

# **WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 11th July 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, J A Parker, P S Potts, Mrs C L Sproats and Mrs A R Wyatt.

## **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

District Councillor Mrs A E Costello

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A Ntuk, Ms M L Morrow and G C M Willis, County Councillor S J Corney and District Councillor Ms C A Lowe.

## **47/22 MINUTES**

Upon being moved by Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Ms Gifford, the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments –

- (a) the replacement of the words ‘be recalibrated’ by the words ‘verify the calibration’ in the second line of Minute No. 32/22(n) entitled ‘Speedwatch Equipment’ and
- (b) the replacement of the date ‘23rd’ by the date ‘24th’ in the second line of Minute No. 32/22(p) entitled ‘Feast Week Band Concert’.

## **48/22 MEMBERS’ INTERESTS**

Councillor Green declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute No. 56/22 (Great Pastures Phase II Open Space Maintenance) as he was a resident of a property on Phase I. He requested a dispensation to speak but not vote on the matter as he had experience of the standard of maintenance being undertaken on phase I.

## **RESOLVED**

that a dispensation to speak but not vote on the subject be granted to Councillor Green.

## **49/22 MATTERS ARISING**

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 13th June 2022:-

**(a) 66 High Street**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(a), the Clerk reported that no further information had been received since the previous meeting regarding 66 High Street and that the outcome of the application for planning applications for the refurbishment of the property was awaited.

**(b) Bellway Homes**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(b), the Clerk reported that he was continuing to seek information from Bellway Homes as to when the company would improve the surface of the footpath that they had installed and provide a kissing gate at Jubilee Park as they had promised.

**(c) Bridleways**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(c), the Clerk reported that he had heard nothing further from the County Council's Principal Rural Surveyor regarding the creation of a permissive bridleway to link bridleways 17 and 18.

**(d) Speedwatch Signs**

Arising from Minute No. 32/22(d), Councillor Green reported that he wished to withdraw his request for the installation of Speedwatch signs at the entrances to the village as over a year had elapsed since the County Council had first been asked for an indication of the cost of installing the signs and the information had still not been provided.

**RESOLVED**

that no further action be taken in respect of this matter.

**(e) Repairs to Lighting Column**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(g), the Clerk reported that he had been informed by Balfour Beatty that they had now received a new feeder column to replace the one damaged in a vehicle collision at the Clock Tower junction in November and that this would be fitted before the end of July.

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

Further to Minute No. 06/22(h), the Clerk reported that no further information had been received from the District Council regarding the action to be taken following the unauthorised felling of a tree in the garden of 32 High Street.

**(g) Holiday Sports Club**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(i), the Clerk reported that Finding Fitness had advised that the holiday sports club to be held at the school for two weeks in August was now fully subscribed with 64 children having been enrolled. Arrangements were being made for a visit while the club was open and the Clerk reported that details would be circulated to those Members wishing to attend.

**(h) Parish Centre – Water Supply**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(k), the Clerk reported that a claim had been submitted to Source for Business for the possible recovery of the cost of the excessive water consumption as a result of a leak in the supply to the Parish Centre. The company had advised that it was not the policy of South Staffs Water to offer a leak allowance but that they would submit the claim to Anglian Water in respect of the sewerage element of the bill.

The Clerk advised that enquiries were being made with the County Council to pursue the matter with the authority after the claim with Source for Business had been finalised as the leak had been located on land in their ownership.

**(i) Traffic in the High Street**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(m), Councillor Green advised that he had yet to finalise a draft brief for consideration by the Council with regard to engaging traffic consultants to advise on possible measures to improve highway safety in the village.

**(j) Speedwatch Equipment**

Arising from Minute No. 32/22(n), Councillor Green reported that the Speedwatch camera had been returned from the suppliers and was now in use again for local Speedwatch sessions.

**(k) The Weir – Advertising**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(o), the Clerk reported that he had yet to receive a reply from the Christmas Lighting Group regarding the Council's decision to permit them to display sponsored banners around the Weir prior to the switch-on of the lighting display at the end of November.

**(l) Litter Bin in Flaxen Walk**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(q), the Clerk reported that Muir Housing Group had been asked to install a Glasdon litter bin in Flaxen Walk similar to those installed elsewhere in the village but a reply had yet to be received.

**(m) Climate and Environment Strategy**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(r), Councillor Mrs Sproats advised that the Climate and Environment working party had met recently. An article would be included in the next edition of the Warboys Diary, and information published elsewhere,

inviting expressions of interest from people living in the Parish to become involved in the implementation of the Climate and Environment Strategy and Action Plan. A first meeting of those interested was being planned in mid-October.

**(n) Feast Week – Street Market**

Further to Minute No. 40/22, Councillor Mrs Wyatt reported on the arrangements being made by the Community Association to hold a street market in the High Street on 24th July while the road was closed for the arrival of the funfair during Feast Week. A leaflet also had been delivered to the residents of the Great Pastures and The Furrows estates inviting them to attend the Community Association stall that day to find out more about what was happening in the village.

**(o) Replacement Parish Centre**

Further to Minute No. 41/22, Members were advised that the working party had met the Council's Architect since the previous meeting and that the plans for the replacement of the Parish Centre were moving forward to the next stage of design.

**50/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th June 2022 be received.

**51/22 LEISURE AREAS COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure Areas Committee held on 27th June 2022 be received.

**52/22 POLICE REPORT**

Members noted that there were no incidents to report in respect of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Parish since the previous meeting.

**53/22 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

District Councillor Costello reported that she had nothing to report with regard to decisions by the District Council. However, as she was also a member of the County Council, she added that the new Shire Hall at Alconbury Weald had been officially opened in the previous week. She also reported that the County Director of Health had expressed concern about the recent growth in the number of cases of Covid-19 being reported locally.

## **54/22 RIDING OF HORSES IN WARBOYS**

Members were informed that a member of the public had contacted the Parish Council to ask for improved highway safety in the village for the riders of horses. The person concerned had been injured when the horse that she had been riding had been involved in a collision with a motor vehicle in December. She was of the opinion that some motorists drove too quickly and too closely when passing horse riders and she felt that action should be taken to improve the safety of riders when using the highway. She also expressed the view that there were insufficient bridleways in the Parish in comparison to the number of horse riders.

In the ensuing discussion, Members felt that there was little that could be done to raise the driving standard of some motorists and that any highway improvements would have negligible impact upon those who drove too fast on village roads or ignored the Highway Code. Nevertheless, Members agreed to review the matter again when considering bids under the Local Highway Improvement programme for 2023/24.

## **55/22 CUTTING OF GRASS – HIGH STREET**

Councillor England drew attention to the fact that a member of the public had volunteered to cut the grass verge in the High Street since the first lockdown in 2020 and he suggested the payment of a gratuity to the person concerned as the work had previously been undertaken by the Handymen and this enabled them to spend more time on their other duties.

While appreciating the work carried out by the individual, Members referred to the fact that other members of the public volunteered to collect litter on a regular basis in the village and at Onyetts Field. The Council also planned to attract people to assist with the future maintenance of Onyetts Field. Members therefore felt that it would be inadvisable to pay a gratuity in isolation to the person cutting the grass and that it would be preferable to express the Council's appreciation in another way such as a letter of thanks or inviting volunteers to a social occasion when thanks could be extended.

The Clerk advised that the Handymen had confirmed that they had the capacity to resume the cutting of the High Street verges themselves. He also reported that he was liaising with the Council's insurers to investigate the status of members of the public who volunteered to carry out community work in the Parish.

Although the Finance and General Purposes Committee had considered the question of grass cutting when preparing the budget for 2022/23 when it had met in the previous November, Councillor England asked that this be considered again by the Committee when considering the budget for 2023/24.

## **RESOLVED**

that a gratuity be not paid to the person volunteering to cut the grass but that the Council's appreciation be extended in a non-monetary way.

## **56/22 GREAT PASTURES PHASE II OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE**

Members considered an offer from David Wilson Homes to transfer the ownership of the open spaces on phase II of the Great Pastures development to the Parish Council.

Members were reminded that the Council had explored the implications of accepting the transfer the open spaces on phase I of the estate in some detail in the autumn of 2019 but had decided to decline the offer.

The plan provided by David Wilson Homes showing the open spaces on Phase II and which had been circulated to Members showed that they included two balancing ponds, two newt ponds and an equipped play area as well as areas of grassland. The Clerk explained that the Section 106 Agreement associated with the planning permission required the developer to offer to transfer ownership and future maintenance of the open spaces firstly to the Parish Council and then to the District Council. This would be accompanied by a payment calculated under the District Council's Developer Contributions SPD which, in the case of Phase II, was likely to be in the region of £100,000. In the event of both authorities declining the offer, the land would be transferred to a management company controlled by the residents.

Councillor Green explained the arrangements for the residents of Phase I whereby households paid a half-yearly amount to a company engaged by David Wilson Homes who undertook the maintenance of the open spaces. Although a management company could be formed by the residents, he thought this was unlikely to happen in view of the onerous nature of such a commitment on the part of those involved and he considered it probable that a maintenance company would continue to be engaged by the developer in future years to maintain the open spaces with the cost recharged to residents.

In the ensuing debate, a range of views was expressed with some Members being of the opinion that, having explored the situation thoroughly in 2019, it would be inappropriate to accept the transfer of Phase II for the same reasons that the offer of Phase I had been declined. The contrary view was that the Council should consider an expansion of its maintenance capabilities to incorporate Phase II and other potential sites in the village.

After a vote had been taken, it was

### **RESOLVED**

that the offer from David Wilson Homes to transfer ownership of the open spaces on Phase II of the Great Pastures development be declined.

## **57/22 POND CREATION**

Further to Minute No. 32/22(j) and to Minute No. 07/22(i) of the Leisure Areas Committee, the Clerk submitted the terms supplied by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust for the creation of a pond for Great Crested Newts at Onyetts Field (a copy of which had been circulated).

Members had raised no objection to the principle when this had been considered by the Committee, although an alternative location for the pond had been suggested to that

discussed by the Chairman and the Clerk when they had met representatives of the Wildlife Trust on site. Members also suggested that there was a risk that the pond would dry out in the summer months unless it was of sufficient depth and that there was no guarantee that this could be kept free of fish in the future.

**RESOLVED**

that the terms submitted by the Wildlife Trust be accepted and arrangements made for a pond for Great Crested Newts to be provided at Onyett Field.

**58/22 RAMSEY CIVIC CHURCH SERVICE**

Arising from an invitation for the Council to be represented at the Mayor of Ramsey's Civic Church Service on 18th September, it was

**RESOLVED**

that Councillor Green be authorised to attend on the Council's behalf.

**59/22 PLANNING SOFTWARE SYSTEM**

The Clerk reported on the cost of improving security for the software system maintained by EDGE IT and used by the Council for planning application purposes. The company had recommended an added level of security to protect both the Council and their own business systems. The cost would be an initial £7.50 and £36 per annum thereafter.

**RESOLVED**

that the proposal be accepted and arrangements made for the additional security to be applied.

**60/22 REVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Further to Minute No. 43/22, the Council reviewed its social media policy (a copy of which had been circulated).

Councillor Ms Gifford drew attention to the number of users of the various Facebook sites in the village and both she and Councillor Mrs Sproats referred to the need to achieve an appropriate balance in the use of social media to publicise the Council's business without attracting undue responses which became onerous to manage without additional resources.

**RESOLVED**

that the social media policy be retained in its current format, with exception of a change in the Members authorised to post material on any social media account in the Council's name from Councillors Ms Gifford and Dr Withams to Councillors Ms Gifford and Mrs Sproats.

## **61/22 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

Members were informed that the District Council had advised that bids could be submitted for funding from their central CIL fund towards infrastructure projects until the end of August. The Clerk reported that he was unaware of any proposals that could be submitted on this occasion but if any Member wished to suggest a scheme for funding, this could be discussed at the next meeting. A further opportunity to apply for funding would arise later in the year.

## **62/22 OPEN FORUM**

The Clerk reported that there had been no matters raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council.

## **63/22 ACCOUNTS**

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

### **RESOLVED**

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
W E Batterbee	Salary – June 2022	1,210.79
D A Warwick	Salary – June 2022	1,244.43
R Edwards	Salary – June 2022	288.00
R Reeves	Salary - June 2022	1,063.66
HMRC	Tax & NIC – June 2022	1,561.58
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	14.39
R Reeves	Mileage claim	62.55
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	78.00
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	21.28
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support (paid by direct debit)	53.69
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	140.16
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply	5.72

(June)

Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (June)	4.97
Cranbrook Plants	Summer bedding plants	492.29
Westcotec	Calibration & bracket, Speedwatch camera	198.00
Dyers of Warboys	Play sand, Adams Lyons playground	277.00
Cheffins	Planning consultancy	2,563.20
G H Bullard & Associates	Professional fees for Parish Centre drainage design	2,488.80
Tibbett Architectural Services	Stage payment architectural fees – Parish Centre replacement	2,450.00

## **64/22 BUDGETARY CONTROL**

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

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

Chairman.