

# **WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 13th March 2023 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman.

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, D W England, D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford, Ms M L Morrow, J A Parker, P S Potts, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S C Wilcox, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt.

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

District Councillor Ms C A Lowe

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor R J Dykstra, County Councillor S J Corney and District Councillor Mrs A E Costello.

## **210/22 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman drew attention to the recent death of Mrs B Murphy who had been a member of the Parish Council some years previously.

Members stood for a minute's silence as a token of respect.

## **211/22 MINUTES**

Upon being moved by Councillor Willis and seconded by Councillor Potts, the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **212/22 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor England declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute Nos. 222/22 entitled 'Adams Lyons Playground', 223/22 entitled 'Onyetts Field' and 224/22 entitled 'Onyetts Field Byelaws. He had received a dispensation previously to speak but not vote on each of the matters.

## **213/22 MATTERS ARISING**

The Council considered the following matters arising from the meeting held on 13th February 2023:-

**(a) Bridleways**

Further to Minute No. 190/22(a), the Clerk reported that he was still awaiting a reply from the County Council's Rural Asset Manager with regard to the proposed creation of a permissive bridleway to link bridleways 17 and 18.

**(b) Repairs to Lighting Column**

Further to Minute No. 190/22(b), the Clerk undertook to investigate whether all of the uplighters on the lighting columns at the Jubilee Clock Tower were working.

**(c) Former Youthie Building**

Further to Minute No. 190/22(g), the Clerk reported that he was still trying to arrange a meeting with officers from the County Council to discuss the future of the former Youthie building.

**(d) Replacement Parish Centre**

Further to Minute No. 194/22, the Clerk advised that the drainage report was expected from MTC within the following two weeks, after which tenders would be invited for the replacement of the Parish Centre.

Members were informed that the Chairman and the Clerk would be attending a meeting of the Women's Institute Committee in April to discuss a possible contribution from the Institute towards the cost of the new building.

It was also reported that, at the funeral of Mrs M Richardson, it had been announced that fifty per cent of the collection would be donated towards the replacement Parish Centre. A cheque for £234 had subsequently been received and the Clerk confirmed that a letter of thanks had been sent to Mrs Richardson's next of kin.

**(e) Climate Change and Environment Group**

Arising from Minute No. 204/22, Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that the group had met recently. The notice on local recycling outlets had been improved visually with the help of one of the group for inclusion in the next edition of the Warboys Diary and Councillor Mrs Sproats also reported that the questionnaire to invite the views of Warboys residents on climate change and the environment was nearly completion.

**214/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 13th and 27th February 2023 be received.

## **215/22 POLICE REPORT**

Members were reminded that information had been circulated from the Police about attendance at their liaison meetings which any member of the public could register to attend.

Councillor Parker reported that, following a number of complaints about parking outside the Primary Academy, the Police had taken action recently and issued a number of motorists with parking fines.

## **216/22 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

District Councillor Ms Lowe reported that the District Council would be consulting on the potential withdrawal of the green waste collection service from households in 2023/24.

She also reported that she had attended a protest on site on 11th March against the proposed erection of social housing on land at Station Road. A further protest would be held later in the month.

The Clerk advised that County Councillor Corney had asked if Members would notify him if they had any concerns about the proposal by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to introduce a congestion charge for motorists in Cambridge.

## **217/22 VACANCY**

Further to Minute No. 196/22, the Chairman reported that one expression of interest had been received for co-option to the Council to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of former Councillor S Green.

Copies had been circulated prior to the meeting of the information provided by Mr J Land who was present at the meeting and introduced himself to Members.

Having been proposed and seconded, it was

### **RESOLVED**

that Mr J Land be co-opted to the Council and appointed to all of the Council's committees for the remainder of the municipal year.

Having signed the declaration of acceptance of office, Councillor Land joined the meeting.

**Councillor J Land in attendance.**

## **218/22 ASSISTANT CLERK**

Further to Minute No. 197/22, the Clerk reported that 33 requests had been received for information packs for the position of Assistant Clerk and 14 completed applications had been returned prior to the closing date.

Copies of the applications had been circulated electronically to Members of the Appointments Panel who would be meeting later in the evening to agree the shortlist and the arrangements for interview.

## **219/22 LOCAL HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

Further to Minute No. 190/22(c), the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) with regard to the scheme submitted to the County Council under the Highways Improvement Programme (LHI) for 2023/24.

Members were reminded that the bid had comprised the creation of a footway alongside Puddock Hill for use by horse riders and pedestrians, together with the introduction of a 40 mph limit to slow the speed of traffic. Following concerns expressed by the County Council's Highways Project Manager dealing with the scheme about its feasibility, the Clerk reported that he had met the officer on site.

The Highways Manager had explained that the verge wasn't wide enough for the creation of a path for horse riders which, to meet the required standard, needed to be 3 metres in width and 1.8 metres from the edge of the carriageway. The cost of creating a footway built to highways standards would far exceed the maximum allocation of £25,000 available under the LHI programme. As a compromise, the Highways Manager had estimated that the cost of a 1.8 metre wide path with a crushed limestone base would be £37,569. This could increase if the County Council's Road Safety Audit felt that the path should be extended to provide a safer crossing point of the carriageway at the top of the hill.

As the vegetation in the verge on the eastern side of Puddock Hill had been cut back which now allowed walkers to step off the carriageway to avoid oncoming traffic, Members felt that the cost of the scheme could not be justified, particularly as this would be unusable for horse riders and not improve their safety.

It was therefore

### **RESOLVED**

that the element of the Highways Improvement Programme bid for a footway on Puddock Hill be withdrawn but the request for a 40 mph limit be retained.

## **220/22 20 MPH LIMITS**

The Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) following the launch of a programme by the County Council for the introduction of 20 mph speed limits on highways in Cambridgeshire.

The programme enabled any person, with the support of the local county councillor and town/parish council to apply for the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit to improve highway safety, encourage residents to walk or cycle and reduce noise and pollution. A budget of £150,000 had been allocated annually which would enable 8 schemes to be implemented each year. Applications had to be accompanied with accident statistics, evidence demonstrating an existing safety issue, an explanation of how this would

encourage people to walk and cycle and evidence that this had the support of the local community following public consultation.

The Clerk reminded Members that complaints were received from residents from time to time about the excessive speed of motorists on many of the roads in the village. With concerns locally about the current 30 mph speed limit being exceeded, the Clerk suggested that it was likely that complaints would increase if the speed limit was reduced to 20 mph. If motorists did fail to comply with the lower speed limit, parish councils would be expected to apply for traffic calming measures through the Local Highway Improvement programme which the Clerk suggested was likely to be unpopular with residents due to the noise and vibration caused by vehicles negotiating any calming measures that were installed.

As the closing date for submissions was 30th April, Members acknowledged that the timescale was too short for any detailed consideration or meaningful consultation. As the invitation of applications would be an annual occurrence, it was therefore

### **RESOLVED**

that consideration of the matter be deferred until later in the year.

### **221/22 VIBRANT COMMUNITIES FUND**

A report by the Clerk was submitted (copies of which had been circulated) regarding the allocation of funding by the District Council to Warboys under the Vibrant Communities Fund.

It was reported that the funding was intended to help town centres recover from the pandemic and to promote growth and sustainability. The sum allocated to Warboys was £5,000 which could be used to support new or existing community events or other ways of encouraging people to visit local businesses or support cultural events. The District Council required the submission of a project proposal listing activities to be supported and expenditure by 24th March and would require the Parish Council to either incur the expenditure or reimburse organisers and then reclaim the money from the scheme, net of VAT.

The Clerk reported that he had contacted the Community Association and Christmas Lighting Group to invite them to submit proposals for consideration and a list of suggestions from the Association was attached to the report. Although most of the activities were already planned, the Clerk pointed out that the recovery of expenditure would enable the groups to retain more of the funding that they raised.

Following discussion, it was

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that a project proposal be submitted to participate in the scheme;
- (b) that the Clerk be authorised, after consultation with the Chairman, to determine the project proposal; and

- (c) that groups incurring expenditure as part of the scheme be informed that the Council will only reimburse the cost, net of VAT.

### **222/22 ADAMS LYONS PLAYGROUD**

Further to Minute No. 200/22, the Clerk reported that he was still awaiting an amended quotation from a playground provider to install safety surfacing around some items of play equipment at Adams Lyons Playground.

Following a site visit by Councillor Fabb and the Clerk, it was suggested that the best way to address the problem of the sleepers moving away from the mound was to either remove the sleepers and extend the mound or retain the sleepers and create a supporting mound. As this would result in the mound itself extending closer to another item of play equipment, it was agreed that the advice of the safety inspection company that carried out the annual inspection be sought to avoid potential concerns being raised in the safety report.

As both options would require additional safety surfacing, it was agreed to invite fresh quotations for the safety surfacing identified at the playground and to infill the gap between the mound and sleepers in the interim until a permanent solution could be implemented.

(Having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the above minute, Councillor England left the room for the duration of the discussion thereon.)

### **223/22 ONYETTS FIELD**

Further to Minute Nos. 202/22, the Clerk submitted a report (copies circulated) with regard to the maintenance of Onyetts Field.

Having dredged part of the pond, Councillors England and Fabb had drawn attention to the fact that parts of the bankside were being undercut. They had obtained prices from three timber suppliers to install retaining walls where necessary, the cheapest of which was £1,230 plus VAT with the work being carried out by themselves without cost to the Council.

The Clerk reported that he had met Councillor England on site together with a pest control company to investigate a potential solution to the complaint that rabbits from Onyetts Field were eating crops in the adjoining field being farmed by Councillor England. As the company had been unable to suggest a practical solution, enquiries were being made with another local person to try to reduce the number of rabbits at the field.

Councillor England had also suggested that a length of brambles on the boundary with the adjoining field owned by showpeople be removed and a new hedge planted over the course of the ensuing autumn/winter.

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that Councillors Fabb and England be authorised to proceed with the installation of timber walls to protect parts of the pond bankside at a cost of £1,230 for the timber and the work being undertaken by themselves;

- (b) that an application for grant be made to Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd towards the cost of the timber;
- (c) that the report with regard to rabbits at Onyetts Field be received;
- (d) that arrangements be made to remove a length of brambles on the western boundary of the field and to plant a replacement hedgerow in the autumn; and
- (e) that an application be made to the Woodland Trust for hedging plants.

### **224/22 ONYETTS FIELD - BYELAWS**

Further to Minute No. 153/22, a report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which was circulated) following a meeting of the Onyetts Field Working Party on the proposed making of byelaws to regulate activities on the land. The Working Party had amended the model byelaws for pleasure grounds, public walks and open spaces and the draft byelaws were attached to the report for consideration.

Councillor Land drew attention to the definition of model aircraft used in the model byelaws which he suggested was out of date and did not include drones and other types of unmanned craft. The Clerk explained that any change to the terminology or definitions used in model byelaws would normally necessitate consultation on the part of the Government with appropriate bodies.

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Clerk be requested to seek clarification from the Government on the definition of model planes, following liaison with Councillor Land; and
- (b) that subject to any change required to the definition of model planes, the draft byelaws attached to the report now submitted be approved for public consultation purposes.

### **225/22 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING – ROAD CLOSURE**

Further to Minute No. 203/22, the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) with regard to the arrangements for the annual Christmas Lights Switch-on event and the road closure required. Following discussion at the previous meeting about the level of attendance in 2022 and potential alternative locations for the event, the report drew attention to the options available which would require closing a longer stretch of the High Street, closing Mill Green as opposed to the High Street, closing both the High Street and Mill Green or retaining the existing arrangements.

While the event itself was managed by the Christmas Lighting Group, the Clerk explained that the road closure was the responsibility of the Council and its staff. As diversions had to be in place at road junctions, it was suggested that any change to the present arrangements would have an impact on more households and also affect the businesses of

the SPAR store and Kim's fish and chip shop on what was likely to be their busiest time of the week.

The consensus view of Members, following discussion, was that the High Street should be closed from its junction with Mill Green to the junction with Station Road to better accommodate the number of people attending. Members were informed that the Lighting Group would be meeting later in the week and that their views would be reported at that meeting.

## **226/22 CORONATION**

Further to Minute No 206/22, the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) containing an update on the arrangements locally to celebrate the forthcoming coronation of King Charles.

Members were informed that a civic service would be held at the Parish Church on a date to be announced. A flag with the official coronation emblem had been purchased which would be flown in the village. A local businessman had offered to fund the purchase of a suitable seat commemorating the event, with Members suggesting that this be located on the open space in Forge Way near the junction with the High Street.

With regard to the possible distribution of a commemorative gift to school children, Councillor Parker explained that the Primary Academy would be unable to assist with the cost. Pictures showing the type of gifts available from promotional companies were circulated at the meeting, none of which Members considered would be represent a lasting memento of the event. It was reported that the Parent Teachers Association at the Academy might be intending to provide a bookmark to children at the school to mark the occasion and Members suggested that an offer might be made to contribute towards the cost.

Mention also was made in the report of events being arranged in the village to celebrate the coronation.

## **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the report be noted, together with the information contained therein;
- (b) that the local businessman be thanked for offering to fund the purchase of a commemorative seat;
- (c) that the commemorative seat be located in the open space at the entrance to Forge Way, subject to permission being obtained from the District Council who owned the land;
- (d) that no further action be taken with regard to the possibility of a commemorative gift for local children; and
- (e) that the Parent Teachers Association be approached to enquire whether they would like to receive a financial contribution from the Council towards the cost of supplying a commemorative bookmark to children at the Primary Academy.



## **227/22 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

Members agreed to a request from the Royal British Legion's County Community Fundraiser to attend the next meeting of the Council to speak about the local Poppy Appeal and the help that the organisation can offer the Armed Forces Community.

## **228/22 VILLAGE LITTER PICK**

Members were informed that the Community Association would be organising a Spring Litter Pick in the village involving the community over the weekend of 22nd/23rd April.

## **229/22 OPEN FORUM**

The Clerk reported that the only matters raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council had been questions about the eligibility of neighbouring parishes for grants from Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund and about the venue of the Feast Week band concert.

## **230/22 ACCOUNTS**

Upon being moved and seconded , it was

### **RESOLVED**

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
W E Batterbee	Salary – February 2023	1,144.00
D A Warwick	Salary – February 2023	1,225.99
R Edwards	Salary – February 2023	360.80
R Reeves	Salary - February 2023	1,126.12
HMRC	Tax & NIC – February 2023	1,507.93
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	15.59
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Road planings for allotments roadway	95.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Flag for coronation	22.19
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	78.00

E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	186.76
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support (paid by direct debit)	105.36
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	86.77
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (February)	6.89
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (February)	5.86
M.A.M. Garden Maintenance	Grass cutting	170.00
Xerox UK Ltd	Photocopying charges	16.50
Cheffins Planning	Planning consultancy – Station Road development	490.20
James Waters	Hedge cutting – Onyetts Field	108.00
Wards of Warboys	Defibrillator location agreement	25.00
Allstar	Zero liability service (paid by direct debit)	4.19
R Reeves	Reimbursement – printer ink	21.98
R Reeves	Reimbursement – sanitary bins for Parish Centre	99.99
M.A.M. Garden Maintenance	Grass cutting	170.00

## **231/22 BUDGETARY CONTROL**

Members received the budgetary control statement for February 2023, together with the list of Parish Centre bookings for that month, copies of which had been circulated.

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

Chairman.