

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 9th December 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, Mrs M H Harlock, J A Parker, R A Payne, P S Potts, Mrs J E Tavener and Mrs A R Wyatt.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

County Councillor T V Rogers

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs J M Cole, S J Green, Mrs S C Wilcox and G C M Willis and District Councillor G J Bull.

158/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman expressed her appreciation to Members who had helped in organising the social gathering with employees prior to the meeting in order to thank them for their work on behalf of the Council over the previous year.

The Chairman also reported the receipt of correspondence from the Christmas Lighting Group thanking the Parish Council for their financial support and the employees for helping with the arrangements for the display and switch-on ceremony which had been extremely well attended this year.

Members were informed that a letter had been received from the Poppy Appeal Organiser for Warboys and Wistow thanking the Council for their donation for the wreath for the Remembrance Sunday service and advising that a total of £3,652.23 had been collected in this year's appeal.

Finally the Chairman drew attention to the resignation of District Councillor Bull from his position as Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council with effect from 4th December. Councillor Bull had indicated that he would remain one of the ward councillors for Warboys for the remainder of his term of office but would only be attending meetings of the Parish Council in future if Councillor Mrs Tavener was unable to attend or there was an item which required his specific attendance.

159/19 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Payne, the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

160/19 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

All Members previously had declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the setting of the Council's budget and Council Tax precept for 2020/21 (Minute No. 172/19 below refers) but had been granted a dispensation by the Council to speak and vote on such matters.

161/19 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 11th November 2019:-

(a) Lighting of Clock Tower Shelter

Further to Minute No. 141/19(a), the Chairman advised that this matter would now be deferred until such time as Councillor Green might be able to progress the possible illumination of the Clock Tower shelter.

(b) Cycle Racks

Further to Minute No. 141/19(b), Members were informed that the work to create an opening in the perimeter wall at Wards of Warboys for the installation of a cycle rack had been completed and that the Handymen would be installing the cycle racks in the near future.

(c) Bellway Notice

Further to Minute No. 141/19(d), 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.

(d) Street Lighting

Further to Minute No. 141/19(e), Members were informed that the transfer of the electricity supply for the Parish Council's street lighting from the County Council to Total Gas and Power had been completed with effect from 8th October.

(e) Bollard at Jubilee Clock Tower

Further to Minute No. 141/19(f), the Clerk reported that the welder who had been contacted was unable to undertake mobile welding in order to repair the fixing plate for the bollard missing from the Jubilee Clock Tower. It had still not been possible to contact the welder from Somersham who had the plate despite numerous attempts to do so. Councillor Potts suggested another person who might be able to assist with the welding work and Councillor England offered to make enquiries with other potential contacts.

(f) 66 High Street

Further to Minute No. 146/19, the Clerk reported that he had been informed that Conservation Officers at the District Council were continuing to investigate what

action could be taken in the case of 66 High Street but it was unlikely that there would be any developments until the New Year.

(g) Replacement Parish Centre

Further to Minute No. 148/19, the Chairman reported that the first meeting of the working party established to investigate the replacement of the Parish Centre had taken place. A second meeting had been arranged in January and Huntingdon Town Council had been asked if the members of the working party could visit the recently completed Medway Centre in Huntingdon.

(h) Citizens Advice Rural Cambs

Further to Minute No. 151/19, Councillor Mrs Harlock reported that she had attended the recently held AGM of Citizens Advice Rural Cambs and had been impressed by the work of the organisation which had acknowledged the financial support given previously by the Council.

162/19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 11th and 25th November 2019 be received.

163/19 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 25th November 2019 be received.

164/19 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.

Specific mention was made of a traffic accident when a vehicle had left the A141 and demolished the walls of the Sheepwash. The Clerk indicated that he would try to discover the name of the driver or their insurers to obtain reimbursement for the repair but he was not optimistic that this could be achieved.

165/19 ADAMS LYONS PLAYGROUND - PLAY EQUIPMENT/SLEEPER REPLACEMENT

Further to Minute No. 125/19, a report (copies of which had been circulated) was submitted by the Clerk on the installation of play equipment and replacement of timber sleepers at Adams Lyons playground.

Following a meeting on site with the Area Sales Manager of Wicksteed Leisure, quotations had been received from the company for various types of multi-play units for younger children. Although the Council's Financial Regulations required the submission of three quotations, the Clerk pointed out that all of the multi-play units supplied by play equipment companies differed with a huge choice available and Wicksteed alone having over 60 types to choose from. It was therefore impossible to make an effective price comparison. Wicksteed Leisure had supplied competitive quotes in the past and had provided high quality equipment.

The Clerk also reported that Dyers of Warboys had confirmed that they could replace the timber sleepers on the climbing wall with ones made from recycled plastic. A quotation was being prepared with the company assessing how many new sleepers would be required. The company also would remove the sensory garden prior to the installation of the new play equipment.

As ground conditions currently were so wet, it was acknowledged that the work would not be undertaken on site until the spring.

RESOLVED

- (a) that Financial Regulations be waived to avoid the necessity of obtaining quotations from several companies, having regard to the quality of the equipment and competitive nature of the prices previously quoted by Wicksteed Leisure and the difficulty in making effective comparisons;
- (b) that the quotation submitted by Wicksteed Leisure Ltd for a multi-play unit and safety surfacing of £10,652.71 plus VAT be accepted; and
- (c) that the cost be met from the Community Infrastructure Levy reserves held by the Council.

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

166/19 HEATH POND AND SHEEPWASH

Further to Minute No. 80/19(c), Members were informed that the application by Froglife to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for grant towards the dredging of the Heath Pond and refurbishment of the Sheepwash had been unsuccessful. Froglife were continuing to explore other grant possibilities and a further report would be given if these came to fruition.

167/19 SEAT – PATHFINDER WAY

Further to Minute No. 126/19, Members were informed that an objection had been received from a resident of Pathfinder Way to the proposed installation of a seat on one of the open spaces on the estate. The resident had expressed concerns that the decision had resulted from a request by a single individual, that members of the public did not use Pathfinder Way to access the surgery, that there was a seat in High Street near the junction with Pathfinder Way, that the seat would be used by youngsters who would cause disturbance to nearby residents, and that the money could be better used in improving Popes Lane.

The Chairman pointed out that the resident who had written lived some distance away from the proposed location of the seat on the open space opposite the entrance to Wellington Close and would not be disturbed by its installation. Members acknowledged the difficulty in identifying locations for street furniture of any type as neighbours were likely to object to potential sites located in proximity to their dwellings.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

that the correspondence from the resident be noted and the Clerk requested to arrange for the seat to be installed at the location previously agreed in Pathfinder Way.

168/19 CAMBRIDGESHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

The Clerk drew attention to an invitation from the County Council to comment on a draft Climate Change and Environment Strategy and Action Plan. The County Council had declared a Climate and Environment Emergency earlier in the year and would be publishing the strategy and action plan for comment from 20th December 2019 to 31st January 2020.

Members decided not to accept an offer from the County Council to attend the next meeting to speak about the strategy. However the Clerk reported that he would circulate the consultation document and a list of actions that parish councils could take on the climate and nature emergency that had been prepared by Friends of the Earth for consideration at the meeting.

169/19 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

Further to Minute No. 141/19(c), a report was submitted (copies of which had been circulated) which had been prepared by the Clerk on the availability of grant aid for the installation of charging points for electric vehicles in public locations.

A presentation had been given by an officer of the County Council on 6th November which had been attended by representatives of the Parish Council, Greener Futures and the Community Association and copies of the PowerPoint slides were attached to the Clerk's report. Members were informed that a grant was available from Government for 75% of the capital cost of installing charging points and it was likely that the balance could be

obtained by means of a grant from Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund. In terms of the ongoing revenue costs, companies were available who could manage the smart technology necessary to recharge users of the charging points, although some additional administration inevitably would arise for the Council.

The Clerk suggested that the only practical location which would be easily accessible in the village was the Library car park and permission would be required from the County Council if this was to be used. In view of the extensive preliminary work and justification that would have to accompany an application for grant, Members were informed that a member of the Greener Futures group had expressed an interest in assisting in the process.

While recognising the environmental advantages of electrically charged cars, Members expressed some scepticism about the practicality of the scheme. This included the high cost of electrically charged vehicles, the number of households in Warboys with no access to off-street charging facilities, the time required to charge a vehicle and the possibility of a charging point being monopolised by a small group of car owners which could lead to dissension and complaint.

Nevertheless in order to try to assess demand, it was

RESOLVED

that, in conjunction with Greener Futures, a survey be included in the next edition of the Warboys Diary.

170/19 GREENER FUTURES

Members were informed that representatives of the Council and Greener Futures had met on 6th November. A list had been circulated which had been prepared by Greener Futures on the ideas that they had for action that could be taken locally to help tackle climate change and improve the environment. On behalf of Greener Futures, Mrs B Ball expanded on the themes that the organisation would like to pursue, with particular mention to the planting of trees and the possibility of establishing a central location where residents could bring unwanted items for re-use by others.

171/19 PARISH CENTRE ENERGY COSTS

The Clerk reported that the current contracts for gas and electricity supply to the Parish Centre would expire in February and March. Price comparisons of a number of energy suppliers had been received from a company specialising in such matters, together with two different quotes from the existing supplier, E.ON.

Having regard to the fluctuating nature of energy charges and the different rates available, it was

RESOLVED

that, after consultation with the Chairman, the Clerk be authorised to accept the most advantageous prices available for the supply of energy to the Parish Centre when the current contracts expire.

172/19 COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT 2020/21

Members considered the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (Minute No. 163/19 above refers) with regard to the determination of the budget and Council Tax precept for 2020/21. The budgetary estimates had been updated following the Committee's meeting and were attached to a report by the Clerk (a copy of which had been circulated).

While the Committee had recommended the setting of a precept of £120,000 which would result in an anticipated increase of 2% in the level of Council Tax for a Band D property from its current level of £78.43 to £80, the Clerk explained that this had been based on a potential Council Tax Base of 1,500. Since the meeting, the District Council had advised that the Council Tax Base for Warboys would increase to 1,525 for 2020/21. As a result, the precept recommended by the Committee would only require a Council Tax for a Band D property of £78.69 which was an increase of 0.3%.

Having regard to the decision to proceed with the replacement of the Parish Centre, Members remained of the opinion that the level of Council Tax should rise by 2% which was regarded as an acceptable level of increase. It was therefore

RESOLVED

- (a) that the precept for 2020/21 be set at £122,000 which would require a Band D Council Tax level of £80.00, representing an increase in the level of Council Tax for a Band D property of 2%; and
- (b) that, subject to the decision in (a) above, the budget now submitted be approved for 2020/21.

173/19 SCAMS

The Clerk circulated information from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership which had been established to help protect members of the public from the many scams that defrauded victims causing financial hardship and ill health.

Members were informed that if the Council became a supporter of the Partnership, it would result in the latter forwarding details of the latest scams and advice on how individuals could protect themselves from fraud. The information could then be disseminated to local residents. It was therefore

RESOLVED

that the Council become a supporter of the Partnership.

174/19 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Members considered the format for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 22nd April 2020. It was felt that the number of speakers invited to the last Annual Parish Meeting had been excessive and had resulted in the meeting lasting too long. As a General Election was to be held on 12th December, it was suggested that the new Member of Parliament for North West Cambridgeshire should be invited to address the meeting. While accepting that legislation required the holding of at least one Parish Meeting annually, Members felt that the name might deter members of the public from attending and that thought could be given to a more descriptive title for the meeting which still achieving the legislative requirement.

RESOLVED

that the local Member of Parliament be invited to speak at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

175/19 MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Members decided to decline an invitation for the Council to be represented at the Mayor of March's Civic Carol Service in March on 22nd December.

176/19 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) Clerk & Councils Direct
December 2019 edition
- (b) Countryside Voices
Winter 2019 edition published by CPRE
- (c) Fieldwork
Winter 2019 edition published by CPRE

177/19 OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported that the only matter raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council had been concerns registered by a member of the public about the impact of the proposed development in Ramsey Road on his property.

178/19 ACCOUNTS

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Tavener and seconded by Councillor Mrs Harlock, it was

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
M J Buddle	Salary – November 2019	1,107.24
W E Batterbee	Salary – November 2019	1,113.24
R Edwards	Salary – November 2019	396.00
R Reeves	Salary - November 2019	1,017.73
Mrs N Everett	Salary – November 2019	470.54
HMRC	Tax & NIC – November 2019	1,608.03
R Reeves	Reimbursement – printer cartridges	20.94
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)	206.56
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support – October (paid by direct debit)	167.99
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	114.02
Balfour Beatty Living Places	Replacement LED lamps – New Road	1,942.42
Merlin Lighting (Installations) Ltd	Christmas lighting installation and removal	1,200.00
SLCC	Annual subscription for Clerk	202.00
Earth Anchors Ltd.	Seat and picnic table	1,683.60
Parrott Print Ltd	Printing of condolence book pages	78.00
Cambridgeshire	Street lighting electricity recharge	1,016.75

County Council	01/10/2018 – 30/09/2019	
Dyers of Warboys	Alterations to wall – Wards	2,850.00
Society of Local Councils Clerks	Clerk’s Manual (new edition)	52.30
Michael Murray Signs Ltd.	Lettering on Honours Board	30.00
Guardian 24	Lone working system renewal	158.76
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Membership renewal	57.00
Xerox (UK) Ltd	Photocopying charges	46.94

179/19 BUDGETARY CONTROL

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

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

Chairman.