

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 14th February 2022 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman.

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

IN ATTENDANCE

District Councillor M W Haines.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs J M Cole, Mrs C Evans, R A Payne and P S Potts, County Councillor S J Corney and District Councillor G J Bull.

168/21 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor England and seconded by Councillor Green, the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the addition of the number '160/21' after the words 'Minute No.' in the resolution of Minute No. 151/21 entitled 'Members' Interests'.

169/21 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

170/21 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 10th January 2022:-

(a) 66 High Street

Further to Minute No. 152/21(a), District Councillor Haines reported on the discussion that had taken place at the meeting of the District Council's Development Management Panel on 24th January when planning application 21/01410/FUL for the refurbishment of 66 High Street had been refused.

(Councillors Mrs M H Harlock and Mrs S J Wilcox arrived at the meeting during the course of the discussion of the above minute.)

(b) Bellway Homes

Further to Minute No 152/21(b), the Clerk reported that he had spoken to a representative of Bellway Homes who had promised to expedite the improvement of the path that they had installed at Jubilee Park and the installation of a kissing gate between the park and their development.

(c) Bridleways

Further to Minute No. 152/21(c), the Clerk reported that he was awaiting further information from the County Council's Principal Rural Surveyor regarding the proposed creation of a permissive bridleway to link bridleways 17 and 18.

(d) Speedwatch Signs

Further to Minute No. 152/21(e), the Clerk reported that he had yet to receive an estimate of cost from the County Council's local Highways Officer for the installation of Speedwatch signs at the entrances to the village as requested in a PFHI application by the Parish Council.

(e) Playground Safety Reports

Arising from Minute No. 152/21(g), the Clerk reported that Caloo had fitted the replacement musical chimes and undertaken an inspection of the cableway at Adams Lyons playground. The Council's insurers had reimbursed the Council with the cost of the new chimes, net of VAT and an excess of £100 under the insurance policy. Caloo had confirmed that their engineer had disassembled the aerial runway and had not found any fault with the cable. However enquiries were ongoing with regard to the possible need for a new spring to be fitted.

The Clerk also reported that he had been informed by Wicksteed Leisure that the replacement place equipment at Jubilee Park would be fitted on 14th March or thereabouts.

(f) Shelter Near Jubilee Clock Tower

Further to Minute No. 152/21(h), Councillor Mrs Wilcox advised that a reply had yet to be received from the Land Registry following a request for information regarding the rights reserved in a conveyance of land to BT in 1971 on which the shelter adjacent to the Jubilee Clock Tower was situated.

(g) Parish Centre – Water Consumption

Further to Minute No. 152/21(i), the Clerk reported that enquiries were ongoing to try to establish the cause of the excessive water consumption at the Parish Centre.

(h) Replacement Parish Centre

Arising from Minute No. 152/21(j), Members were informed that consultants had been engaged to enable a reply to be provided to the Middle Level Commissioners with regard to the expected discharge to their watercourse system from the replacement Parish Centre. The Council's Architects had drawn attention to further

advice from the consultants with regard to the foul and surface water drainage from the site and the need to satisfy both the Commissioners and Anglian Water over the likely level of discharge. This would involve further preparatory work to be incurred which would need to be funded by the Council but hopefully might alleviate the need for the creation of balancing tanks at the construction stage.

(i) Repairs to Lighting Column

Further to Minute No. 152/21(l), the Clerk reported that he had met a representative of Balfour Beatty on site to examine the replacement lighting column and electricity feeder column at the Jubilee Clock Tower that they had installed in December to replace the ones damaged in a road traffic collision. It had transpired that a timer controlling the Christmas lighting attachments and spotlights lighting the clock face had not been replaced when the new lamp column and feeder pillar had been installed. Balfour Beatty had now supplied an updated quotation to install a replacement timer and this had been sent to the Council's insurers for approval for the work to be undertaken.

The Clerk also reported that yet another vehicle collision had taken place at the junction in the week prior to the meeting. The County Council had issued an order for the all of the road markings in Church Road and Ramsey Road to be renewed as long ago as November 2020 but the work had not been undertaken. Members were informed that the Clerk was continuing to liaise with the local Highways Officer for the markings around the Clock Tower to be renewed and that the latter had escalated the matter to his manager to arrange for the work to be undertaken by their contractors.

(m) Felling of Tree in Conservation Area

Further to Minute No. 156/21, the Clerk reported that he would enquire whether the District Council proposed to take any action following the felling of a tree located in the conservation area in the garden of 32 High Street without permission in December.

(n) Onyett's Field

Arising from Minute No. 158/21, the Clerk reported that he and the members of the working party had met an officer of the local Wildlife Trust on site recently to obtain the Trust's views on the future management of Onyett's Field which had been acquired by the Council. A summary of the discussion at the meeting had been prepared by Councillor Mrs Sproats which would be forwarded to the Trust for their comments.

Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that the Trust's officer had suggested that the Council monitor the land for twelve months to establish a more informed view before finalising any future management plan and she had offered to visit again in the summer to offer further advice.

(o) Environmental Strategy

Further to Minute No. 159/21, Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that the working party had met to consider the preparation of an environmental strategy for consideration by the Council. A draft was being prepared for future discussion and Councillor Green had offered to join the working party.

RESOLVED

that Councillor Green be included in the membership of the working party.

(p) Maintenance of Open Spaces

Further to Minute No. 160/21, the Clerk reported that he had been advised by David Wilson Homes that the open spaces on phase I of the Mahaddie Way development had been transferred to Ground Solutions to manage on behalf of the residents of the estate. The company had advised that it would be some time before they had completed the public open space on phase II of the development which would have to be managed by them formally for twelve months before it would be offered to the Parish Council under the terms of the section 106 agreement for the development.

171/21 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 10th January 2022 be received.

172/21 RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Rights of Way Committee held on 24th January 2022 be received.

173/21 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OFF STATION ROAD

Further to Minute No. 154/21, the Clerk reported that four firms of planning consultants had been asked to quote to advise the Parish Council on the District Council's proposal to dispose of land for housing development at Station Road. One had declined because of a conflict of interest, one had not responded and the remaining two had offered to undertake the work at a similar cost. As Cheffins had offered to undertake the work in two parts based upon an initial assessment of the site and its position in terms of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, followed by a formal response on behalf of the Parish Council if a planning application was forthcoming, Cheffins of Cambridge had been engaged at a cost of £2,500.

Members were informed that representatives of Cheffins had met Councillor Willis and the Clerk on site in the week prior to the meeting and were preparing their initial analysis for consideration by the Council.

The Chairman advised that she had been discussing with the Clerk the most advantageous way of engaging with residents opposed to the scheme in the event of a planning application being submitted. As it was still considered inadvisable to host a large gathering in the Parish Centre due the ongoing rate of Covid-19 infections, the Chairman suggested a further Zoom meeting that could be held without any limitation on numbers, followed by a formal meeting of the Planning Committee with representatives of the objectors in attendance.

Councillor Green and District Councillor Haines reported that they had attended a meeting with residents of Station Road recently at which both the proposed development and traffic speeds had been discussed. Councillor Haines advised that he had met the Leader of the District Council regarding the proposed development who had reiterated his view that the site could be regarded as a windfall site for planning purposes within the context of the Local Plan. Councillor Haines also mentioned that he would be meeting Shailesh Vara MP on site in March.

RESOLVED

that the report be received and the decision to engage Cheffins to act on behalf of the Parish Council endorsed.

174/21 STATION ROAD – SPEED REDUCTION

The Clerk reported the receipt of an approach from a resident of Station Road who was acting on behalf of other local residents and horse riders. They had expressed concern about highway safety in Station Road due to excessive traffic speeds and the difficulty for horse riders to access the bridleways off Fenside Road from the village due to the lack of an adequate footway.

Members were reminded that the horse riders had submitted a Local Highway Improvement bid in 2018 which had been supported by the Parish Council by offering to fund the requisite 10% local contribution towards the cost. However the bid had not been scored sufficiently highly by the County Council to receive funding. Councillor Green reported that the horse riders were considering a further application under the programme later in the year and fund-raising measures to meet the local contribution towards the cost. In the interim they had asked for the Parish Council's support in trying to persuade the County Council to install warning signs of horse riders at both the top and foot of Puddock Hill.

RESOLVED

that the request for horse rider warning signs at Puddock Hill be supported.

175/21 REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Councillor Haines reported that he had met Cambridgeshire Constabulary's Speedwatch Co-ordinator recently with Councillor Green and was also reviewing the situation with regard to heavy commercial vehicles in the village. He was also making arrangements for the Police and Crime Commissioner to visit Warboys to observe a Speedwatch session in operation in March.

(District Councillor Haines then submitted his apologies and left the meeting.)

176/21 POLICE REPORT

The Clerk reported that he had been contacted by the new Neighbourhood Police Sergeant for St Ives and Ramsey who had indicated that he hoped to attend the meeting of the Council in March to introduce himself to Members.

Councillor Mrs Wyatt also mentioned that she had spoken with the Sergeant recently regarding incidents of anti-social behaviour in School Road.

177/21 ABSENCE FROM MEETINGS

Due to the absence of Councillor Potts from meetings for a number of months following his partner's accident and serious injury, it was

RESOLVED

that the reason for Councillor Potts' absence be approved and an extension of time granted for him to continue as a member of the Council until the election in May 2022.

178/21 LOCAL HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The Clerk reported on the arrangements for the consideration of applications for funding under the Local Highway Improvement scheme for 2022/23 and he circulated a copy of the feasibility study prepared by one of the County Council's Highway Engineers of the Parish Council's bid for improvements to the crossing of the A141 via public footpath 6. The feasibility study had been amended in response to comments by the Clerk and now incorporated all of the Parish Council's suggested improvements with the exception of steps between Wilthorne and the A141 and warning signs for pedestrians. The Highway Engineer was of the opinion that the installation of steps would restrict mobility for some pedestrians and he had advised that the official traffic manual did not contain warning signs for pedestrians of fast-moving traffic ahead and therefore could not be installed on highway land.

The estimated cost of the scheme was £21,291.86, towards which the Parish Council had budgeted for a contribution of £5,000.

The application would be considered at a meeting of the County Council's panel of Members on 2nd March and the Parish Council would be represented at the meeting by the Chairman.

RESOLVED

that the report be received and the feasibility study presented be accepted.

179/21 QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

Further to Minute No. 152/21(d), the notes of a meeting of the Platinum Jubilee Working Party held on 11th January 2022 were submitted, copies of which had been circulated.

Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that the working party had focused on the beacon lighting event to celebrate the Jubilee on 2nd June and the installation of more lasting symbols of the Queen's reign in the village. The Community Association would be concentrating on village events over the days of the bank holiday. In particular, Members' views were invited on the planting of a commemorative tree at Onyett's Field on which the advice of the local Wildlife Trust would be invited, suitable furniture or a feature in the replacement Parish Centre garden and a Jubilee flag to be flown from the village flagpole.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

- (a) that the views of the local Wildlife Trust be invited on the proposed planting of a tree at Onyett's Field to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee;
- (b) that the idea of a suitable commemorative feature in the garden of the replacement Parish Centre be supported and further consideration be given to the format of the feature in due course; and
- (c) that a flag commemorating the Jubilee be purchased for display on the flagpole.

180/21 GRASS CUTTING

Further to Minute No. 8/21 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Members considered a report by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) following the invitation of quotations for grasscutting in the forthcoming year. Five companies had been invited to quote, including the existing company which had maintained Adams Lyons playground and Jubilee Park for the past three years. However several Members expressed their dissatisfaction with the performance of the company over the standard and frequency of cuts and the number of invoicing errors. Notwithstanding the fact that the company had now submitted the lowest price for the work, Members were of the opinion that the contract should be awarded to the company that had submitted the second lowest quotation.

Members were reminded that the Finance and General Purposes Committee also had resolved to establish a working party to consider future grasscutting by the Parish Council in Warboys but they decided not to pursue this idea.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

- (a) that Roy Parker Garden Services be offered a contract to undertake the mowing and strimming of Adams Lyons playground and Jubilee Park in 2022 at a price of £140 per cut; and
- (b) that no further action be taken to establish a working party to consider grasscutting in the Parish.

181/21 CONNECTIONS BUS PROJECT

Further to Minute No. 89/21, the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) following visits by the Connections Bus Project staff to Warboys in the autumn term. Information provided by the Project on the level of attendance by children each week, the activities undertaken and the range of issues raised with the youth workers by the children was attached to the report. With the easing of pandemic restrictions, it had been possible for the Connections Bus itself to return to the Library car park midway through the term. This had resulted in the attendance level rising to 29 children on two of the weekly visits with a total of 52 individual children attending during the term. Numbers had continued at the same level for the first two weeks of the spring term.

In view of the welcome increase in the level of attendance and the advice and activities provided by the youth workers for local children, Members

RESOLVED

that the report be received and the Council continue to fund the weekly visits by the Connections Bus Project to Warboys on Friday evenings.

182/21 SOIL IMPROVER FOR ALLOTMENTS

Further to Minute No. 6/21 of the Allotments Committee, the Clerk reported that Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd had approved an application for grant for the supply of soil improver for allotment tenants again in the forthcoming spring. The grant made available of £360 was likely to be sufficient to cover the cost in full of arranging a further delivery.

183/21 HOLIDAY SPORTS CLUB

Further to Minute No. 152/21(k), the Clerk reported that Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd had approved an application for grant towards the cost of the proposed holiday sports club for two weeks in the school summer holidays. The grant was being provided by the

Whittome Wind Trust and would amount to 50% of the net cost of the holiday club less VAT and the income from participants, subject to a maximum of £1,275.

Members were informed that Warboys Primary Academy had agreed provisionally to the holiday club being located at the school in the first week in August and it was hoped that the second week in August also would be available. However this was dependent on staff availability for access purposes and could not be confirmed until the Easter holidays. The company engaged to run the club, Finding Fitness, had advised that this would not present a problem for them, provided the dates could be confirmed by Easter.

RESOLVED

that the report be received and Whittome Wind Trust thanked for their continued financial support for a holiday sports club in the village.

184/21 PARISH CENTRE – COVID-19 GRANTS

Members were informed that the Government's additional grants for businesses affected by the omicron variant of the Covid-19 pandemic, including those for village halls, would not be made available to public bodies, including town and parish councils. The Clerk reported that he had been in e-mail correspondence with the District Council who were administering the current grants but they had been adamant that the grants did not apply to town and parish councils on this occasion.

185/21 FOOTPATH LINK FROM MAHADDIE WAY

Councillor S J Green asked the Council to consider the installation of a litter bin on the footpath being established between the Mahaddie Way estate and Flaxen Walk which was now being used by residents of the estate to access the school and village. Councillor Green reported that litter was now starting to proliferate along the route between the estate and the centre of the village.

The Clerk also reported the receipt of an approach from David Wilson Homes offering to fund two additional bins at phase II of their Mahaddie Way development which was nearing completion if the Council was prepared to empty them on a regular basis. Members were reminded that the developers had been prepared to only contribute the equivalent cost of less robust bins on Phase I and the balance of the cost for the type of bins provided elsewhere throughout the village had been met by the Council.

RESOLVED

that the additional litter bins proposed be agreed in principle and the Clerk requested to liaise with Councillor Green on suitable locations and with David Wilson Homes as to the funding that they were prepared to offer towards the cost of installation.

186/21 FIRST AID TRAINING

The Clerk reported that the Handymen's First Aid at Work certificates would expire in April and September. A reminder had been received from the British Red Cross to renew the Senior Handyman's training but the Clerk reported that a new training company in Warboys had hired the Parish Centre to provide an Emergency First Aid at Work course. The company had agreed to the attendance of both of the Handymen on the course in March.

RESOLVED

that arrangements be made for the Handymen to attend the Emergency First Aid at Work course at the Parish Centre at a cost of £50 per person.

187/21 CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT

The Clerk submitted a request by Councillor Mrs Sproats and himself to attend an on-line Climate Change Summit arranged by the Society of Local Council Clerks in March at a cost of £45 per person and it was

RESOLVED

that the request be approved.

188/21 PORTABLE PA SYSTEM

The Clerk pointed out that the amplifier used at the Parish Centre and outdoor events in recent years had been donated and that whilst it had proved useful on occasion, it was an old piece of equipment which relied on a power source. As the amplifier had been somewhat unreliable at the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial in November, the Clerk suggested that the Council purchase a portable system with a rechargeable battery that could be used at outdoor events, including the forthcoming beacon lighting event for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

RESOLVED

that the Clerk be authorised to purchase a portable PA system at an approximate cost of £200.

189/21 OPEN FORUM

Members noted that no matters had been raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council.

190/21 ACCOUNTS

Upon being moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Ms Gifford, it was

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
W E Batterbee	Salary – January 2022	1,061.66
D A Warwick	Salary – January 2022	1,119.24
R Edwards	Salary – January 2022	297.60
R Reeves	Salary - January 2022	1,045.58
HMRC	Tax & NIC – January 2022	1,322.92
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	14.39
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Dyofix for The Weir	108.00
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)	136.10
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support + 365 licence– December (paid by direct debit)	33.88
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support + 365 licence– January (paid by direct debit)	33.88
Chess ICT Ltd	IT broadband and back-up service (paid by direct debit)	45.98
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	84.61
Allstar	Admin. charge (paid by direct debit)	5.02
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (January)	6.06
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (January)	5.36
Warboys Community Association	Annual subscription	15.00

Smith of Derby Ltd	Jubilee Clock – 3 year maintenance Agreement	651.60
Warboys Community Association	Grant for Warboys Diary publication	200.00
Caloo Ltd.	Aerial runway inspection – Adams Lyons	594.00
Caloo Ltd.	Installation of replacement chimes – Adams Lyons playground	3,322.80
EDGE IT Systems Ltd.	Planning software – annual charge	187.20
ESPO	Refuse sacks	152.40
Ramsey Builders Merchants Ltd	Stakes for waymarks	32.40
National Savings & Investments	Deposit	100,000.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Vehicle tax for van	275.00
Glasdon UK Ltd.	Lifebuoy mounting and lifebuoy	376.77

191/21 BUDGETARY CONTROL

The Council received the budgetary control statement for January 2022 together with the list of Parish Centre bookings for that month and the bank reconciliation for the third quarter of the year, copies of which had been circulated to all Members.

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

Chairman.