consideration in deciding whether it would be in the public interest to pursue the service of the notice.

District Councillor Bull was thanked for his support in trying to expedite action towards the improvement of the building, after which he left the meeting.

(Having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the following matter, Councillor Green left the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon.)

147/19 DAVID WILSON HOMES DEVELOPMENT – OPEN SPACES

Further to Minute No. 127/19, a report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated to all Members) following an offer by David Wilson Homes (DWH) to transfer the freehold interest in the open spaces on Phase I of their development off Station Road to the Council. Plans were attached to the report showing the extent of the open spaces on both phases I and II of the development and also the open space provided in the Bellway development south of Farriers Way.

Members were informed of the volume of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts and additional Council Tax precept income that would be generated by the three developments. In addition, the developers would be required to make financial contributions to the Parish or District Councils if they accepted the freehold transfer of the open space in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD adopted by the District Council. The latter was estimated to generate a payment of in excess of £150,000 for the 2.34 hectares of open space at the DWH developments. A further sum would arise in the case of the Bellway development, although the precise extent of the open space was unavailable.

The Clerk reported that a representative of Arthur Ibbett Ltd had visited Warboys and provided an estimate of the cutting equipment required for both sites which would cost in the region of £28,000 plus an allowance of 10/15% annually for repairs. An additional employee would be required to manage the open space work which would also cost in the region of £20,000 p.a. While adoption of the estates would generate a considerable capital sum, the Clerk estimated that this would be exhausted in about 7 to 8 years.

Members remained concerned over the dangers to children presented by the balancing ponds on the developments and were not prepared to expand the role of the Council by accepting responsibility for additional open space maintenance. In the event of neither local authority accepting the open space, the Clerk reported that this would be transferred to a management company who would charge each household an annual sum for maintenance purposes.

Having discussed the issues involved, Members

RESOLVED

that the offer from David Wilson Homes to transfer the freehold interest in the open spaces at their Phase I development in Warboys be declined.

(County Councillor Rogers left the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

148/19 PREMISES

Further to Minute No. 128/19, Members considered a report by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) on a range of options which could provide accommodation for use as offices for the Council. These involved the possible acquisition of 20 High Street, the lease and refurbishment of the former Youthie premises and a replacement of the Parish Centre.

Details were contained in the report of the Community Infrastructure Levy receipts received to date by the Parish Council and the receipts anticipated from future developments on sites allocated for housing in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

With regard to 20 High Street, Members were advised that the cost of acquisition, modification and legal fees could amount to £250,000 and that CIL receipts could not be used to fund the cost if the primary use was an offices and meeting accommodation. Members acknowledged the lack of off-street parking, the need to apply for planning permission for change of use, the loss of commercial premises in the village and fact that small business relief would not be available for either this property or the Parish Centre as the limit for relief would have been exceeded.

Discussions had been held intermittently for several years with the County Council over the refurbishment of the Youthie premises but the officer now dealing with the matter on behalf of the County Council's Property Division had confirmed that they were not prepared to dispose of the freehold interest in the premises as it adjoined the Library which would remain in their possession. The offer currently available was a lease of 20 years at a peppercorn, followed by a commercial rent which was estimated to be circa. £5,000 at today's costs. The cost of refurbishment had not been calculated but was anticipated to be in excess of £100,000. Members remained of the view that the terms offered by the County Council were unacceptable and that the transfer of the freehold interest was preferred.

With regard to the replacement of the Parish Centre, various discussions had been undertaken previously as to a possible joint venture with sports clubs or the Underfives Playgroup. However none of the organisations had been interested in having to pay for improved accommodation. Given the deteriorating condition of the current Parish Centre, Members were of the opinion that a decision needed to be made on its future. As the District Council had offered a sum of £200,000 towards its replacement from their own CIL receipts, Members concluded that the construction of a replacement Parish Centre offered the most practical option in terms of improved village social facilities and office accommodation for the Council's employees.

Following a debate on the options available, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that no further action be taken in respect of the commercial premises at 20 High Street currently being advertised for sale;
- (b) that the County Council be advised that the terms offered for the Youthie are unacceptable; and
- (c) that a working party be established comprising the Chairman and Councillors Green and Payne to progress the replacement of the Parish Centre.

149/19 VE DAY 75

Members received the notes of the meeting of the VE Day 75 working group held on 28th October 2019 (copies of which had been circulated).

150/19 PROTOCOL FOR DEATH OF SENIOR NATIONAL OR LOCAL FIGURE

Further to Minute No. 120/19(c), the Clerk submitted a proposed protocol for marking the death of a senior national figure or local holder of high office (copy attached). Members were advised that arrangements were in hand to have the necessary actions prepared to deal with the death of a senior national figure at short notice and the Chairman requested that a pack be made available for use in the event of holiday commitments etc.

Having regard to the announcement of the death of Lord Mawhinney at the commencement of the meeting, Members agreed that his name should be the first in the Council's new Book of Condolence in which they and others could record their sympathies.

RESOLVED

that the protocol for the death of a senior national or local figure be adopted.

151/19 REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Chairman drew attention to the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Citizens Advice Rural Cambs towards the work of the organisation. Having been reminded that the Council had given a grant of £100 to the organisation in April, Members considered that a further request for assistance should not be considered until a period of twelve months had elapsed.

152/19 DECEMBER MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Members agreed to arrange a social gathering with the staff in the Hall at the Parish Centre prior to the next meeting of the Council on 9th December and the Clerk was requested to make the necessary arrangements.

153/19 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported that the following items of correspondence had been received since the previous meeting and he indicated that he would arrange for them to be circulated to Members for information:-

(a) Open Space

Autumn 2019 edition issued by Open Spaces Society

(b) Footprints

Published by East Anglia's Children's Hospices.

(c) Bulletin

November 2019 edition published by the War memorials Trust.

154/19 OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported that there were no matters raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council to bring to the attention of the Council.

155/19 ACCOUNTS

Upon being moved by Councillor Payne and seconded by Councillor Potts, it was

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
M J Buddle	Salary – October 2019	1,111.12
W E Batterbee	Salary – October 2019	1,116.83
R Edwards	Salary – October 2019	254.40
R Reeves	Salary - October 2019	1,017.33
Mrs N Everett	Salary – October 2019	470.34
HMRC	Tax & NIC – October 2019	1,576.77
R Reeves	Reimbursement – printer cartridges	57.59
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Book of Condolence	54.95
R Reeves	Petty cash	30.00
Mrs N Everett	Reimbursement – flowers for Timebank Members (Council will be reimbursed by CHS Group)	40.00
Vodafone	Mobile phone contract (Timebank) (paid by direct debit)	10.40
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	101.00
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	78.56
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support – October (paid by direct debit)	149.99
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	65.02

CGM Group	Grass cutting	306.00
Huntingdonshire District Council	Hedgecutting	393.70
CAPALC	VAT training course	80.00
Warboys Walking Group	Grant	150.00
National Savings & Investments	Deposit	15,000.00
Caloo Ltd.	Play equipment repairs	690.00
Warboys Community Association	Hire of projector	10.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – purchase of black ribbons	39.90
R Reeves	Mileage claim	59.85
ESPO	Miscellaneous supplies	181.13
R Durrant	Trumpet player at Remembrance Sunday service	20.00
CGM Group	Grass cutting	306.00

156/19 BUDGETARY CONTROL

The Council received the budgetary control statement and the list of Parish Centre bookings for October 2019, copies of which had been circulated to all Members.

157/19 DISABLED PARKING BAY – 14 RAMSEY ROAD

The Chairman reported that she had admitted the following item of business for consideration as the closing date for comments was prior to the next meeting of the Council.

The Chairman reported the receipt of correspondence from the County Council inviting comments on an application for a disabled parking bay to be marked in the carriageway at 14 Ramsey Road. Members noted that the property had off-street parking and that a public exhibition had been held recently showing plans to develop land west of Ramsey Road which would involve the creation of a new junction in Ramsey Road almost opposite No. 14.

Members were addressed by the occupier of the property who explained that the request had arisen to facilitate access and egress to a minibus that collected his severely handicapped daughter each day. Having regard to the explanation provided, it was

RESOLVED

that the County Council be advised that the Parish Council has no objection to the request.

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

Chairman.