

# **WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 17th April 2023 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman.

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

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

County Councillor S J Corney

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Ms M L Morrow, Mrs S C Wilcox and Mrs A R Wyatt and District Councillor Mrs A E Costello.

## **232/22 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reminded Members that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 19th April and she encouraged them to attend.

## **233/22 MINUTES**

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

## **234/22 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor England declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute Nos. 236/22(h) entitled 'Adams Lyons Playground' and 248/22 entitled 'Onyetts Field'. He had received a dispensation previously to speak but not vote on each of the matters.

## **235/22 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

Further to Minute No. 227/22, Members were informed that the Royal British Legion's County Community Fundraiser was unable to attend the meeting to talk about the local Poppy Appeal and the help that the organisation could offer the Armed Forces community. She had asked if she could attend the next week, to which Members had no objection provided she was prepared to wait while the formal business of the Annual Meeting was undertaken.

## **236/22 MATTERS ARISING**

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

**(a) Bridleways**

Further to Minute No. 213/22(a), the Clerk reported that he had been notified by the County Council's Rural Asset Manager that she had received permission from the Head of Strategic Assets to proceed with the proposed creation of a permissive bridleway to link bridleways 17 and 18.

**(b) Repairs to Lighting Column**

Further to Minute No. 213/22(b), it was reported that all of the lighting at the Jubilee Clock Tower now appeared to be working.

**(c) Replacement Parish Centre**

Further to Minute No. 213/22(d), the Clerk reported that the Architects had supplied a draft invitation to tender document for comment. It was understood that a report from one of the consultants was expected within the following week, after which tenders would be invited.

Members were also informed that the Chairman and Clerk had attended 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. This would now be considered by the body as a whole in May.

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

Arising from Minute No. 213/22(e), Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that the insert in the latest edition of the Warboys Diary containing information about local recycling opportunities had been well received. Some of the questionnaires asking people about their priorities concerning climate change had been returned in hard copy but fewer had been received on line. As a result, the link to the questionnaire would be highlighted on the Council's website and elsewhere.

Members were informed that the next meeting of the working party would be held on 22nd May.

**(e) Green Bin Collections**

Arising from Minute No. 216/22, the Clerk informed Members that the Environment Act 2021 appeared to require waste collection authorities to collect recyclable materials free of charge from domestic properties, contrary to the report at the previous meeting that the District Council were planning to withdraw green waste collections. The Clerk advised that further information would be brought to Members' attention when this became available.

**(f) Local Highway Improvements Bid**

Further to Minute No. 219/22, the Clerk reported that he had received confirmation from one of the County Council's Highways Project Managers that the modified LHI bid for a 40 mph buffer zone at the entrance to the village from Puddock Road would now be dealt with as a non-complex application. As a result, there was no necessity for this to be considered by the County Council's Panel that determined the larger complex applications.

**(g) 20 Mph Limits**

Further to Minute No. 220/22, the Chairman reminded Members that the question of the introduction of a 20 mph limit in Warboys would be considered again at a future meeting.

**(h) Adams Lyons Playground**

Further to Minute No. 222/22, the Clerk reported that the company that undertook safety inspections of the playgrounds on behalf of the Council had not been prepared to offer advice on an outstanding issue at Adams Lyons playground unless a meeting was held on site when the annual inspection was being undertaken. A charge would apply to the meeting.

However, the inspection had been carried out on 13th April without any prior notification to enable a meeting to be held. Under the circumstances, the inspector had agreed to return to site later in the week to meet the Clerk.

**(i) Onyetts Field – Byelaws**

Further to Minute No. 224/22, the Clerk reported that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had confirmed that the definition of model aircraft in the model byelaws for open spaces was out of date. They had drawn attention to subsequent modifications to the legislation by Air Navigation Orders and the Civil Aviation Authority's code for drones and model aircraft.

Under the circumstances, the Clerk reported that he had forwarded the reply to Councillor Land to enquire whether, due to his experience of the subject, he would update the definition. The changes would then be forwarded to the Department for comment before proceeding further with the byelaws for Onyetts Field.

**(j) Coronation Gift**

Arising from Minute No. 226/22, Members were informed by the Clerk that he had spoken to the Chair of the Parent Teachers Association about the possibility of the Council funding part of the cost of the gift that they were proposing to donate to school children to celebrate the forthcoming coronation of the King. In view of the modest cost of the gift, the PTA had felt that any contribution from the Council was unnecessary and no further action was required.

## **237/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 13th and 15th March 2023 be received.

## **238/22 ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE**

### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 20th March 2023 be received.

## **239/22 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20th March 2023 be received.

## **240/22 APPOINTMENTS PANEL**

Further to Minute No. 218/22, the Chairman drew attention to the Minutes of the meeting of the Appointments Panel when applicants for the newly created position of Assistant Clerk had been interviewed. Members were informed that references had now been obtained for the successful candidate who was required to give the County Council, her current employer, three months' notice before leaving.

### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Appointments Panel held on 29th and adjourned to 31st March 2023 be received.

## **241/22 POLICE REPORT**

A report by the local Speedwatch Co-ordinator of activities by the group in Warboys over the previous month had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

## **242/22 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

County Councillor Corney reported on the increases in precept levied by a number of public authorities for 2023/24 with the Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority issuing a precept for the first time. He mentioned that, in considering submissions for 20 mph zones, a County Council officer had acknowledged that the authority favoured a whole village approach as opposed to individual streets for lower

speed limits to save on the cost of signs. Attention also was drawn to potential funding towards the replacement of the Parish Centre from one of the funds administered by Cambridgeshire Community Federation.

(Councillor Corney then left the meeting after having been thanked by the Chairman for his attendance.)

### **243/22 SPORTS HOLIDAY CLUB**

Further to Minute No. 198/22 and the decision not to arrange a sports holiday club in the village over the summer holidays, a report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) on subsequent developments.

Information had come to light that Smartkidz who had been intending to run holiday sports clubs at the Primary Academy had decided not to proceed with clubs in the summer half term and summer holidays due to a low take up of places earlier in the year. Under the circumstances, the Clerk had enquired whether the school might be available in the summer holidays if another provider could be engaged to replace Finding Fitness who no longer managed holiday clubs. However, as the only time that the school could offer was the first week of the holidays, with the accommodation limited to classrooms as opposed to the hall plus the field, this effectively precluded the use of the school if the Council wished to fund a holiday club.

The Clerk reported that, in response to an enquiry, the Leisure Department of the District Council had indicated that they ran sports clubs for a number of parish councils of up to 20 children of primary school age for sessions of two hours. Subject to the availability of the sports field, the Clerk reported that it would be possible to run a holiday club on Tuesday mornings and afternoons throughout the holidays at the Parish Centre but that all of the administration would have to be undertaken by the Council.

Having been advised by Councillors Parker and Mrs Sproats that it now transpired that a company by the name of Youth Dreams Project intended to run a holiday sports club at the school in the summer holidays, Members

### **RESOLVED**

that no further action be undertaken by the Council to attempt to organise a holiday club in Warboys.

### **244/22 BIG HELP OUT VOLUNTEERING**

The Chairman drew attention to the Big Help Out Volunteering event being organised by the Community Association on 8th May at the Royal Oak as part of the Coronation weekend. Organisations would be invited to identify what volunteering opportunities they had available at the event to encourage members of the public to become more involved in the community.

A range of activities and occasions when the Council had tried to attract volunteers in the past was listed by the Clerk. Following a request by the Chairman for Members to attend

on the day to promote the Council and its activities, Councillor Land offered to assist the Chairman in attending the event.

### **245/22 CORONATION SEAT**

Further to Minute No. 226/22, Members were reminded that a local businessman had offered to fund the installation of a seat to celebrate the forthcoming coronation of the King. Examples of various types of seats produced for the occasion were circulated at the meeting.

The Clerk also reported that the District Council had confirmed that they had no objection to a seat being installed on the open space at the entrance to Forge Way.

### **RESOLVED**

that a seat be purchased from Sloane & Sons to commemorate the coronation.

### **246/22 VIBRANT COMMUNITIES FUND**

Further to Minute No. 221/22, the Clerk reported that the District Council had approved the Council's application for funding under the Vibrant Communities Fund to support community events in 2023/24. Following consultation with the Community Association and Christmas Lighting Group, the Clerk reported that he had applied for an amount of £5,000 to support the Coronation fete and Big Help Out Volunteering event, Feast Week, Remembrance Sunday service and Christmas Lights Switch-on. Amounts had been included in the submission to offset the cost of the road closure orders where necessary but the remainder would be available for the Community Association and Lighting Group to help fund the events.

### **247/22 FORMER YOUTHIE PREMISES**

Further to Minute No. 213/22(c), the Clerk reported that he and former Councillor Payne had met staff of the County Council to discuss the former Youthie premises which the County Council planned to demolish.

Members were reminded of the recent history of the premises after the Youth Action Group's lease had been terminated and they had been told to vacate the building by the County Council some 13 years previously as it was considered to be in a dangerous condition. After commissioning independent advice from a structural engineering company that had found the building to be sound, the Parish Council had offered to acquire the building for use as a community hub but the leasehold terms offered by the County Council had been unacceptable to the Council.

At the site meeting, the County Council's officers had expressed their concern about the difficulties posed by the proposed demolition, both in terms of the cost and the need to close the library for some time while the work was undertaken. Planning permission would be required to demolish a building in a conservation area and the officers had been

reminded that this had been refused by the District Council when they had applied previously.

Members were reminded that the scheme to replace the Parish Centre would involve the replacement of the existing wooden storage sheds with a new building. If it could be demonstrated that the former Youthie building was still structurally sound and favourable terms could be negotiated with the County Council, the Clerk suggested that its use for storage might avoid the need for a new building. This might save costs and also provide a future use for the Youthie building.

After Members had expressed no objection to the suggestion, it was

## **RESOLVED**

that the Clerk be authorised to continue negotiations with the County Council and, subject to an indication from them of favourable terms being forthcoming for a lease of the building, to obtain further independent structural advice from a specialist company.

## **248/22 ONYETTS FIELD**

Further to Minute Nos. 223/22, Councillor England reported that the farmers who had obtained the hay crop at Onyetts Field for a number of years had both passed away recently. As the hay was likely to be ready for cutting at the end of May, Councillor England suggested the names of individuals who might be interested in carrying out the work. In the event that no one was interested, Councillor Fabb offered to cut the grass which he would leave in situ as it would be unsuitable for his stock.

The Clerk also reported that he was preparing an application for a grant from Red Tile Trust towards the cost of the materials needed to protect parts of the pond bankside, with the work being undertaken by Councillors England and Fabb. Councillor England had cut down the brambles adjoining the field owned by the travelling show people and a hedging pack would be ordered from the Woodland Trust for planting in the autumn as a replacement. The Clerk also reported that he would speak to the person who had offered to help with the removal of rabbits at the field as neither he nor Councillor England had heard from him for some time.

## **249/22 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING**

Further to Minute No. 225/22, the Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) with regard to various aspects of the Christmas lighting arrangements in the village, following his attendance at a meeting of the Lighting Group in March.

Members were informed that the Lighting Group favoured the closure of the High Street from the junction with Mill Green to the junction with Station Road for the event in 2023 owing to the number of people attending in the previous year. This would require a new road closure and diversion would be prepared for submission to the County Council and would inconvenience more residents and local businesses. However, a representative of the Lighting Group who was present at the meeting reported that the Group had already

spoken to Kims take away who supported the extended closure and that members of the Group would speak to the other residents affected to explain the situation to them.

Members were reminded that the Council had paid the invoice from Merlin Lighting each year to erect and dismantle some of the lighting. However, the Lighting Group had concluded that they were unable to continue erecting and dismantling the remainder of the lights due to Health and Safety concerns and had obtained a quotation from Merlin Lighting to erect all of the lights and the Christmas tree.

Following a meeting between representatives of the Lighting Group and Balfour Beatty, new timers had been fitted by the company in two lighting columns in the High Street where the Christmas lighting attachments had not been working. The attachments on three of the columns at the Clock Tower had not been working which was thought to be the result of the repairs undertaken following the traffic accident that had demolished one of the columns and control box. Balfour Beatty had sourced suitable timers for the columns at a cost of £213.94 each which they had offered to fit without charge. Finally, the Lighting Group had received an offer to fund the fitting of timers in two additional columns in Mill Green, if the Council issued the necessary order to Balfour Beatty for them to undertake the work.

Members were informed that a local resident had offered to build an illuminated crown that could be fitted to the Clock Tower to celebrate the forthcoming coronation and for use in future Christmas displays. However, the Lighting Group had decided for a variety of reasons not to repair or replace the previous crown used at the Clock Tower and the Clerk drew attention to potential damage to the listed structure and the need for a risk assessment to be completed by a competent person.

Although the Council had agreed previously that members of the Lighting Group met the conditions to be regarded as volunteers and therefore covered by the Council's insurance policy when erecting and dismantling the lights, the Clerk advised that the situation was less clear in terms of the switch-on event. As this had grown over the years, resulting in the large attendance in 2022, the Clerk invited Members to consider a similar arrangement for the event, which would involve insuring the volunteers under the Council's policy subject to the submission of a risk assessment to the Council's satisfaction.

Finally, the Clerk reported that the Lighting Group had requested permission to attach a maximum of 24 banners on the fence around the Weir, subject to the same conditions as in 2022 when the Council had permitted 12 banners to be installed. The Group had advised that they anticipated that the sponsorship raised would meet the additional cost of engaging Merlin Lighting to undertake the erection and dismantling of all the lighting and the Christmas tree.

Following discussion on the issues raised and an input from the representative of the Lighting Group who was present at the meeting, it was

## **RESOLVED**

- (a) that an application be made for a road closure order for High Street from the junction with Mill Green to its junction with Station Road, together with a short stretch of Statfold Green from 2.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. on 25th November 2023 to facilitate the Christmas lighting switch-on event;



- (b) that arrangements be made for the Council to adopt an overarching approach to the Lighting Group, subject to the latter's agreement, and insure their members as volunteers when organising the switch-on event and other activities in accordance with the requirements of the Council's policy with Ansvar;
- (c) that permission be granted for a maximum of 24 banners to be attached to the Weir railings to raise funding for the Christmas lighting arrangements in Warboys, subject to the same conditions as the previous year and the Clerk be requested to discuss the arrangements with the Lighting Group in terms of the money raised;
- (d) that the additional costs to be incurred in engaging Merlin Lighting to install and dismantle all of the Christmas lighting be noted;
- (e) that the cost of fitting timers in three of the lighting columns around the Jubilee Clock Tower at a total cost of £641.82 be met by the Council;
- (f) that an order be placed with Balfour Beatty for timers to be fitted in two lighting columns in Mill Green, subject to the cost being met by the Lighting Group from a donation that they had been offered;
- (g) that the offer to construct an illuminated crown to be fitted at the Clock Tower to celebrate the King's coronation and subsequent lighting displays be declined; and
- (h) that the additional funding towards the switch-on event by the Council under the Vibrant Communities Fund be noted.

## **250/22 INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

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

### **RESOLVED**

that the Investment Strategy be approved as submitted in the report now circulated to Members

## **251/22 ANNUAL PATHFINDER MARCH**

Members were informed that the annual Pathfinder March would be taking place on Saturday 24th June and passing through the Parish, with checkpoints at the Royal Oak and Airfield. The Clerk advised that arrangements would be made to ensure that the route was suitably waymarked through the Parish.

The Clerk also reported on a recent approach concerning the Pathfinders Reunion which traditionally had involved refreshments at the Parish Centre after a Sunday morning service at the Parish Church. The previous organisers of the reunion had decided reluctantly that they were unable to continue making the arrangements annually themselves and the event

had been cancelled during lockdown. However, the RAF now appeared to be assuming responsibility for the arrangements and had queried whether the Parish Centre could be made available again for refreshments after the service.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the situation regarding the Pathfinder March be noted; and
- (b) that the Parish Centre be made available without charge on 21st May for the Pathfinders Reunion.

**252/22 OPEN FORUM**

The Clerk reported that the only matter raised at the Open Forum following the previous meeting of the Council had related to the former Youthie premises which had been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

**253/22 ACCOUNTS**

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

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that payment of the following accounts be endorsed:-

		£
Source for Business	Water rates – Hallgate allotments	377.77
Saffron Insurance	Insurance for van	335.05
RH Building Consultancy Ltd	Parish Centre Replacement Building control fees	1,020.00
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	89.35

- (b) that payment of the following accounts be approved:-

W E Batterbee	Salary – March 2023	1,308.56
D A Warwick	Salary – March 2023	1,363.32
R Edwards	Salary – March 2023	502.40
R Reeves	Salary - March 2023	1,126.12
HMRC	Tax & NIC – March 2023	1,705.20
R Martin	Half year Clockwinder’s fee	145.00

Mrs I Hansell	Half year Internal Auditor's fee	100.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	15.59
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Ink cartridges	61.20
R Reeves	Mileage claim	14.85
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	192.54
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	834.87
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support (paid by direct debit)	103.44
Allstar	Card fee (paid by direct debit)	1.80
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (March)	7.87
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (March)	6.64
npower Business Solutions	Electricity supply – Christmas lighting 2021	100.40
Source for Business	Parish Centre – water/sewerage charges (No payment required as account still £515.67 in credit from reimbursement for excess consumption due to leak.)	288.42
Ivan Barrett	Repairs to van	200.40
Ivan Barrett	Miscellaneous supplies	91.97
ESPO	Paper	62.16
ESPO	Miscellaneous supplies	320.30
Parrot Print	Printing of Diary insert – recycling	190.36
Lawyers in Local Government	Annual subscription for Clerk	60.00
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Annual subscription	60.00
RDW Book and Paper Conservation Ltd	Binding of minute books	131.80

## **254/22 BUDGETARY CONTROL**

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

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

Chairman.