

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held remotely on 14th December 2020.

PRESENT

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, 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 and P S Potts.

IN ATTENDANCE

County Councillor T V Rogers.

District Councillor G J Bull.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs J E Tavener, Mrs S C Wilcox, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt.

In the absence of Councillor Dr Withams at the start of the meeting, Councillor Parker assumed the Chair.

Councillor Parker, Vice Chairman, in the Chair

112/20 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Payne and seconded by Councillor Mrs Harlock, the Minutes of the meetings held on 9th November and 7th December 2020 were approved as a correct record.

113/20 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

All Members previously had declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the setting of the Council's budget and Council Tax precept for 2021/22 (Minute No. 129/20 below refers) but had been granted a dispensation by the Council to speak and vote on such matters.

114/20 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the minutes of the meetings held on 9th November and 7th December 2020:-

(a) Damage to Sheepwash

Further to Minute No. 91/20(a), the Clerk reported that the claim for reimbursement for damage to the Sheepwash in a traffic accident was ongoing.

(b) Adams Lyons Playground – Trees

Further to Minute No. 91/20(b), the Clerk reported that the tree surgery at Adams Lyons playground and Jubilee Park had been completed.

(c) Dredging of The Weir

Arising from Minute No. 91/20(c), the Clerk reported that he had been unable to progress the potential dredging of The Weir with specialist companies.

(d) Display Boards

Further to Minute No. 91/20(h), the Clerk reported that the display board at the Parish Centre had been returned following the inclusion of the names of parish clerks.

(e) 66 High Street

Further to Minute No. 96/20, the Clerk reported that the owner of 66 High Street had advised that he had met Planning and Conservation Officers on site to discuss the renovation of the property. In order to generate funding to offset the costs involved, the owner had proposed the conversion of the old bakehouse into a one-bedroom house and the construction of a pair of semi-detached two-bedroom houses at the rear of the site.

A sketch plan of the owner's proposals had been circulated to Members but it was felt that it would be premature for the Council to offer an opinion on the venture in the absence of further information.

(f) Sports Holiday Club Proposal

Further to Minute No. 98/20, the Clerk reported that he had been unable to progress the idea of a sports holiday club with the District Council's Leisure team as most of the staff had been furloughed until recently due to the second pandemic lockdown period. A reply had only been received from the Warboys Primary Academy earlier that day with the result that it had not been possible for a more comprehensive report to be given. The Clerk indicated that he would report further at the next meeting.

(g) Pandemic Restrictions

Further to Minute No. 99/20, the Clerk reported that some hirers had returned to the Parish Centre following the ending of the second lockdown period but others had decided not to return until after the New Year.

(h) Replacement Parish Centre

Further to Minute No. 100/20, Members were informed that the Parish Centre Replacement Working Party had met representatives of the Sports Field Committee to explain the Council's proposals for the replacement of the current building. Due to a lack of clarity about the history of the present sports field ownership arrangements, the Sports Field Committee's representatives had indicated that they would look into the documentation in their possession.

The Clerk also reported that the Council's Architects had yet to receive a reply from the District Council in response to the pre-application enquiry that had

been submitted and that District Councillor Bull had been making enquiries to see if this could be expedited.

(i) Community Infrastructure Levy

Further to Minute No. 111/20, the Clerk confirmed that applications had been submitted prior to the closing date of earlier that day for funding from the District Council's CIL strategic allocation towards the purchase of land and drainage equipment at the Sports Field. Further information had also had to be submitted in respect of the offer of funding towards the replacement of the Parish Centre to assure the District Council that the scheme was proceeding.

(Councillor Dr Withams arrived at the meeting during consideration of the above item.)

Councillor Dr Withams, Chairman, in the Chair

115/20 ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 2nd November 2020 be received.

116/20 LEISURE AREAS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure Areas Committee held on 2nd November 2020 be received.

117/20 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9th November 2020 be received.

118/19 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 16th November 2020 be received.

119/20 POLICE REPORT

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

Councillor Mrs Cole reported that she had been contacted by a member of the public who had informed her of recent damage to headstones and monuments at the cemetery in Church Road. As the cemetery was owned by the Parish Church, it was suggested that the person concerned be advised to contact the Police and the Church to make them aware of the situation.

120/20 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Rogers reported that the County Council had received funding of £12 million from the Government to recompense the authority for their expenditure in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

District Councillor Bull advised that he had been in touch with officers in the Planning Division to investigate the use of enforcement action in the case of a breach of planning permission by the owner of Fenside Caravan Park by having caravans on site longer than permitted.

Councillor Bull also reported that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority had invited tenders for a new bus route that would travel through Warboys.

(Councillors Rogers and Bull extended the compliments of the season to the Chairman and Members and they then left the meeting)

121/20 WARBOYS RESIDENTS AGAINST NOISY TRAFFIC (RANT)

Further to Minute No. 94/20, the notes were submitted of a meeting of the working party established to consider the survey results submitted by RANT about traffic conditions in Warboys. Members were informed that the working party would be meeting again in January.

Councillor Green reported that he would be progressing the possibility of some of the residents concerned joining the local Speedwatch team after undergoing the necessary training. Councillor Payne advised that he was monitoring the situation at the SPAR in terms of the parking of delivery vehicles and the Clerk reported that he had spoken to the relevant highways officer about the process involved in investigating the feasibility of a weight restriction in Warboys.

122/20 COMMUNITY ROADWATCH

Members were reminded by the Clerk that they had considered reports at both of their previous meetings about issues raised by Community Roadwatch UK (CRW) in terms of highway safety in Ramsey Road (Minute Nos. 69/20 and 95/20 refer). The Clerk reported that Community Roadwatch had now asked for further concerns to be considered by the Council in relation to Ramsey Road and elsewhere. Under the circumstances, a further report had been submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated to all Members).

Members were informed that CRW wanted a traffic sign to be installed warning of pedestrians crossing Ramsey Road for a distance of 250 yards from the entrance to the 30 mph zone to the bend near the Oaklands junction. If it was not possible to submit a Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bid for the sign, CRW had asked for the Parish Council's support in applying themselves to the County Council under a Privately

Funded Highway Improvement (PFHI) bid for the signs to be installed. The Clerk explained that Parish Council support was not required for a PFHI bid by a third party but CRW had felt that this could be an important factor in any bid.

The Clerk reminded Members that an LHI bid by the Parish Council had been successful for measures to reduce traffic speeds in that part of Ramsey Road and the works were likely to be implemented shortly. A further bid for additional traffic calming measures had been made for 2021/22. The Clerk pointed out that a request for a pedestrian crossing sign in similar circumstances in Fenton Road at the entrance to the village had been refused by the County Council earlier in 2020 and it therefore was highly unlikely that a PFHI bid would be successful. Moreover as members of the public crossed highways throughout the village, the situation at Ramsey Road did not differ from other roads.

Members were informed that CRW also had expressed their continued dissatisfaction with road safety in Fenton Road, notwithstanding the works undertaken under a successful LHI earlier in the year in an attempt to reduce traffic speeds.

CRW had asked when an item on road safety would appear again on the Council's agenda. While highway matters were discussed at most Council meetings, the Clerk pointed out that a generic item on road safety had never appeared on the agenda and that if the Council wished to play a more active role in road safety, this could not be achieved with the current level of staffing resources.

As CRW had indicated their intention to encourage residents to contact the Parish Council through the local press to raise concerns about road safety, Members asked that articles be placed in future editions of the Warboys Diary to explain the actions being taken by the Council with regard to highway matters.

On a separate matter, Councillor Mrs Cole reported that a member of the public had contacted her to draw attention to the condition of Puddock Road north of the Ramsey Hollow junction where a rut in the surface was causing vehicles to leave the road. As there had been fatalities previously along this single width road where people had been drowned in the adjoining ditch, the Clerk was requested to approach the County Council to ask what improvements could be made.

The Clerk also reported the receipt of a complaint from a resident of Mahaddie Way about the speed of traffic using the estate and the installation by David Wilson Homes of speed humps. The Clerk reminded Members that the application for reserved matters planning permission had been recommended for refusal by the Parish Council as it had been felt that the road layout would result in excessive traffic speeds. As no objections had been raised by the highway authority at the time, the Clerk reported that he had referred the complaint to that authority for their response, although it was pointed out that the estate had yet to be adopted as a public highway.

Having regard to the foregoing, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the correspondence from CRW be noted;
- (b) that articles be placed in the Warboys Diary explaining the actions being taken by the Parish Council with regard to highway issues in the village;

- (c) that the Clerk be requested to liaise with the County Council on measures to improve highway safety in Puddock Road; and
- (d) that the situation with regard to Mahaddie Way be noted and the response from the County Council awaited.

123/20 TRAFFIC SPEEDS ON A141

Further to Minute No. 91/20(d), a report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) following the receipt of a response from the County Council about traffic speeds on the A141 and the re-launch of the County Road Safety Partnership as the Vision Zero Partnership.

While the County Council had acknowledged that the configuration of the A141 between Warboys and Chatteris tended to encourage motorists to drive in excess of the speed limit of 60 mph, the Road Safety Manager had advised that other factors also had contributed to recent collisions and that the risk of accidents was lower on this stretch of road than on many others in Cambridgeshire. This was therefore not regarded as a priority by the County Council for specific intervention matters in excess of the speed enforcement that currently was undertaken from time to time by the Police.

The Clerk also reported that notification had been received that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership was about to be relaunched as the Vision Zero Partnership with a new road safety strategy. The strategy's principal aim was to reduce the incidence of deaths and serious injury on Cambridgeshire roads by 50% by 2030 and eliminated entirely by 2040. The Clerk suggested that the strategy appeared to lack specific actions as to how the target would be achieved, although it appeared that communities would be expected to play a significant role in addressing the problem.

RESOLVED

that the report be noted and the Clerk requested to continue to liaise with Chatteris Town Council on possible speed reduction measures for the A141 between Chatteris and Warboys.

124/20 LITTER BINS – MAHADDIE WAY

Councillor Green drew attention to a growing problem of litter and dog fouling on the open spaces at the Mahaddie Way estate and the absence of any litter bins. The Clerk reported that he had been advised by the District Council that there was no requirement for the developer to install litter bins and that the District Council themselves were now removing bins elsewhere in an effort to encourage the public to take their rubbish home with them.

As Councillor England had mentioned previously that the District Council had surplus bins that they would be prepared to offer to the Parish Council, the Clerk reported that he had asked if any bins were currently available but a reply had not been received prior to the meeting.

Having regard to the size of the estate and the current lack of provision, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that litter bins be provided at either end of the footpath link through the Mahaddie Way estate; and
- (b) that the Clerk be requested to try to obtain surplus bins from the District Council and if these were not forthcoming, to place an order for new bins from the Council's usual supplier.

125/20 BELLWAY HOMES

Further to Minute No. 91/20(e), the Clerk reported that the site manager of the Bellway Homes development at The Furrows had been relocated to another site and that he had been unable to obtain a reply from his successor about the footpath link to Jubilee Park. Members were informed that site meetings had now been held with three separate employees of Bellway Homes since the matter first had been raised with the company over 12 months previously.

The Clerk also reported that the County Council's Sustainable Drainage team had been unable to obtain a reply from Bellway following a request for a financial contribution towards the clearance of the culvert carrying excess water from the development (Minute No. 91/20(f) refers). The County Council had obtained consent from the Chairman for a joint letter to the company on behalf of the two authorities to try to obtain a favourable response.

126/20 CHANGES TO AIRCRAFT FLIGHTPATHS

Members' attention was drawn to an invitation to comment on changes to the arrivals flightpath to London Luton Airport. A copy of the executive summary of the consultation document issued by NATS and LLA had been circulated containing the background to the proposal.

The Clerk explained that Luton and Stansted Airports currently used the same aircraft stacking areas but with the growth in traffic at the airports it had been decided to create a new stacking area for Luton that would be located above Huntingdonshire at a height of 8,000 feet. The eastern perimeter of the stack would be above Huntingdon itself but the plans showed aircraft approaching the stack above Warboys. It was unclear what impact the noise of aircraft at that height would have upon Warboys and the Clerk pointed out that the consultation only sought responses to the way in which aircraft left the stack to fly south to land at Luton.

Under the circumstances, it was

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

127/20 FENS BIOSPHERE

The Clerk drew attention to an area consultation on a proposal to achieve UNESCO Biosphere status for The Fens. A copy had been circulated of the brief issued by the organisation leading the campaign. The core zone of the proposed biosphere comprised the Ouse and Nene Washes and other designated areas such as the Great Fen and

Woodwalton Fen but the wider zone would include the surrounding fens and most of the Parish of Warboys.

It was suggested in the consultation that designation would protect natural resources and enhance climate resilience, promote the rural economy and support local communities and places.

RESOLVED

that the campaign to achieve UNESCO Biosphere status for The Fens be supported.

128/20 APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Members considered applications for financial assistance from the following organisations:-

- (a) Warboys Community Association towards the cost of producing the Warboys Diary in 2020;
- (b) Citizens Advice Rural Cambs towards the operating costs of the organisation in what had been a particularly busy year with more requests for assistance from the public than normal due to the impact of the pandemic; and
- (c) The Open Spaces Society towards their campaign to introduce national plans and standards for open spaces. The Clerk advised that the Council was a member of the organisation but that they were seeking additional funding to enable them to combat plans announced by the Government to change the planning system which could result in a reduction in the provision of accessible public open space.

RESOLVED

that the applications be approved and grants of £200, £100 and £50 be awarded to the Community Association, Citizens Advice Rural Cambs and The Open Spaces Society respectively.

129/20 COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT 2021/22

Members considered the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (Minute No. 118/20 above refers) with regard to the determination of the budget and Council Tax precept for 2021/22. The budgetary estimates were attached to a report by the Clerk (a copy of which had been circulated) which contained information on the level of Council Tax Base for the year.

The Committee had recommended the setting of a precept of £125,256 based upon an assumed increase in the Council Tax Base from 1,525 to 1,535. This would have resulted in an anticipated increase of 2% in the level of Council Tax for a Band D property from its current level of £80.00 to £81.60. Since that meeting, the District Council had advised that the Council Tax Base for Warboys would increase to 1,575 for 2021/22. As a result, the precept recommended by the Committee would only require a Council Tax for a Band D property of £79.53 which would represent a reduction of 0.6%.

Having regard to the expenditure required for 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 2021/22 be set at £128,520 which would require a Band D Council Tax level of £81.60, 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 2021/22.

130/20 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/22

Following the submission of suggested dates for meetings in 2021/22 in accordance with the Council's previous format, it was

RESOLVED

that the calendar of meeting dates now submitted for the municipal year 2021/22 be approved.

131/20 NAMING OF STREETS

The Clerk reported that it had been customary for the Council to try to suggest street names with a local connection for new developments for consideration by developers. As the application for outline planning permission for the land at the rear of 21 Ramsey Road had been approved by the District Council's Development Management Committee, Members were invited to consider a choice of name for the new street.

Councillor Mrs Harlock drew attention to some historical names on old maps of this part of the village but consideration was deferred to the next meeting to allow time for further investigation of names with a local connection.

132/20 CENSUS

Members were informed that notification had been from the Office for National Statistics regarding the census to be taken in 2021 and the need to raise awareness to ensure that all households completed a return. As the names of a significant number of residents did not appear on the Register of Electors for Warboys and the census would provide the official statistics for the Parish for the ensuing 10 years, the Clerk stressed the importance of returns being completed by all households so that accurate data about the Parish was collected.

133/20 OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported that the only question raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council had related to the condition of the car park at the SPAR store. As he would be writing to Blakemore on a number of matters following the

meeting of the RANT working party, the Clerk indicated that he would include this in a comprehensive approach to the company.

134/20 ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
M J Buddle	Salary – November 2020	1,044.06
W E Batterbee	Salary – November 2020	1,043.46
R Edwards	Salary – November 2020	144.00
R Reeves	Salary - November 2020	1,045.18
Mrs N Everett	Salary – November 2020	569.10
HMRC	Tax & NIC – November 2020	1,429.83
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Replacement cooker	289.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – anti-bird spikes for play equipment	333.60
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	14.39.
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Dyofix	72.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Road planings for allotments roadway	65.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Heater for workshop	52.98
R Reeves	Petty cash	30.00
W E Batterbee	Mileage – November 2020	11.25
Vodafone	Mobile phone contract (Timebank) (paid by direct debit)	10.66
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	65.00
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	120.75
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support – November (paid by direct debit)	157.67
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	62.02

Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply November	5.43
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply November	4.91
ESPO	Miscellaneous supplies	61.80
The CGM Group	Grass cutting in September (East Anglia) Ltd	204.00
The CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd	Grass cutting in September (credit note)	-102.00
Aquaflow Warboys Ltd.	Replacement tap – Parish Centre	105.92
Richardson Thompson Leech LLP	Valuation fees	480.00
G Worboys	Reimbursement of allotment deposit	25.00
Global Tree Solutions Ltd	Tree surgery – Adams Lyons playground	4,164.00
Xerox (UK) Ltd	Photocopying charges	33.85
Ivan Barrett Ltd	Miscellaneous supplies	121.25
Michael Murray Signs Ltd	Honours Board lettering	90.00
PeopleSafe	Remote working subscription (formerly Guardian 24)	158.76
Society of Local Council Clerks	Annual subscription for Clerk	208.00
Amosite Ltd	Asbestos survey of Parish Centre 2018	114.00
Amosite Ltd	Asbestos survey of Parish Centre 2019	114.00
Amosite Ltd	Asbestos survey of Parish Centre 2020	114.00
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Annual membership subscription	57.00
ESPO	Miscellaneous supplies	62.70
Merlin Lighting (Installations Ltd)	Christmas lighting installation	600.00
Ayres Tree Care	Tree surgery – Jubilee Park	200.00

135/20 BUDGETARY CONTROL

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

136/20 ROAD CLOSURES

(Due to the need to respond to an invitation to comment with a closing date prior to the next meeting, the Chairman had consented to the following item being raised at the meeting.)

The Clerk reported that an application had been made to the County Council for a road closure order to be made in the vicinity of 44 Popes Lane from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. for a period of one week from 15th February 2021. It was anticipated that the closure was required for service connections to a house nearby that was currently under construction. No objections were raised by Members.

The Clerk reported that he had received notification from the County Council that they proposed to carry out top dressing works to the roads on the Pathfinder Way estate and School Road in March 2021 which also would necessitate road closures.

137/20 THE CLERK

As Mr R Reeves would have been Clerk of the Council for a period of 25 years at the end of December, a presentation was made to him by Members who expressed their appreciation to him for his long service to the Council.

There being no further business, the Chairman extended the compliments of the season to Members and she declared the meeting closed.

Chairman.