

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 15th May 2023 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillor Dr S C Withams, Chairman.

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

County Councillor S J Corney.

Ms L Acred, Royal British Legion Community Fundraiser Cambs & Hunts.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Mrs J M Cole and District Councillors Mrs A E Costello and Ms C A Lowe.

01/23 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Upon the motion of Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Willis, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor Dr S C Withams be elected Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor Dr Withams signed the declaration of acceptance of office as Chairman of the Council.

Councillor Dr Withams in the Chair.

(County Councillor Corney arrived at the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

02/23 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Upon the motion of Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Land, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor J A Parker be appointed Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor Parker signed the declaration of acceptance of office as Vice Chairman of the Council.

03/23 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Potts and seconded by Councillor Parker, the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

(Councillors Ms Morrow and Mrs Wilcox arrived at the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

04/23 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor England declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in Minute Nos. 06/23(e) (Onyetts Field – Byelaws) and 15/23 (Onyetts Field) as he leased land nearby. He had received a dispensation previously to speak but not vote on matters affecting the land.

05/23 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Ms L Acred who was the Royal British Legion's County Community Fundraiser for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. She proceeded to explain the work of the organisation in helping former armed service personnel and their families in many different ways. The Legion also worked closely with Help for Heroes and SAFA.

Members were reminded that the Warboys branch of the British Legion had closed some years previously. Moreover, the person who had acted as the local co-ordinator had decided that he no longer wished to organise the annual house to house collection in Warboys and ordering of wreaths, etc. The Chairman indicated that the Council would help by publicising the need for a co-ordinator and collectors in the village through the Warboys Diary, social media and other means. Ms Acred undertook to supply information and posters that could be used to help attract volunteers and she was then thanked by the Chairman for her attendance and she left the meeting.

06/23 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from its meeting held on 17th April 2023:-

(a) Bridleways

Further to Minute No. 236/22(a), the Clerk reported that he had heard nothing further from the County Council with regard to the proposed creation of a permissive bridleway to link bridleways 17 and 18.

(b) Repairs to Lighting Columns

Further to Minute No. 236/22(b), the Chairman suggested that three of the floodlights in the Jubilee Clock Tower lighting columns were still not working which the Clerk indicated he would investigate.

(c) Climate Change and Environment Group

Further to Minute No. 236/22(d), Councillor Mrs Sproats reported on the responses to date with regard to the survey inviting residents to express their concerns and priorities about the environment and climate change. Several people had also indicated an interest in joining the working party, the next meeting of which would be held on 22nd May.

(d) Local Highways Improvements Bid

Arising from Minute No. 236/22(f), the Clerk informed Members that a decision regarding the LHI bid submitted to the County Council for 2023/24 was still awaited.

(e) Onyetts Field - Byelaws

Further to Minute No. 236/22(i), the Clerk reported that he had received an amended definition for model aircraft from Councillor Land to replace the wording in the model byelaws in respect of Onyetts Field. The amended wording had been sent to the relevant Government Department for approval before progressing further with the making of the byelaws.

(f) Big Help Out Volunteering

Further to Minute No. 244/22, the Chairman and Councillor Mrs Wyatt reported on the event held at the Royal Oak on 8th May as part of the Coronation weekend to try to encourage more members of the public to volunteer in the village. It was suggested that perhaps the cold weather on the day might have affected attendances but a number of people had volunteered to help at the library.

(g) Coronation Seat

Further to Minute No. 245/22, the Clerk reported that a seat chosen by Members at the previous meeting to commemorate the King's Coronation had been reserved with the suppliers. The Handymen were checking which was the better type of anchoring system to be used on site, after which a formal order and payment would be made. The Clerk reported that the local businessman who had offered to fund the cost of the seat was satisfied with the arrangements and a letter had been sent to him thanking him for his generosity and asking if the payment could be made.

(h) Vibrant Communities Fund

Further to Minute No. 246/22, the Clerk reported that the District Council had promised to supply a formal agreement to enable claims to be made for reimbursement under the Vibrant Communities Fund but this was still awaited.

(i) Former Youthie Premises

Further to Minute No. 247/22, the Clerk reported on a response from the County Council's Asset Review Manager with regard to the possible lease of the former Youthie premises by the Parish Council. Members were informed that negotiations

would continue in the hope that this could result in a saving compared with the cost of constructing alternative storage as part of the Parish Centre replacement project and to try to prevent the building's demolition.

(j) Christmas Lighting

Arising from Minute No. 249/22, the Chairman advised that she had been informed by the Chairman of the Christmas Lighting Group that they had welcomed the decisions of the Council at the previous meeting but had yet to meet to formally consider the proposals.

07/23 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED

- (a) that Members be appointed to Committees for the ensuing municipal year as follows:-

Allotments Committee

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford, J Land, Ms M L Morrow, A Ntuk, J A Parker, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S J Wilcox and Dr S C Withams.

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, D W England, D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford, J Land, Ms M L Morrow, A Ntuk, 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.

Leisure Areas Committee

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, D W England, D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford, J Land, Ms M L Morrow, A Ntuk, J A Parker, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S J Wilcox, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt.

Planning Committee

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, D W England, D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford, J Land, Ms M L Morrow, A Ntuk, 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.

Rights of Way Committee

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, R J Dykstra, D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford, J Land, Ms M L Morrow, A Ntuk, J A Parker, P S Potts, Mrs C L Sproats, Mrs S J Wilcox, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt.

Employment Panel

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, D W England, P S Potts and Mrs S J Wilcox.

Appeals Panel

Councillors J A Parker, P S Potts and Dr S C Withams.

Hearings Panel

Three Members to be appointed by the Clerk on an ad hoc basis.

Appointments Panel

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, Ms L A Gifford, J A Parker, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt.

- (b) that Mr P Bellamy and Mrs F Dykstra be co-opted to the Allotments Committee in a non-voting capacity to represent the Allotments Association;
- (c) that Ms K Simpson be co-opted to the Rights of Way Committee in a non-voting capacity to represent horse riders;
- (d) that Mr M Croucher be co-opted to the Leisure Areas Committee in a non-voting capacity to represent sports clubs; and
- (e) that Members be appointed to working groups for the ensuing municipal year as follows:-

Parish Centre Replacement Working Party

Councillors D W England, J Land, Ms M L Morrow and Dr S C Withams and former Councillor R A Payne.

The Weir Working Party

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, D W England and Dr S C Withams, together with Mr R Posey.

Allotments Liaison Group

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, Ms L A Gifford and J A Parker.

Onyetts Field Working Party

Councillors D R A Fabb, Ms L A Gifford and Mrs C L Sproats.

Environment and Climate Change Working Party

Councillors Ms L A Gifford and Mrs C L Sproats.

08/23 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

A report was circulated by the Clerk with regard to representation on outside organisations for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED

that appointments/nominations be made to outside bodies for the ensuing municipal year as follows:-

Organisation	Representative
Warboys Community Association	Cllr Ms L A Gifford
Warboys Old Village Board School Trust (until 2024)	Cllr J A Parker
Warboys Day Centre Management Committee	Cllr J A Parker
Warboys Landfill Liaison Group	Cllrs Mrs J M Cole & D W England (dep. the Clerk)
Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund Ltd.	Cllrs Mrs J M Cole, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt
White Hart Bowls Club (Liaison)	Cllr Mrs A R Wyatt

09/23 ATTENDANCES BY COUNCILLORS

Members noted a report by the Clerk (a copy of which had been circulated) listing attendances by Members at meetings of the Council and committees in the previous municipal year in both actual and percentage terms during that time.

10/23 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Corney drew attention to a number of issues being considered by the County and District Councils. At the County Council, a motion to increase funding on highway repairs would be considered at a Council meeting later in the week and Councillor Corney indicated that he would supply information about possible grant funding that might assist in the replacement Parish Centre project.

At the District Council, Councillor Corney reported that the Local Plan Update had commenced with a number of reports and papers having been issued for public consultation.

In response to a question by Councillor Willis about delays in investigating enforcement cases, Councillor Corney advised that the Planning Enforcement team had been overwhelmed by the number of cases that had been reported but were working through the backlog.

11/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17th April 2023 be received.

12/23 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th April 2023 be received.

13/23 POLICE REPORT

The Clerk reported that a number of cases of vandalism had been reported to the Police that been experienced at Onyetts Field, the details of which were contained in Minute No. 15/23 below. In addition, the Clerk reported that a litter bin had been damaged at Jubilee Park, with the outer casing and base removed, although these had been replaced in situ by the Handymen.

14/23 REPLACEMENT PARISH CENTRE

Further to Minute No. 236/22, the Clerk advised that tenders were due to be invited imminently for the replacement Parish Centre.

Members were also informed that the Warboys Branch of the Women's Institute had agreed to offer a grant of £50,000 towards the cost of the project from the reserves that they held from the sale of their hall and land in the village.

15/23 ONYETTS FIELD

The Clerk reported on damage that had occurred at Onyetts Field at the end of April. The stakes used in the hedge planting undertaken over the winter had been removed and burnt and the footbridge over the stream had been destroyed. The vandalism had been reported to the Police and highlighted on the Council's Facebook account.

The stakes had been replaced by the Handymen and the damage to the bridge had also been reported to the County Council as the footbridge was on the line of a public footpath. The remnants of the bridge had been removed by Councillor England, pending a response from

the County Council as to whether a replacement would be fitted. In order to try to deter further acts of vandalism, CCTV cameras had been purchased and notices displayed that they were in use.

The Clerk also reported that he had arranged for the hay crop to be cut by a local farmer later in the summer. With regard to the problem of rabbits, Members were informed the person who had intended to address the problem had been challenged by members of the public who wanted to ensure that the rabbits were not harmed in any way, some of whom were actually taking food on site to feed the animals. Having regard to the legal requirement to keep rabbit numbers in check, Members suggested that attention be drawn to the damage that they caused as pests in the Diary and on Facebook. Councillor England also undertook to liaise with the person who had offered to help in tackling the problem.

A question was raised by Councillor Willis about the proposed creation of a newt pond on site that had been discussed previously when a number of different locations had been suggested. As a result of some doubt as to the potential size of the pond and the amount of spoil that would be generated, it was agreed that further information be obtained about the scale of any new pond.

Finally, the Clerk reported on an opportunity to participate in a project being undertaken by the District Council which would include funding for a Biodiversity Audit, recommendations for improvement and funding for their implementation. Onyetts Field had been suggested to the District Council as a suitable site for participation in the project and Members were informed that it appeared likely that this would be accepted.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report be received; and
- (b) that an application be made to the District Council to include Onyetts Field in the Biodiversity Audit project.

16/23 CCTV POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE

The Clerk submitted a revised CCTV Policy and Code of Practice (copies of which had been circulated) to reflect the additional potential locations of the mobile cameras purchased to deter vandalism.

RESOLVED

that the policy and code of practice be adopted by the Council.

17/23 GRASS CUTTING

A report was submitted by the Clerk (copies of which had been circulated) summarising the policies adopted recently by the County and District Councils to limit the cutting of grass on land in their ownership. Both authorities had invited town and parish councils to follow their example with regard to the land in their ownership.

The County Council was supporting 'No Mow May' to pause grass cutting on road verges during May to enable habitats for wildlife, plants and pollinators to thrive. The District Council had adopted an Alternative Land Management project to manage the open spaces in their ownership with the intention of creating more diverse and sustainable landscapes to support biodiversity. This would entail some open spaces not being cut, except around the margins. The Clerk reported that details of the open spaces to which the new policy would apply in Warboys had been requested but the information had yet to be supplied by the District Council.

The report submitted listed all the land containing grassed areas that the Parish Council currently either owned or cut on behalf of others. The cutting arrangements varied depending on the type of use of the various parcels of land, with some areas such as the playgrounds and amenity areas on housing estates cut regularly, while other areas such as Onyetts Field and the Heath Pond were cut only for hay or largely left in its natural state.

The Clerk also reported that correspondence had been received from a resident of Pathfinder Way claiming that trees on land in the Council's ownership were responsible for subsidence to his property.

Councillor Mrs Sproats suggested that if part of Adams Lyons playground was left uncut with paths maintained through that area it would provide an attractive feature as well as helping biodiversity. The Clerk undertook to look at the feasibility of the idea but with that exception, it was

RESOLVED

that no change be made the type and regularity of cut of the open spaces that the Council either owned or maintained in the village.

18/23 ADAMS LYONS PLAYGROUND

Further to Minute No. 236/22(h), the Clerk reported on the outcome of discussions on site with the safety inspector from PlaySafety Ltd about the supporting wall of the mound at Adams Lyons playground. If the Council intended to extend the slope around the mound, either with the sleepers removed or remaining in situ, the inspector had confirmed that some items of the multi-play unit nearby would have to be removed. However, the inspector was satisfied with the stability of the sleepers at present and with the action taken by the Handymen to infill the gap between the sleepers and the mound.

The inspector had advised that the gap between the sleepers and the top of the mound should be measured and then monitored to ensure that there was no further movement before considering whether any further action was required. The Clerk reported that he would arrange for the situation to be monitored and would report back if there was a cause for concern.

19/23 CONDITION OF SIGNS

Members were informed that Councillor Ms Gifford had drawn attention to the poor condition of a number of roadside signs in the village. The Clerk advised that he had

reported a damaged street naming sign in Popes Lane to the District Council for replacement. Members confirmed that a faded sign near the junction of Heath Road and the A141 was an old 'Welcome to Huntingdonshire' sign and expressed no objection to its removal.

There was some discussion as to whether three damaged Cambridgeshire Village of the Year signs in Church Road should be replaced as the competition that they had been installed to celebrate had not existed for some 20 years. After a vote had been taken, it was

RESOLVED

that the three Cambridgeshire Village of the Year signs in Church Road be removed and not replaced.

20/23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Clerk submitted a report, copies of which had been circulated, containing the Annual Government Statement for 2022/23, together with Internal Auditor's report of her inspection of the accounts.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Internal Audit Report be received and noted; and
- (b) that the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 be approved for submission to the external auditors.

21/23 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2022/23

The Clerk invited Members to approve the Accounting Statements for the Parish Council for the financial year 2022/23 for submission to the external auditors. Copies were circulated of the relevant extracts from the Annual Return, together with supporting statements.

Members were informed that a surplus had been achieved in the financial year of £34,723, notwithstanding the fact that only £837 had been received in Community Infrastructure Levy receipts..

RESOLVED

that the Accounting Statements for 2022/23 be approved for submission to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors.

22/23 REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Clerk submitted a request for financial assistance from Cambridgeshire Libraries towards the costs to be incurred in organising the Summer Reading Scheme at Warboys

Library in the school holidays. Members acknowledged that the scheme always had proved popular with young children and been well supported.

RESOLVED

that a grant of £125 be made to Cambridgeshire Libraries towards the Summer Reading Scheme in Warboys in the forthcoming school summer holidays.

23/23 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMPLAINT

Further to Minute No. 84/22(b) of the Planning Committee, the Clerk reported that he had submitted a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office about the failure of the District Council to respond to a Freedom of Information request for information about the pre-application advice provided in respect of the planning application for development in Station Road. The District Council had responded by claiming to have supplied the information at the end of March but the only communication received from them on that date had been an acknowledgement that they were assembling the answers to the questions raised which would be supplied as soon as possible.

However, the Clerk advised that the information supplied by the District Council had mostly all been in the public domain and had failed to answer the specific questions posed. The matter had therefore been referred back to the District Council and the Information Commissioner's Office had confirmed that the District Council were now required to undertake an internal review within 20 working days. In the event that the information requested was not supplied, the matter could then be referred back to the ICO for further action.

The Clerk also reported that the planning consultant employed by Cheffins who had acted on behalf of the Council in respect of the proposed Station Road development was moving to an alternative company. He had asked whether the Council was prepared to continue to engage his services in respect of the case after his move. Subject to clarification that this would not contravene any contractual arrangements with Cheffins, Members

RESOLVED

that they had no objection to continue to employ the same consultant with his new employers.

24/23 PORTRAIT OF THE KING

The Clerk reported that the Government had announced that public authorities would be able to apply for an official portrait of His Majesty King Charles free of charge later in the year.

25/23 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 future of the Youthie building which had been considered earlier in the meeting.

26/23 ACCOUNTS

In submitting a schedule of accounts and invoices to be paid (copies of which had been circulated), the Clerk reported that Allstar had agreed to reimburse the Council with the charge made for the Ecopoint service which had been cancelled previously.

With regard to the Coronation bench, an order would be placed once the Handymen had decided on the preferred choice of anchoring system and payment would need to be made in advance of delivery. Details of the bench had been supplied to the businessman who had offered to fund its purchase who had confirmed that he was satisfied with the arrangements made.

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

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
W E Batterbee	Salary – April 2023	1,128.00
D A Warwick	Salary – April 2023	1,250.99
R Edwards	Salary – April 2023	329.60
R Reeves	Salary - April 2023	1,064.06
HMRC	Tax & NIC – April 2023	1,434.77
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	15.59
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Spypoint cameras	259.98
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	192.54
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (2/04/23 – 30/04/23 - paid by direct debit)	366.07
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre (30/04/23 – 1/05/23 - paid by direct debit)	4.28

Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support (paid by direct debit)	105.76
Allstar	Card fee (paid by direct debit)	1.80
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	134.34
Allstar	Ecopoint (paid by direct debit)	4.02
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (April)	7.50
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (April)	6.34
ESPO	Paper towels	56.40
M.A.M. Garden Maintenance	Grass cutting	340.00
Playsafety Ltd	Safety inspection of playgrounds and equipment	421.20
Ivan Barrett	MOT and service of van	448.09
MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd	Parish Centre replacement – Consultants’ fees for drainage design	3,086.40
Parrot Print	Receipt books	186.00
Sloane & Sons	Coronation bench	799.00

27/23 BUDGETARY CONTROL

The Council received the budgetary control statements for the 2022/23 closedown and April 2023, together with the list of Parish Centre bookings for that month, copies of which had been circulated to all Members.

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

Chairman.