

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 14th September 2020 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, J A Parker, R A Payne, P S Potts, G C M Willis, Mrs S J Wilcox and Mrs A R Wyatt.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs J M Cole and Mrs J E Tavener, County Councillor T V Rogers and District Councillor G J Bull.

47/20 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Willis, the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th August 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48/20 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared by Members in respect of items appearing on the agenda.

49/20 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 10th August 2020:-

(a) 66 High Street

Further to Minute No. 35/20(a), the Clerk reported that no further information had been received regarding a resolution of the situation at No. 66 High Street.

(b) Damage to Sheepwash

Further to Minute No. 35/20(b), the Clerk reported that he had submitted a claim to the insurers of the driver who had damaged the Sheepwash in a vehicle collision. Despite a reminder, a response had not been received and the Clerk indicated that he would pursue the matter further.

(c) Meeting Arrangements

Further to Minute Nos. 35/20(d) and (e), Members considered the ramifications of the Government's announcement in response to the increase in the rate of Covid-19 infections that no more than 6 people should gather either internally or externally with effect from 14th September.

The Clerk drew attention to the updated guidance on the Government's website that explained in detail the changes to social distancing. The guidance on the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities had confirmed that community facilities following Covid-19 secure guidelines could continue to host more than 6 people in total, although no one should visit or socialise in a group of greater than 6 in number. Activities having more than 6 people participating should ensure that all individuals maintained social distancing of 2 metres or 1 metre with actions taken to reduce the risk of transmission.

Under the circumstances, the Clerk explained that face-to-face meetings of the Parish Council and the use of the Parish Centre by hirers were unaffected by the new legislation. This view had been confirmed by Cambridgeshire ACRE.

Nevertheless, Members discussed whether meetings of the Parish Council should be held remotely as opposed to face-to-face. Members were advised by the Clerk of the implications of changes to the regulations permitting remote meetings in August and which he had referred to at the previous meeting. Details of the log-in arrangements for a meeting held remotely and open to the public now had to be included in the agenda to enable any person to 'attend' that meeting.

In answer to questions about the possibility of hosting face-to-face meetings at the Parish Council with remote access for those Members unable to attend, the Clerk advised that the Council currently did not possess the necessary equipment to enable this to be introduced.

With regard to the use of the Parish Centre by other groups, the Clerk reported that a number of hirers now had returned following the lifting of lockdown with others making enquiries about returning. Use of the Parish Centre was regulated by the additional hire conditions and risk assessment approved by the Council with all hirers also being required to submit their own risk assessment to ensure that they complied with Government guidance during the pandemic.

On a related issue, the Clerk reminded Members that the Government had introduced a legislative requirement some two years previously whereby the websites of local authorities had to be accessible for the disabled. As the deadline for compliance was later in September, the person who maintained the Council's website would be making the necessary changes shortly with the website being taken down for this purpose on 20th and 21st of the month.

Following lengthy discussion, it was

RESOLVED

that meetings of the Council continue to be held face-to-face and the Clerk requested to investigate the feasibility and cost of providing remote access to those meetings.

(d) Jubilee Park – Link to Bellway Development

Further to Minute No. 35/20(g), the Clerk reported that Bellway had indicated that they would be contacting their ground worker with a view to installing the footpath link to Jubilee Park from their development at The Furrows. As no further communication had been received in the past month, the Clerk indicating that he would be contacting the company again to expedite this matter.

(e) VJ Day

Further to Minute No. 35/20(h), the Chairman informed Members that it had been possible to record a commemoration of VJ Day with representatives of the Warboys Branch of the Royal British Legion which had been uploaded to the Council's website. The Scouts had donated the poppies for the war memorial railings which had been installed by the Handymen and wreaths had been laid on VJ Day itself with a local resident in attendance who had played Last Post and Reveille at 11.00 a.m. and Sunset later in the day.

(f) Parish Centre – Security Arrangements

Further to Minute No. 35/20(i), the Clerk reported that some difficulty had been encountered when trying to log-on to the new CCTV unit at the Parish Centre which had been replaced recently by Business Watch. The company would be carrying out a site visit later in the week.

(g) Replacement Parish Centre

Further to Minute No. 35/20(h), the Clerk reported that the working party had held a further meeting by Zoom with the principal of Tibbett Architectural Services to progress the scheme for the replacement of the Parish Centre. Amendments to the initial plans had been suggested and, as Councillor Payne had been unable to attend the meeting, the architects would be seeking his views before supplying revised plans for consideration and the submission of a pre-planning enquiry to the District Council for planning permission.

The Chairman indicated that an informal meeting of Members would be arranged by Zoom to discuss the plans once these had been received.

(h) Adams Lyons Playground – Trees

Further to Minute No. 45/20, the Clerk reported that Global Tree Solutions would be submitting an application to the District Council for consent to the cutting back of the trees in Adams Lyons playground. Provided that no objection was raised by the District Council or a reply was not received within six weeks of submission, the work would be proceeding.

(i) Dredging of The Weir

Arising from Minute No. 46/20, Members were informed that Councillor Mrs Cole was making enquiries into the possible relocation of the remaining large fish in The Weir.

The Clerk reported that he would be contacting other firms with a view to the possibility of arranging for the pond to be dredged.

50/20 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 10th August 2020 be received.

51/20 POLICE REPORT

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

52/20 TRAFFIC IN WARBOYS

Members noted the distribution of a leaflet and questionnaire in parts of the village by an organisation that had been formed calling itself Warboys Residents Against Nuisance Traffic (RANT) criticising the Parish Council for not having taken action to prevent HGVs and Tractors from travelling through the village. As the organisation had not contacted the Council and the closing date for replies to the questionnaire had only passed a few days prior to the meeting, no further action was taken pending an approach from the organisation.

53/20 WINTER GRITTING

A report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) summarising the action taken in previous winters to supplement the gritting of highways in the Parish by the County Council as the highway authority.

An invitation again had been received from the County Council for volunteers in local communities to grit footways designated by parish councils and approved by the highway authority. The Clerk explained that this had been undertaken for several years by the Handymen, although the number of times that it had been necessary to undertake gritting had been limited in recent winters by the warmer weather. The equipment and grit would again be supplied by the County Council.

The Clerk also explained that the route map of winter gritting routes produced by the County Council still showed Station Road, Puddock Hill and Fenside Road as secondary routes that would only be gritted if freezing weather occurred for more than 5 days. However, the Parish Council had agreed to meet the cost of gritting Station Road and Puddock Hill over the past 5 years as a primary route.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Council continue to arrange for the gritting of footways to be undertaken by the Handymen under the community gritting scheme;
- (b) that no change be made to the schedule of footways gritted by the Handymen; and
- (c) that the Council continue to pay for the gritting of Station Road and Puddock Hill by the County Council as a primary route.

54/20 VILLAGE OF THE YEAR SIGNS

The Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the implementation of the Local Highway Improvement bid for the current year which included the installation of gateways at the entrance to the village in Ramsey Road. This would necessitate the removal of the 30 mph posts to which three Village of Year

plaques had been attached by the Parish Council to commemorate the success of the village in becoming Cambridgeshire Village of the Year in 2000, 2002 and 2004.

The County Council had enquired whether the Parish Council wished to continue to have the plaques displayed and, after a vote had been taken, it was

RESOLVED

that the Clerk be requested to make arrangements for the plaques to be displayed elsewhere in Ramsey Road near the entrance to the village.

55/20 CONNECTIONS BUS PROJECT VISITS

Further to Minute No. 35/20(i), Members considered a report by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) following detached youth work visits to the village each week for six weeks by staff of the Connections Bus Project. A schedule which had been provided by the Project was attached to the report listing the number of young people who the youth workers had spoken with during their visits and summarising the topics of conservation. Although wet weather had been experienced on three of the visits, Members noted that only a small number of young people had been out in the village in an evening.

The Project had enquired whether the Council wished to continue to fund detached youth work visits over the autumn as the Connections Bus would be unable to return until January at the earliest because of the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing rules.

RESOLVED

that, given the low number of young people contacted by youth workers over the summer and the fact that visits could not be advertised under the current restrictions, no further action be taken to fund further visits in the autumn.

56/20 JUBILEE CLOCK REPAIR

Following the receipt of information that one of the dials at the Jubilee Clock Tower was not working, the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) explaining that Smith of Derby had identified the problem as being a worn con rod. A quotation for its repair in the sum of £756 plus VAT had been accepted by the Clerk after consultation with the Chairman to ensure that the clock was working again as soon as possible. A date had not yet been given by the company as to when the part would be installed.

It was pointed out to Members that the Council's Financial Regulations required the invitation of three quotations for works estimated to cost in excess of £500 and that the specific approval of the Council was required for any expenditure in excess of £750. However the Clerk drew attention to the fact that it would be impractical to obtain three quotations as few specialist firms existed and the Council had a maintenance contract with Smith of Derby.

As the fault had been due to wear and tear, Members queried whether it would be advisable to ask Smith of Derby to quote for the repair of the con rods on the remaining three clock dials.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the acceptance of the quotation for the repair of the clock be endorsed;
- (b) that Financial Regulations be waived to enable the clock to be repaired by Smith of Derby; and
- (c) that Smith of Derby be asked to supply a price for the repair of the three remaining con rods on the assumption that they might be similarly likely to be worn and susceptible to becoming faulty.

57/20 SMALL BUSINESS GRANT FUND

A report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) on the financial implications to date of the Covid-19 pandemic in respect of Council business. During the period of closure of the Parish Centre from mid-March to the end of July in lockdown, it was estimated that the loss in income had been approximately £3,000, although this had been offset to some extent by a reduction in expenditure. The Handymen had returned to work after Easter but a claim had not been made under the furlough scheme as the Government had indicated that it did not expect local authorities to do so as they were funded by the precept which remained unaffected by the pandemic.

Nevertheless, the Clerk reported that information had been received from the District Council that the Government had belatedly advised that the parish councils qualified for small business grant fund. An application had therefore been submitted in respect of the Parish Centre and a grant of £10,000 had been received.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

58/20 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the arrangements for the forthcoming Remembrance Sunday in November. The Warboys Branch of the Royal British Legion had forwarded information from its Headquarters instructing branches not to organise Remembrance Sunday parades and stressing that these were purely civic events which were the responsibility of relevant local authorities. The Clerk pointed out that the arrangements in Warboys had increasingly been administered by the Council in recent years, particularly the closure of the High Street to enable the service at the war memorial to be attended by several hundred people.

As the Government had recently made it an offence to meet in groups of more than six people, Members acknowledged that it would not be possible to organise a service and parade that complied with the legislation now in force. As this was unlikely to change prior to the beginning of November, Members reluctantly decided that it would not be possible to hold the usual service and parade in 2020. The Clerk suggested that poppies could be displayed again on the war memorial railings and representatives of village organisations invited to lay wreaths at times of the own choosing at the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday prior to 11.00 a.m.

RESOLVED

- (a) that no action be taken to close the High Street or organise a service or parade on Remembrance Sunday in order to avoid contravention of Government legislation on gatherings of more than six people; and
- (b) that poppies be attached to the war memorial railings by the Handymen in advance of Remembrance Sunday and village organisations invited to make their own arrangements to lay wreaths that day.

59/20 SALARIES OF EMPLOYEES

Members noted a report by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) containing information on the review of salaries of local government employees nationally with effect from 1st April 2020. Details of the revised salaries of relevant employees had been included in the report which it had been estimated would result in additional salary costs in the current year of £1,574.

60/20 OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported on the issues raised by Members at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council. Councillor Ms Gifford had drawn attention to a faulty dial on the Jubilee Clock Tower which had been referred to in Minute No.56/20 above. She had also reported on complaints from horse riders about the speed of farm vehicles in Station Road and Fenside Road. The complainants had been asked to keep a log of the incidents to enable the matter to be investigated but no further information had been received.

It was also reported that Councillor England had asked if the rubbish sacks collected weekly from litter bins in the village by the Handymen could be left for collection again by the District Council refuse operatives at the Parish Centre as opposed to Manor Farm.

61/20 ACCOUNTS

Upon being moved by Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Mrs Wilcox, it was

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
M J Buddle	Salary – August 2020	1,146.11
W E Batterbee	Salary – August 2020	1,141.88
R Edwards	Salary – August 2020	139.20
R Reeves	Salary - August 2020	1,157.38
Mrs N Everett	Salary – August 2020	618.54

HMRC	Tax & NIC – August 2020	1,625.12
R Reeves	Reimbursement – ink cartridges	57.59
R Reeves	Reimbursement – No dogs signs	31.32
M J Buddle	Reimbursement – Cable ties	4.50
R Reeves	Mileage claim	31.95
W E Batterbee	Mileage claim	24.30
Vodafone	Mobile phone contract (Timebank) (paid by direct debit)	10.66
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	110.00
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	16.02
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support – August (paid by direct debit)	157.67
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	62.29
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity Supply - September	3.95
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity Supply - September	3.34
ESPO	Sanitiser & dispenser	67.20
ESPO	Wall calendar	0.60
ESPO	Cleaning materials	33.48
ESPO	Disposable aprons	8.70
Arthur Ibbett Ltd	Hedgecutter repair	119.71
CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd	Grass cutting in July	204.00
Wicksteed Leisure Ltd.	Repair safety surfacing	1,674.00
Time Banks UK	Annual subscription	120.00
Ms C-J Williams	Refund of Parish Centre deposit	10.00
Balfour Beatty Living Places	Quarterly street lighting maintenance	144.90
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Fire extinguishers maintenance	117.41

Xerox (UK) Ltd	Printing charges	24.91
National Savings & Investments	Deposit	100,000.00
Premier Gas Services	Parish Centre – gas appliances maintenance	140.00
Connections Bus Project	Detached youth worker visits	1,080.00
SLCC Enterprises Ltd	Latest edition of Local Council Administration	123.80
Glasdon UK Ltd	2 x litter bin hoods	372.91
Arthur Ibbett Ltd	Pruning saw	44.99
The CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd	Grass cutting in August	102.00

62/20 BUDGETARY CONTROL

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

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

Chairman.