

# **WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 14th June 2021 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

## **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, J A Parker, R A Payne, P S Potts, Mrs C L Sproats and Mrs S J Wilcox.

## **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

District Councillor M W Haines.

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs M H Harlock, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt and District Councillor G J Bull.

## **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that Councillor Mrs M Harlock's husband sadly had passed away in the week preceding the meeting and a condolence card was circulated at the meeting for Members to sign.

Members were informed that Captain and Mrs Victor Lucas would be leaving the Manor House shortly to move to be closer to their family in Somerset. The Chairman mentioned how much they had done for Warboys during their time at the Manor House, with Captain Lucas having been recognised as an Honorary Freeman of Warboys. The Chairman advised that both she and the Clerk had written to Captain Lucas to thank him and his wife for their service to the community while residing in Warboys.

The Chairman also drew attention to the success of the yard sale that had been organised by the Underfives Playgroup in the village on 13th June which had enabled a number of village organisations to generate funds.

## **18/21 MINUTES**

Upon being moved by Councillor Payne and seconded by Councillor Potts, the Minutes of the annual meeting held on 17th May 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

## **19/21 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest had been received in respect of matters appearing on the agenda.

## **20/21 MATTERS ARISING**

The Council considered the following matters arising from the annual meeting held on 17th May 2021:-

**(a) HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(a), the Clerk reported that the Rector had now returned the black sheet and one of the photo frames that had been lent for the civic service to commemorate HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. Unfortunately the second photo frame had disappeared while at the church and the Rector had offered to pay for its replacement. However it was agreed that the Rector be thanked for his offer and the Clerk authorised to purchase a replacement.

**(b) 66 High Street**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(b), the Clerk reported that there appeared to be something of an impasse between the owner of 66 High Street and the District Council's Conservation Officers with regard to the refurbishment of the property. District Councillor Bull had advised that he had tried to progress matters but without any success to date.

**(c) Bellway Homes**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(c), the Clerk reported that he had received an offer from Bellway Homes to install a wooden kissing gate on the footpath link which they had created between Jubilee Park and their estate. The company had also supplied a specification for the footpath surface to be improved.

Following consultation with Councillors Willis, Payne and Green, the Clerk reported that he had replied to Bellway asking for a kissing gate of metal construction similar to those installed by the County Council on public footpaths and at the pedestrian entrance to the park. As the material proposed for the footpath was self-binding gravel or similar, Bellway had been asked to provide a more permanent solution. The company also had been asked to confirm when they would be undertaking work to stabilise the play equipment that they had had to relocate which had been too close to the line of the footpath that they had installed.

**(d) Sports Holiday Club Proposal**

Further to Minute No. 05/20(d), the Clerk reported that Warboys Primary Academy had agreed to the proposed sports holiday club being held at the school in the week commencing 16th August. A maximum of 50 children could be accommodated by Finding Fitness who would be running the club as this would allow each child to attend on two days with a maximum of 20 children each day. The Clerk reported that within less than a week of the club being advertised, 44 children had been registered.

**(e) Bridleways**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(e), Members were informed that the County Farms Estate had confirmed that they did not require a written proposal for the creation of a link between bridleways 17 and 18 but had asked the Parish Council to speak to a local farmer about one of the drains. The Clerk advised that, as neither he nor Councillor Potts could recall this having been raised at the site meeting with County Farms officers earlier in the year, the latter had been asked to provide clarification as to what was required.

**(f) Connections Bus Project**

Arising from Minute No. 05/21(f), the Clerk informed Members that the Connections Bus Project had commenced their new Friday evening activities for youngsters at Adams Lyons playground with effect from 21st May and that no complaints had been received thus far from nearby residents.

**(g) Police Report – Damage to Chimes**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(g), the Clerk reported that a member of the public had offered to try to repair the musical chimes which had been vandalised at Adams Lyons Playground having seen the cost of replacement equipment reported in the Warboys Diary. However, after consultation with Councillor Willis, the Clerk reported that the person had been thanked for their offer but this had been declined until the outcome of a claim for reimbursement had been considered by the Council's insurers.

**(h) Traffic Working Party**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(h), Members were informed that the next meeting of the Traffic Working Party had been deferred pending the reinstatement of the local Speedwatch team. However Councillor Green advised that the training of volunteers had been delayed because the new Police Speedwatch Co-ordinator had yet to receive her own training to be able to train others.

**(i) Mahaddie Way**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(i), the Clerk reported that the Handymen had installed two litter bins at Mahaddie Way. No further complaints about traffic on the estate had been received during the last month.

**(j) Highways Update**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(j), the Clerk reported that the gateway signs and 40 mph buffer zone had been installed in Ramsey Road in accordance with the Local Highway Improvement scheme approved in the 2020/21 programme.

Members were also informed by the Clerk that he would be responding to the County Council with regard to improvements to the crossing of the A141 to access the land to be acquired opposite Wilthorne.

**(k) NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers Day**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(m), the Chairman confirmed that a flag had been purchased for display on 5th July to thank NHS staff and frontline workers in recognition of their efforts during the pandemic. The Council would be liaising with the Community Association as to what other suitable activities could be undertaken on that day.

**(n) Appointments**

Arising from Minute No. 07/21, the Clerk reported that Councillor Parker had advised that he had not received any communication from the District Council regarding tree warden activities for some time. As this had been a District Council initiative and the Tree Warden Co-ordinator had been made redundant some years previously, it was

**RESOLVED**

that the position of Tree Warden be dispensed with.

**(o) Requests for Financial Assistance**

Further to Minute No. 12/21, the Chairman reported that the grant to the County Council towards the Summer Reading Challenge at Warboys Library would be withheld until confirmation had been received that the event was proceeding.

Following the Council's decision not to approve a request by Community Roadwatch for a grant, the Clerk reported that the organisation had asked for the return of certain items of equipment that they claimed to have donated to the initial Speedwatch team to enable them to become established. The Clerk reported that arrangements were in hand to return the items requested which had been collected from the home of the late Councillor Mrs Tavener.

**(p) Purchase of Land Adjoining A141**

Further to Minute No. 17/21, the Clerk reported that he had been advised by Solicitors acting for the Council that all of the land to be acquired adjoining the A141 had now been registered with the Land Registry which should enable the transaction to proceed.

**21/21 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17th May 2021 be received.

## **22/21 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th May 2021 be received.

## **23/21 POLICE REPORT**

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

## **24/21 REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

District Councillor M W Haines drew attention to an announcement by the Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority of the start of a consultation exercise on highway improvements in St Ives to reduce traffic congestion. Details of the various scheme options were contained in a webpage that had gone live earlier in the day and Councillor Haines encouraged Members to view the options to ensure that they would not have a detrimental effect on traffic locally.

## **25/21 GREENER FUTURES**

The Clerk advised that he had been unable to prepare a report for consideration by the Council regarding the use of allotment land as a tree nursery as recorded in the notes of a meeting of the Council's representatives with Greener Futures. This would be submitted to a future meeting as time permitted.

### **RESOLVED**

that the notes of the liaison group meeting with representatives of Greener Futures held on 11th May 2021 be received.

## **26/21 COUNTY BROADBAND**

Councillor England explained that he had requested that an item be placed on the agenda to discuss the approach by County Broadband to households to register to receive broadband from the company to enable them to fund the installation of fibre broadband in Warboys. Having spoken to the company's local representative, Councillor England advised that he now thought that correspondence from the Parish Council on letterheaded paper delivered to all households might encourage more people to register.

Other Members remained of the view that the scheme by County Broadband was a commercial proposition and endorsed the Council's previous decisions (Minute Nos. 237/20 and 05/21(o) refer) not to express support for the venture. The overwhelming consensus of opinion was to reaffirm the Council's previous decisions not to support or endorse the actions of the company.

## **27/21 PARKING NEAR WARBOYS PRIMARY ACADEMY**

A report (copies of which had been circulated) was submitted by the Clerk following the receipt of a request from the organiser of a petition concerned about the problems of parking near Warboys Primary Academy. The petition organiser had drawn attention the practice of people parking on double yellow lines, zigzag markings and junctions when dropping off and collecting children from school. When asked for suggestions for a solution, the organiser had proposed an extension of the parking restrictions and a pedestrian crossing in Humberdale Way.

The Clerk reported that he had forwarded a copy of his report to the school for comment prior to the meeting but the school had explained that they wrote to parents regularly asking them to park responsibly and that there was little further that they could do.

Members were reminded that the Parish Council had very limited powers to assist, other than the submission of a further bid for funding to the County Council under the Local Highway Improvement programme for highway safety measures. Previously successful bids had resulted in the speed cushions, 20 mph speed limit and zigzag markings in Humberdale Way near the school. If the parking restrictions were currently being ignored, the Clerk suggested that additional restrictions were likely to have little effect and would merely displace the problem further away from the school. Humberdale Way was unlikely to meet the criteria for the installation of a pedestrian crossing.

Members were informed that the Police were responsible for the enforcement of parking restrictions. Recent weekly neighbourhood policing updates had reported that the Police were aware of the problem and that this had been referred to the local neighbourhood team for their attention.

The Clerk reminded Members that the school crossing patrol had been withdrawn by the County Council in 2017 when the previous crossing control person had retired. The County Council had offered to carry out a review of the situation if necessary but this was unlikely to be reinstated unless there had been a significant increase in traffic and the number of children crossing Humberdale Way to access the school.

Under the circumstances, Members acknowledged that there was little that the Parish Council could do to resolve the concerns expressed and that the only advice that could be offered was to continue to draw the situation to the attention of the Police.

(District Councillor Haines left the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

## **28/21 LICENCE TO CULTIVATE THE HIGHWAY**

Members considered an invitation from the County Council to comment on an application for a licence to cultivate the highway verge outside No. 32 Ramsey Road, with none of the plants to exceed one metre in height.

Members were of the opinion that this could create an irregular pattern of cultivation in the highway verge and potentially make the verge more difficult to maintain for those cutting the grass. A question was posed about the longer term appearance of the verge if this was not well maintained or the property changed hands and who would be responsible for reinstating the verge in such circumstances. It was therefore

## **RESOLVED**

that the County Council be recommended to refuse the application for a licence.

### **29/21 BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE**

Members were informed that Stagecoach had invited the Council's view on their project to update their bus stop infrastructure as shown by the installation of a bus stop flag at the stop in Ramsey Road near the junction with Garratt Drive. While no specific views were expressed on the flag itself, it was suggested that it would be helpful if timetable information could be displayed at individual stops and that Stagecoach be informed accordingly.

### **30/21 DAMAGE TO SHELTER**

The Clerk reported that a member of the public had reported that the roof of the shelter near the Jubilee Clock Tower had been damaged by a BT vehicle reversing into the nearby exchange. Although the driver had informed the member of the public that he would report the incident to his employers, the Clerk undertook to contact BT to ensure that the necessary repairs were undertaken by the company.

### **31/21 CONTRACT FOR WATER AND SEWERAGE – PARISH CENTRE**

The Clerk reported that the contract for water and sewerage services at the Parish Centre was due for renewal. Having been informed that additional administrative work had been incurred previously when water and sewerage had been purchased separately, Members had no objection to renewing the current contract with Source for Business (formerly Cambridgeshire Water Business).

### **32/21 PARISH CENTRE REPLACEMENT**

Further to Minute No. 05/21(p), the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) following a public exhibition of the plans for the replacement of the Parish Centre. Users of the current building and other societies in the village had been supplied with copies of the plans and their comments also had been invited. Members were advised that the views would be collated from both exercises for consideration by the working party and the Architects with a view to the final plans being approved at the next meeting prior to submission of an application for planning permission.

Members were reminded that the planning application would need to be accompanied by a number of reports from consultants (landscape, ecology, highways, etc.) which would be invited by the Architects. As the Council's Financial Regulations applied to the invitation and acceptance of quotations for any expenditure in excess of £500, the Clerk suggested that this could potentially delay the procedure for the submission of the planning application.

A bat survey had not been requested by the District Council when the Architects had submitted a pre-planning enquiry to the Planners but the Clerk reported that there was concern that, as there was a limited timescale to obtain surveys of this nature, this could delay the consideration of the planning application if the Planners later determined that this was necessary. Councillors Payne and Green confirmed that bat surveys should be undertaken in the summer months and that the absence of a survey could potentially delay the planning process.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the content of the report in terms of the consultation undertaken and any consequential amendment of the plans be noted;
- (b) that Financial Regulation 8(c) be suspended to enable quotations for consultants' reports in connection with the replacement Parish Centre to be obtained by Tibbett Architectural Services and to authorise the Clerk (after consultation with the members of the working party) to agree to fewer than three quotes being obtained where this is considered appropriate;
- (c) that Financial Regulation 8(d) be suspended to authorise the Clerk (after consultation with the members of the working party) to accept a quotation for a consultant's report which is not the lowest priced, subject to a report subsequently being submitted to the Council with the reasons for the decision; and
- (d) that the Architects be authorised to arrange for a bat survey to be undertaken of the Parish Centre site.

**33/21 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

The Clerk submitted a report, copies of which had been circulated, containing the Annual Government Statement for 2020/21. Subsequent to the despatch of the agenda the Internal Auditor had completed his inspection of the accounts and his report had been circulated.

Members' attention was drawn specifically to the question regarding proper notice having been for the exercise of public rights to inspect the accounts for 2019/20 which had been answered in the negative. The external auditors had mentioned this in their report on the 2019/20 accounts and had directed the Council to answer the question 'No' in the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement. However the Clerk advised Members that, on checking the notice supplied by the auditors with the dates completed for the exercise of public rights last year, the period had amounted to only 29 days rather than the statutory period of 30.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Internal Audit Report be received and noted; and
- (b) that the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 be approved for submission to the external auditors.

### **34/21 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2020/21**

The Clerk invited Members to approve the Accounting Statements for the Parish Council for the financial year 2020/21 for submission to the external auditors. Copies were circulated of the relevant extracts from the Annual Return, together with supporting statements.

Members were informed that, as income had exceeded £200,000 in each of the past three years, the accounts had had to prepared on an Income and Expenditure basis as opposed to Receipts and Payment basis as previously.

#### **RESOLVED**

that the Accounting Statements for 2020/21 be approved for submission to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors.

### **35/21 PENSIONS**

The Clerk reminded Members that the Council had decided to use the National Employers Savings Trust (NEST) as the pension provider under the statutory auto-enrolment scheme for employee pensions. Although none of the Council's employees had decided to join the scheme, the Council had a legal duty to assess and re-enrol eligible staff. The Pensions Regulator had notified the Council that a re-enrolment date for the purposes of employees' pensions had to be set before 31st August 2021. The Clerk advised Members that he would make the necessary arrangements.

### **36/21 REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Having considered a request for financial assistance from Magpas towards the cost of operating the Air Ambulance service, Members

#### **RESOLVED**

that a grant of £100 be made to the organisation.

### **37/21 PURCHASE OF FUEL**

The Clerk report ed that fuel required by the Handymen had always been purchased from the Clock Garage as the only supplier of fuel in Warboys. However, following their decision to close for the supply of fuel later in the month, the Handymen would need to travel to a neighbouring village for supply. As an Allstar fuel card was used by the Handymen, arrangements would be made to ensure that this could be used at alternative garages.

### 38/21 OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported that the only matters raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council had been the cultivation of the highway verge in Ramsey Road and County Broadband, both of which had been dealt with earlier in the current meeting.

### 39/21 ACCOUNTS

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

#### RESOLVED

(a) that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
M J Buddle	Salary – May 2021	1,041.26
W E Batterbee	Salary – May 2021	1,041.46
R Edwards	Salary – May 2021	222.40
R Reeves	Salary - May 2021	1,045.58
Mrs N Everett	Salary – May 2021	506.10
HMRC	Tax & NIC – May 2021	1,514.76
Dr S C Withams	Chairman’s Allowance 2021/22	100.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	14.39
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Printer cartridges	60.48
Vodafone	Mobile phone contract (Timebank) (paid by direct debit)	10.28
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	65.00
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	184.78
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support – May (paid by direct debit)	136.44
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	116.48
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply – May	5.51

Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply – May	5.02
ESPO	Refuse sacks	75.84
ESPO	Miscellaneous supplies	184.80
Cambridgeshire County Council	Contribution to LHI Fenton Road scheme in 2019/20	5,606.00
Tibbett Architectural Services	Design fees for replacement Parish Centre	2,450.00
Cambridgeshire County Council	Grant for Summer Reading Challenge	125.00
Warboys Community Association	Grant for Feast Week competitions	75.00
Business Watch	Servicing of Parish Centre CCTV	120.00
Xerox (UK) Ltd	Photocopying charges	29.78
Warboys Walkers	Grant	150.00
Community Heartbeat Trust	Replacement defibrillator battery	282.00

(b) that payment of the following accounts prior to the meeting be endorsed:-

One Stop Promotions Ltd	Thank you NHS and Key Workers flag	31.19
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#### **40/21 BUDGETARY CONTROL**

The Council received the budgetary control statement for May 2021 together with the list of Parish Centre bookings for that month, copies of which had been circulated to all Members.

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

Chairman.