

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 11th October 2021 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman.

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, Mrs C Evans, Ms L A Gifford, S J Green, Mrs M H Harlock, J A Parker, R A Payne, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S J Wilcox, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

County Councillor S J Corney
District Councillors G J Bull and M W Haines.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors D W England and P S Potts.

101/21 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Dykstra and seconded by Councillor Ms Gifford, the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

102/21 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

103/21 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 13th September 2021:-

(a) 66 High Street

Further to Minute No. 82/21(a), the Clerk reported that there was no further information to report in respect of 66 High Street.

(b) Bellway Homes

Further to Minute No. 82/21(b), the Clerk reported that Bellway Homes had responded to the invitation for a representative from the company to attend a meeting of the Council by offering to install a resin bound surface for the footpath that they had constructed in Jubilee Park. However they were not prepared to

provide an alternative to the wooden kissing gate that they had offered to install between the park and the open space on the estate. The company proposed to install the gate on their side of the boundary which would mean that their successors in title would be responsible for future maintenance rather than the Council.

Members accepted that it was unlikely that the company could be persuaded to improve their offer and the Clerk was authorised to accept the proposal and also remind the company of the need for to properly secure the item of play equipment that they had relocated.

(c) Sports Holiday Club

Further to Minute No. 82/21(c), the Clerk advised Members that he was awaiting an invoice from Warboys Primary Academy for the hire of the school for the Sports Holiday Club in August before claiming the grant towards the cost from the Whittome Wind Trust. Consideration of the organisation of a similar project in 2022/23 would be dependent on the inclusion of funding in the budget later in the autumn.

(d) Bridleways

Further to Minute No. 82/21(d), Members were informed that the proposed linking of bridleways 17 and 18 over land in the ownership of the County Farms estate had now been referred by the County Council's Principal Rural Surveyor to the Rights of Way team to progress the matter.

(e) Damage to Shelter

Arising from Minute No. 82/21(e), the Clerk reported that he had exhausted his enquiries with BT regarding the damage to the shelter owned by the Council near the Jubilee Clock Tower. Although a neighbour had witnessed the damage being caused by a BT vehicle reversing along the roadway to the telephone exchange, the company were adamant that they could find no evidence that one of their vehicles had been on site at the time when the damage had occurred.

Members were informed that a quote had been received from BKC Roofing to repair the roof at a cost of £220 plus VAT. As there was an excess on the Council's insurance policy of £100 and a claim was already outstanding for the replacement of playground equipment, Members were of the opinion that it would be inadvisable for a further claim to be submitted under the policy for the shelter roof.

In order to prevent a repetition of the damage, Members suggested that some form of obstacle be installed to deter vehicles from travelling too close to the shelter but it was pointed out by the Clerk that the land was not owned by the Council.

RESOLVED

that the quotation from BKC Roofing be accepted for the repair of the roof and a claim be not submitted under the Council's insurance policy for the damage.

(f) The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee

Further to Minute No. 82/21(f), the Clerk reported that he would arrange a meeting shortly of the working party appointed in respect of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in June 2022.

(g) Parish Centre Replacement

Further to Minute Nos. 82/21(g) and 93/21, the Clerk reported that the Parish Centre Replacement working party would be meeting shortly to consider the quotations received for the various consultants’ reports required for submission with the application for planning permission.

(h) Purchase of Land Adjoining the A141

Further to Minute Nos. 82/21(h) and 88/21, the Clerk confirmed that a bid had been submitted under the County Council’s Local Highways Improvement programme for 2022/23 for safety improvements to the pedestrian access to the land east of the A141. It was anticipated that the outcome of a feasibility study by the Highways team would be known before the end of the year, prior to consideration of the application at a County Council Panel meeting of local Members.

County Councillor Corney advised that he had met a member of the County Council’s Highways Maintenance team on site to discuss whether the hedge adjoining the A141 could be cut back to improve visibility at the crossing for both pedestrians and motorists. However it seemed unlikely that any action would be taken by the County Council in advance of consideration of the LHI bid.

Members were also informed that the exchange of contracts for the purchase of the land by the Parish Council was thought to be imminent.

(i) Speedwatch Signs

Further to Minute No. 82/21(i), the Clerk reported that no further information had been received from the County Council following the submission of an application for the installation of Speedwatch signs at the various entrances to the village.

(j) Grasscutting

Arising from Minute No. 82/21(j), the Clerk reported that yet further issues had arisen with regard to invoicing by CGM for grasscutting undertaken for the Council in August which had been raised with the company.

(k) Feast Week Visit by Funfair

Further to Minute No. 82/21(k), the Clerk reported that he had yet to receive a reply from Thurstons regarding the visit of the funfair to Warboys during Feast Week in 2022.

(l) Connections Bus Project

Further to Minute No. 89/21, the Clerk reported that the Connections Bus Project would be resuming the visits by the double decker bus to the Library car park on Friday evenings for the first time since March 2020.

(m) Ox-Cam Arc

Further to Minute No. 91/21, the Clerk reported that a group by the name of Stop The Arc had been formed to raise awareness of the Government's plans to increase the population of the Ox-Cam Arc by 50 to 60% by 2050. The group had published information on the predicted impact of the growth proposed on resources, infrastructure and the environment which the Clerk indicated he would circulate to Members for their information.

(n) Remembrance Sunday

Further to Minute No. 94/21, the Clerk reported that he had spoken with the Rector regarding Remembrance Sunday on 14th November. Arrangements were being made for the service to be held at the War Memorial at 10.30 a.m. that morning following a similar pattern to the pre-pandemic event in 2019.

104/21 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th September 2021 be received.

105/21 POLICE REPORT

Members were informed that the person who had collated the weekly updates on crimes reported locally and issued by the Police was a volunteer who had been unavailable for personal reasons in recent months. It was hoped that he might be able to resume supplying the information in the future. In the interim, the Clerk advised that statistics on reported crime and anti-social behaviour were available on the Police website but it would be time consuming to identify and collate the information for Warboys.

Vandalism had resulted in damage to items of play equipment in Jubilee Park in recent weeks which would be reported under Minute No. 107/21 below but that apart, the Clerk reported that he had no further information to report to Members regarding incidents over the past month.

106/21 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Councillors Bull, Corney and Haines reported on matters of interest affecting Warboys from their respective authorities. Mention was made of the allocation of funding by the County Council to address potential flood risks for watercourses in riparian ownership, the

opening for use of the new Shire Hall at Alconbury Weald and the reinstatement of the scheme to install traffic lights at the Woodhurst crossroads.

A number of issues were raised by Members, including the system introduced which required advance booking for visits to the County Council's recycling centres and the time being taken to pursue enforcement action in respect of the unauthorised use of Fenside Caravan Park.

107/21 PLAYGROUND SAFETY REPORTS

Further to Minute No 87/21, a report (copies of which had been circulated) was submitted by the Clerk containing further information on the maintenance and replacement of playground equipment following the annual safety inspections by PlaySafety.

Members were informed that an order had been placed with Caloo for the replacement of the chimes that had been damaged by vandalism at Adams Lyons playground. The cost of £1,394 plus installation of £1,235 and delivery of £180 would be met by the Council's insurers, less the policy excess of £100. An estimate of the cost of replacing the timber surrounds at the sandpit of £1,449 had been received from Wicksteed Leisure but in view of the size of the estimate, the Clerk indicated that he would investigate other options.

Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund had agreed to offer a grant of 50% towards the cost of replacing the pick-up-sticks play equipment at Jubilee Park with funding provided by the Whittome Wind Trust. This was conditional upon the submission of alternative quotations from other providers. It had been explained to the Trust that play providers did not supply comparable equipment but, in the interim, one of the beams on the unit had been damaged by vandalism. The unit had been made as safe as possible by the Handymen and warning signs displayed asking people not to use the equipment. As a result, the Trust had confirmed the offer of grant to avoid further delay.

An order therefore had been placed with Wicksteed Leisure for the removal of the equipment and installation of the replacement unit approved at the last meeting. As the lead-in time for delivery and installation of the replacement was 18 weeks, Wicksteed had offered to remove the damaged equipment at an earlier date at an additional cost of £180.

Over the same weekend as the pick-up-sticks had been vandalised, the Clerk reported that a picnic table had been set alight at Jubilee Park. Two panels would require replacement and the Clerk indicated that he would order the necessary parts. Members were reminded that the picnic table had only been installed earlier in the year to replace a timber picnic table that had been completely destroyed by vandalism in the year preceding the pandemic.

Members were also informed that a quotation of £500 had been received from Ayres Tree Care to remove tree branches overhanging the rear gardens of Nos. 12, 14 and 16 Farriers Way following complaints from the occupiers of two of the properties.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report and the information contained therein be received;

- (b) that the Clerk be requested to continue his enquiries into the replacement of the timber surrounds to the sandpit at Adams Lyons playground;
- (c) that the offer of grant from Whittome Wind Trust of 50% towards the cost of removing the pick-up-sticks unit at Jubilee Park and its replacement be gratefully received;
- (d) that Wicksteed Leisure be requested to arrange for the removal of the pick-up-sticks unit as soon as possible at the additional cost of £180 plus VAT; and
- (e) that the quotation received from Ayres Tree Care to cut back trees overhanging gardens in Farriers Way in the sum of £500 be accepted.

(Councillor Mrs Sproats declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in that part of the discussion relating to the cutting back of overhanging trees as she was related to an occupier of one of the properties. She left the room for the consideration of that part of the debate and took no part in the discussion and voting thereon.)

108/21 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Christmas Lighting Group summarising their plans to provide illuminations in Warboys over the Christmas period with a switch-on of the lighting to be held on 27th November. The Clerk reported that the necessary road closure order had been approved by the County Council and arrangements would be made by the Handymen to enable the Christmas tree and lighting to be installed at the Weir and the road to be closed for the switch-on event. The necessary permission had been obtained from UK Power Networks to provide the unmetered power supply for the lighting at The Weir.

The Lighting Group had also asked if the Council would fund the cost of engaging a company to erect and dismantle the lighting at height which had cost £500 in the past. The Clerk confirmed that the cost could be met from the budget allocated for Christmas lighting in the current year.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report be received and actions taken endorsed; and
- (b) that the Lighting Group be informed that the Council will meet the cost of engaging an external company to erect and dismantle the lighting.

109/21 FLOODING REVIEW

Members' attention was drawn to a review undertaken by the District Council into local flooding events which had contained a number of recommendations for action by the agencies involved. Copies of a summary of the review's outcomes and recommendations had been circulated to all Members.

Members had no objection to information being included on the Parish Council website to draw the public's attention to sources of advice on flooding. The report had recommended the establishment of local flood groups to address problems locally but the Clerk reported that efforts to establish a local flood forum in Warboys in recent years had not attracted any volunteers from within the community.

110/21 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS - 2020/21

Further to Minute Nos 33/21 and 34/21, the Clerk submitted the Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements and External Auditor's Report for 2020/21 (copies of which had been circulated). A number of comments had been raised by PKF Littlejohn for the Council's attention. In moving to an income and expenditure form of accounting from receipts and payments in 2020/21, the auditors had advised that the figures in Boxes 7 and 8 of the Accounting Statements had not been shown in the correct boxes and the accounts for 2019/20 should also have been restated on an income and expenditure basis. The notice displayed for the inspection of the accounts approved by the Council had been dated one day too early.

RESOLVED

that the report be received and the information supplied by the external auditors noted.

111/21 COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT LEVELS

Further to Minute No. 74/21, a report (copies of which had been circulated) was submitted by the Clerk containing information on his contractual arrangements with the Council, the time actually being worked and advice from the National Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks on how to calculate the hours of employment of clerks. The report also contained forecasts of the financial implications of employing additional administrative staff and the impact of the additional duties arising from the construction of the replacement Parish Centre and the purchase of open space land.

Consideration of the report was deferred, pending the submission of further information to the Financial and General Purposes Committee meeting when the budget for 2022/23 would be determined.

112/21 OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported that individual Members had raised issues at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council relating to a tree in the High Street and displays around the village by the Warboys 'Wool Fairies'.

113/21 ACCOUNTS

Members were informed that an invoice received from Source for Business (formerly Cambridge Water) for the water supply to the Parish Centre was significantly higher than

previous invoices. Although a small leak had been repaired by the company itself following an increase in the previous half-yearly invoice, the charge in the most recent invoice had risen again. The Clerk reported that further investigations would be undertaken to try to identify the cause of the increased consumption but that as the supply was metered, there was no option other than to authorise the payment.

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

RESOLVED

(a) that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
M J Buddle	Salary – September 2021	656.98
W E Batterbee	Salary – September 2021	1,125.74
D A Warwick	Salary – September 2021	529.74
R Edwards	Salary – September 2021	270.40
R Reeves	Salary - September 2021	1,045.18
HMRC	Tax & NIC – September 2021	1,332.38
R Martin	Half year Clockwinder’s fee	130.00
G Hansell	Half year Internal Auditor’s fee	50.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	14.39
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Daffodil bulbs	64.00
Vodafone	Mobile phone contract (paid by direct debit)	10.28
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	78.00
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	42.41
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support – September (paid by direct debit)	159.12
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	54.00
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (September)	5.32
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply	4.77

(September)

Royal British Legion	Poppy wreath	40.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP	Audit fees	720.00
Impie Ltd.	Clothing for staff with logo	169.80
Parrot Print Ltd.	Letterheaded paper	42.00
Source for Business	Parish Centre water supply	798.43
Source for Business	Allotments water supply	44.59
The CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd	Grass cutting (September)	102.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – ink cartridges	31.00

(b) that payment of the following invoice due prior to the date of the meeting be endorsed:-

Saffron Insurance	Change of named driver on van insurance	30.00
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114/21 BUDGETARY CONTROL

The Council received the budgetary control statement for September 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.