

# **WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 11th April 2022 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman.

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

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Mrs C L Sproats, County Councillor S J Corney and District Councillors G J Bull and M Haines.

## **215/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that Councillors Mrs Harlock and Payne had decided not to stand for re-election at the forthcoming election on 5th May. In so doing, the Chairman thanked them for their many years of service to the Council, Councillor Mrs Harlock having been first elected in May 2008 and Councillor Payne having been co-opted in November 2010. Councillor Payne had also represented the Parish Council on Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd, which he had chaired since 2014.

The Chairman welcomed the return of Councillor Potts who had been unable to attend meetings of the Council for some time due to a family accident.

The Chairman also reported the unfortunate deaths recently of Messrs M F Newman and T Buddle. Mr Newman had represented the ward of Warboys for many years on Huntingdonshire District Council and Mr Buddle had owned the butchers shop in Old Mill Avenue until its closure.

Members were reminded that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 20th April and encouraged to attend if they were able.

## **RESOLVED**

that the Council place on record their appreciation for the service to the community of Councillors Mrs Harlock and Payne.

## **216/21 MINUTES**

Upon being moved by Councillor Ms Gifford and seconded by Councillor Mrs Harlock, the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **217/21 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor England declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute No. 227/21 entitled 'Onyett's Field' as he rented land adjoining the site.

## **218/21 MATTERS ARISING**

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 14th March 2022:-

### **(a) 66 High Street**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(a), the Clerk reported that the owner of 66 High Street had advised that he had submitted a further planning application to convert the property into flats and develop the site. However the views of the Parish Council had yet to be invited by the planning authority.

### **(b) Bellway Homes**

Further to Minute No 194/21(b), the Clerk reported that he had been unable to obtain a reply from Bellway Homes following their agreement to improve the surface of the path that they had installed at Jubilee Park and install a kissing gate between the park and their adjoining development.

### **(c) Bridleways**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(c), the Clerk reported that he had e-mailed the County Council's Principal Rural Surveyor again to try to progress the proposed creation of a permissive bridleway to link bridleways 17 and 18.

### **(d) Speedwatch Signs**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(d), the Clerk reported that the County Council's local Highways Officer had advised that he was still unable to obtain a quotation from their contactors for the installation of Speedwatch signs at the entrances to the village as requested in a PFHI application by the Parish Council.

### **(e) Play Equipment, Jubilee Park**

Further to Minute No 194/21(e), the Clerk reported that Wicksteed Leisure had completed the installation of new play equipment in Jubilee Park to replace timber climbing equipment that had deteriorated.

The Chairman mentioned that the safety inspection for the current year would take place later in the month.

### **(f) Shelter Near Jubilee Clock Tower**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(f), Councillor Mrs Wilcox advised that she was awaiting the interpretation of colleagues on the Land Registry documentation

received in respect of the land on which the shelter near the Jubilee Clock Tower was located.

**(g) Replacement Parish Centre**

Arising from Minute No. 194/21(h), Members were informed that District Councillor Haines had been unable to make contact with the District Council's planning officers to enquire about progress in connection with the application submitted for planning permission for the replacement Parish Centre. The Clerk advised that he was liaising with the Council's Architect who had also undertaken to try to expedite the District Council's consideration of the application.

**(h) Repairs to Lighting Column**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(i), the Clerk reported that he had been advised by Balfour Beatty that they were having difficulty sourcing a new feeder column to replace the one damaged in a vehicle collision at the Clock Tower junction in November.

**(i) Felling of Tree in Conservation Area**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(j), the Clerk reported that no further information had been received from the District Council since the previous meeting regarding the felling of a tree without the necessary permission in the garden of 32 High Street which was situated in the conservation area.

**(j) Proposed Development off Station Road**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(m), the Clerk reported that Cheffins had supplied the answers to Freedom of Information requests that they had received from the District Council regarding the demand for affordable homes in Huntingdonshire and the number of affordable homes built recently in Warboys. With regard to the position District-wide, the District Council had referred Cheffins to a report on the subject that they had commissioned jointly with other local authorities in Cambridgeshire. The Clerk suggested that the report appeared to suggest that the demand for affordable homes could be met if 10% of the housing on sites above 10 units were required to be affordable in the Local Plan. However, the Clerk reminded Members that the current requirement in the Plan was for 40% of homes to be affordable which was considerably higher and suggested that demand was being met.

The District Council had advised that 118 affordable homes had been completed in Warboys since 2015.

The Clerk also drew attention to the recently adopted Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document which had assessed the character of various parts of Warboys. The description for the Station Road area appeared to suggest that this was unsuitable for development to the north of the village.

A planning application to develop land in the District Council's ownership for affordable homes in Station Road had yet to be submitted.

**(k) Local Highway Improvement Scheme**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(n), the Clerk reported that he anticipated that the outcome of the Parish Council's LHI application for improvements to the footpath crossing of the A141 to access Onyett's Field would be known later in the month.

**(l) Connections Bus Project**

Arising from Minute No. 194/21(o), the Clerk reported that the Connections Bus Project had submitted their report for the spring term which showed that the number of youngsters attending their weekly visits to Warboys had remained high. Members were informed that a copy of the report would be circulated.

The Project Manager had also asked if they could use Adams Lyons playground again on Friday evenings in the summer instead of the library car park which would allow more space for the children to become engaged in outside activities. A purpose-built vehicle with a gazebo would be used instead of the Connections Bus itself in a similar way to the previous summer.

While there was no objection in principle to the request, Councillor England expressed concern over the potential for disruptive behaviour by some of the youngsters attending and the possibility of trespass on adjoining land. The Clerk was asked to advise the Project Manager that adequate supervision should be provided and that in the event of any complaints from neighbouring property owners, permission would be withheld.

**(m) Holiday Sports Club**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(p), Members were informed that permission had been obtained from the Primary Academy for a holiday sports club to be held at the school for two weeks commencing on 1st August. Finding Fitness of Stamford who would be managing the course again on the Council's behalf would be inviting applications after Easter.

**(n) Mahaddie Way – Additional Bins**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(q), the Clerk reported that David Wilson Homes had received objections from residents to one of the proposed locations for an additional litter bin on phase II of their development at Mahaddie Way. As a result, only one bin would be provided and emptied by the Parish Council which would be installed on receipt of a contribution towards the cost by the developers.

**(o) Great British Spring Clean**

Further to Minute No. 201/21, Members were informed that a number of volunteers had taken part on the Great British Litter Pick in Warboys over the previous weekend in response to a request for helpers by the Community Association. The Chairman thanked those who had taken part and Councillor

Green added his thanks to the Handymen for assembling the bags of litter for collection in the weekly visit by District Council staff.

**(p) Broadband Installation**

Further to Minute No. 202/21, the Clerk reported that a number of Members had commented on the location of the main cabinet for their broadband roll-out in Warboys following an invitation from Gigaclear to do so. Members also referred to activity in village by BT Openreach and County Broadband who also appeared to be undertaking works in the highway to install broadband.

**(q) Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

Further to Minute No. 204/21, the Chairman advised that the Rector had agreed to conduct a service on the evening of 2nd June to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as a result of which the beacon would be lit in the churchyard after the service.

**(r) Jubilee Park – Fencing of Play Equipment**

Arising from Minute No. 205/21, the Clerk reported that he had received confirmation from the District Council that if the area containing the play equipment at Jubilee Park was fenced and a suitable sign installed, the land would fall within the Public Places Protection Order to create an offence if a dog was taken into the area.

Following advice from the contractor engaged to cut the grass regarding the width of the access required for his equipment and the positioning of the new play equipment, the Clerk reported that he would invite quotations from fencing companies for consideration by the Council.

**219/21 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14th March 2022 be received.

**220/21 ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 21st March 2022 be received.

**221/21 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st March 2022 be received.

## **222/21 REPORT BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

As none of County or District Councillors were in attendance at the meeting, a report was not provided.

As both Councillors Bull and Haines had decided not to stand for re-election at the District Council election to be held on 5th May, the Clerk was asked to write to them to express the Parish Council's appreciation for their support for Warboys during their respective terms of office.

## **223/21 POLICE REPORT**

The Clerk reported that he had been contacted by the new Neighbourhood Police Sergeant for St Ives and Ramsey with regard to the alleged incident during a recent visit by the Connections Bus Project (Minute No. 194/21(o) refers). Contact details for the Project Manager had been passed on to the Sergeant but no further information had been received.

Councillor Green had supplied a report on behalf of the Warboys Speedwatch Group which he was co-ordinating, copies of which had been circulated to all Members. The Group now comprised 9 volunteers and had undertaken 10 Speedwatch sessions at various locations around the village. 1,621 vehicles had been monitored and 102 vehicles had been reported to the Police for having exceeded the speed limit within the 30 mph limit in the village. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire had attended one of the sessions undertaken in Warboys and Councillor Green reported that one of the Group was also monitoring lorries through the village.

The Chairman expressed appreciation on behalf of the Parish Council to Councillor Green and the Speedwatch Team for their actions in Warboys.

## **224/21 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION**

Further to Minute No. 198/21, it was reported that 13 people had been nominated for the 15 vacancies on the Parish Council for the election on 5th May and that they had therefore been elected unopposed without the need for an election to be held. Those elected were existing Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, D W England, Ms L A Gifford, S J Green, J A Parker, P S Potts, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S J Wilcox, G C M Willis, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt, together with a new Member, Mr A Ntuk.

The Chairman reminded all those elected of the need to complete a Return of Expenses form to the District Council, even though no expenditure was likely to have been incurred in the uncontested election.

As the two vacancies could now be filled by the Council by co-option, it was

## **RESOLVED**

that the Clerk be requested to invite expressions of interest from qualifying persons for consideration for co-option to the Council.

## **225/21 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Further to Minute No. 199/21, Members considered a recommendation from the District Council for town and parish councils in Huntingdonshire to adopt a new model code of conduct published by the Local Government Association which had been prepared in consultation with other local government groups. Copies of a report by the Monitoring Officer explaining the changes, together with the Parish Council's existing code and the new model code had been circulated to Members with the agenda for the previous meeting.

The Clerk suggested that the new model code was less easy to understand than the previous one adopted by the Parish Council, being three times its length and with three distinct types of registrable and disclosable interests than the previous two. As the sanctions available in the event of a breach of the code remained unchanged and it was unlikely that the District Council's Monitoring Officer would have the necessary resources to investigate any alleged breaches, the Clerk suggested that there was little advantage in adopting the new recommended code. Under the circumstances, it was therefore

## **RESOLVED**

that the new model code be not adopted and the previous Code of Conduct for Members of the Parish Council be retained.

## **226/21 PUDDOCK ROAD**

Members were informed that the County Council had informally consulted households in the vicinity of Puddock Road about the possible closure of the single lane section of the road as a through route to address the proliferation of accidents that had taken place there in recent years. Copies had been circulated to Members of a response by one of the local farmers who had drawn attention to the financial impact on his business owing to the length of the diversion required to access the land that he farmed. Councillors England and Mrs Harlock reported that many of the farmers locally had submitted similar objections.

It was acknowledged that the cause of the problem was excessive speeds by motorists who did not live locally and who were unaware of the dangers of this stretch of road. Members commented on the lack of maintenance expenditure and the presence of soft verges which made it difficult for a driver to compensate if their vehicle left the road. Councillor England also suggested that much of the cause of the subsidence of the carriageway was due to the planting of trees alongside the road in previous years.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had not been consulted at this stage. The County Council had not responded to a request for an extension of time beyond the deadline of 11th April to enable the Parish Council to comment but nevertheless, it was

## **RESOLVED**

that the County Council be informed that the Parish Council object to the possible closure of Puddock Road for through traffic.

## **227/21 ONYETT'S FIELD**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(k), Members considered a draft management plan (copies of which had been circulated) for Onyett's Field. The document had been prepared by the working party, following a meeting on site and advice received from an officer of the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust.

The working party suggested that the management plan be developed over the course of the following year, with the Wildlife Trust's officer expected to undertake a further site visit in the summer when she would assess the changes to the condition of the land as the seasons progressed. Various maintenance tasks had been identified in the document which would need to be addressed over the course of the year. In addition, the working party suggested that volunteers be invited to assist with ongoing maintenance and supervision of the land to generate a greater respect for the flora and fauna on site and create a better sense of ownership.

The Clerk undertook to progress the actions contained in the plan and to report back on the expressions of interest received from members of the public.

## **228/21 FUNDED POND CONSERVATION PROJECT**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group East drawing attention to the availability of grant to fund pond conservation projects to help protect great crested newts. Councillor Willis advised that the Wildlife Trust also had access to similar grants to create or restore ponds.

The Trust had suggested the creation of a second pond at Onyett's Field and the Clerk referred to the condition of the Heath Pond which was silting up due to the absence of any dredging for many years. Members agreed to further investigations being undertaken with both organisations to explore the possibility of funding for both Onyett's Field and the Heath Pond.

## **229/21 . ANNUAL PATHFINDER MARCH**

Members were informed that notification had been received from the Royal Air Force that the annual Pathfinder March would be taking place through the Parish on Saturday 18th June in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Pathfinder Force.



## **230/21 PARISH CENTRE – WATER SUPPLY**

Further to Minute No. 194/21(g), the Clerk reported that the latest invoice received from Source for Business (formerly Cambridge Water) for the Parish Centre was more than double the cost of the previous invoice which itself had been higher than expected.

As a result, a specialist leak detection company had been engaged to try to establish the cause of the excess water consumption and they would be carrying out investigations on site later in the week. As the pipework also served the library, former Youthie premises and playgroup premises as well as the Parish Centre, the County Council and Underfives Playgroup had been notified and further consideration would be given to the cost of repairs and excess consumption when the location of the leak had been established.

## **231/21 INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

As recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, it was

### **RESOLVED**

that the Council's Investment Strategy (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as submitted for 2022/23.

## **232/21 REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Members considered requests from East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH) and Citizens Advice Rural Cambs for financial assistance towards the work of the respective organisations. Having been advised that both organisations were regularly supported by the Council, Members

### **RESOLVED**

that a grant of £100 be made to both EACH and Citizens Advice Rural Cambs.

## **233/21 OPEN FORUM**

Members were informed that it had been reported by a member of the public at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council that Anglian Water had been carrying out sewer surveys in the village.

## **234/21 ACCOUNTS**

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

### **RESOLVED**

(a) that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
W E Batterbee	Salary – March 2022	1,196.20
D A Warwick	Salary – March 2022	1,258.27
R Edwards	Salary – March 2022	299.20
R Reeves	Salary - March 2022	1,081.74
HMRC	Tax & NIC – March 2022	1,507.12
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	14.39
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Computer monitor	169.00
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)	327.22
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support + 365 licence	36.18
Chess ICT Ltd	IT broadband and back-up service (paid by direct debit)	68.53
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	123.96
Allstar	Ecopoint (paid by direct debit)	5.02
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (February)	5.96
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (February)	5.27
Roy Parker Garden Services	Grass cutting	280.00
Michael Murray Signs Ltd	Deep water sign – Onyetts Field	210.00
Cambridgeshire County Council	LHI scheme Ramsey Road - Parish Council contribution	2,860.00
Connections Bus Project	January – March (8 visits)	2,328.00
Lawyers in Local Government	Annual subscription	55.00

Warboys Community Association	50% contribution to Platinum Jubilee insert in Warboys Diary	80.18
Source for Business	Water rates – Allotments	22.55
Source for Business	Water rates – Parish Centre	1,792.77
R Martin	Half year Clockwinder's honorarium	130.00
I Hansell	Half year Internal Audit honorarium	50.00
Envar Composting Ltd	Soil improver for allotments	432.00
Wicksteed Leisure Ltd	New play equipment = Jubilee Park	9,920.10
Ivan Barrett Ltd	Van service & miscellaneous supplies	454.80
(b) that payment of the following invoices required to be made before the meeting be endorsed:-		
Saffron Insurance	Renewal of van insurance	250.04
The Leak Specialists	Parish Centre leak detection (50% deposit)	417.00

## **235/21 BUDGETARY CONTROL**

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

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

Chairman.