

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Warboys Parish Council** held on 12th June 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, J A Parker, Mrs C L Sproats, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

District Councillor Ms C A Lowe.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs J M Cole, Ms M L Morrow, A Ntuk, P S Potts and Mrs S J Wilcox, County Councillor S J Corney and District Councillor Mrs A E Costello

28/23 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Ms Gifford and seconded by Councillor Mrs Sproats, the Minutes of the annual meeting held on 15th May 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

29/23 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor England declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in Minute Nos. 30/23(e) (Onyetts Field – Byelaws) and 30/23(i) (Onyetts Field) as he leased land nearby. He had received a dispensation previously to speak but not vote on matters affecting the land.

30/23 MATTERS ARISING

The Council considered the following matters arising from the annual meeting held on 15th May 2023:-

(a) Bridleways

Further to Minute No. 06/23(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. 06/23(b), the Clerk reported that he was still awaiting a quotation from Balfour Beatty for timers to be fitted to three of the floodlights in the Jubilee Clock Tower lighting columns.

(c) Climate Change and Environment Group

Further to Minute No. 06/23(c), Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that a meeting of Climate and Environment Community Liaison Group had been held on 22nd May. She provided a summary on the issues raised at the meeting and drew attention to the responses to date from members of the public to the climate change questionnaire that had been issued on line and hard copy.

The top priority identified thus far that people had indicated that they would like the Parish Council to focus on was energy use in the home and the community. As a result, Councillor Mrs Sproats reported that she was investigating the possibility of obtaining thermal imaging cameras for use in the autumn/winter which would demonstrate where heat was being lost in individual properties.

(d) Local Highways Improvements Bid

Arising from Minute No. 06/23(d), the Clerk informed Members that he had been advised by the County Project Officer dealing with the LHI scheme for 2022/23 to improve safety of the A141 crossing to Onyetts Field that she was arranging for it to be costed by the County Council's highways contractor. The Clerk also advised that he had been informed by the Local Highways Supervisor that the cutting of the roadside hedge at Onyetts Field would be undertaken under the normal highways maintenance work budget later in the year.

Due to staffing shortages in the highways team, Members were advised that it might be some time before a decision was known regarding the LHI bid submitted to the County Council for 2023/24 for a 40 mph buffer zone in Station Road/Puddock Hill.

(e) Onyetts Field - Byelaws

Further to Minute No. 06/23(e), the Clerk reported that the Byelaws Team at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had accepted the amended definition for model aircraft supplied by Councillor Land to replace the wording in the model byelaws to be adopted in respect of Onyetts Field. Members were informed that work on the procedure to make the byelaws could now proceed.

(f) Vibrant Communities Fund

Further to Minute No. 06/23(h), the Clerk reported that the Community Association had supplied a list of expenditure (net of VAT) incurred over the Coronation weekend in Warboys and the invoice would be submitted for authorisation later in the meeting. An invoice for the Parish Council to be reimbursed with the money under the Vibrant Communities Fund had been sent to the District Council and authorised for payment.

(g) Former Youthie Premises

Further to Minute No. 06/23(i), the Clerk reported that the County Council's Asset Review Manager was waiting information on the cost of making the Youthie building structurally sound before discussing terms for a possible lease of the building to the Parish Council. A further report would be submitted when this was available.

(h) Christmas Lighting

Arising from Minute No. 06/23(j), the Clerk advised that he would be arranging a meeting with the Christmas Lighting Group with regard to implementation of the decisions of the Council to assist the Lighting Group with the arrangements for the lighting display later in the year.

(i) Onyetts Field

Arising from Minute No. 15/23, the Clerk reported that he was awaiting further information from the District Council after they had confirmed the inclusion of Onyetts Field in their Biodiversity for All Project. However, District Councillor Ms Lowe advised that she understood that no locations in Warboys had been included in the scheme which the Clerk undertook to investigate.

Members were informed that the request for a grant towards the cost of materials to support the banksides at the pond would be considered at a meeting of the Red Tile Trust on the following evening. A response was awaited from the County Council as to whether they intended to replace the bridge that had been vandalised. Councillor England confirmed that the hay had been cut by a new contractor earlier in the day.

Councillor Willis reported that the Wildlife Trust had advised that the dimension for a suggested newt pond was 8 metres in diameter. Several locations had been investigated as a possible location of a new pond with some councillors being of the opinion that the size suggested by the Wildlife Trust was too large and would impair access on the narrower part of the field. It was therefore

RESOLVED

that Members of the working party be requested to visit the site to consider the potential location and dimensions of a newt pond and report back at the next meeting.

(j) No Mow May

Arising from Minute No. 17/23, Councillor England reported that he had received many complaints from members of the public about the County Council's policy of 'No Mow May'. These had related particularly to the overgrown footpath between the church and cemetery in Church Road which was impeding access and the lack of visibility at highway junctions. Several other Members also expressed concern about the dangers at junctions with the height of the vegetation in the verges obstructing the sight of oncoming traffic.

31/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15th May 2023 be received.

32/23 REPORTS BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Councillor Ms Lowe drew attention to a number of surveys published by the District Council on line on a range of topics. She also referred to the Local Plan Issues Paper that had been published and on which comments had been invited. Mention was made of an approach to parish councils seeking to establish the exact position in respect of sports provision in their areas. As the Clerk advised that this had not been received, Councillor Ms Lowe undertook to forward the information to Councillor England as the Chairman of the Sports Field Committee.

33/23 POLICE REPORT

The Clerk reported that he was unaware of any issues affecting public facilities that had been reported to the Police over the past month.

Copies of the monthly report of the local Speedwatch Group had been circulated. The Group had only undertaken one monitoring session over the past month but hoped to increase the frequency over the summer.

34/23 REPLACEMENT PARISH CENTRE

Further to Minute No. 14/23, the Clerk advised that tenders had been invited by the Architect for the replacement Parish Centre with a closing date of 17th July.

35/23 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMPLAINT

Further to Minute No. 23/23, the Clerk reported that he had received a reply from 3C Shared Services on behalf of the District Council on the final day of the 20 working days permitted to carry out an internal review of the failure to respond to the Parish Council's request for information about the land proposed for development in Station Road. Members were informed that some additional information had been supplied but that not all of the questions that had been asked originally had been answered.

Under the circumstances, the Clerk advised that he would refer the matter back to the Information Commissioner's Office to register a complaint about the failure to provide the information requested.

36/25 REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF SEAT AND BIN

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from the occupier of a property in Popes Lane seeking the removal of a seat and litter bin in the verge outside the property. The resident claimed that the seat was not used and the verge overgrown. The reason for requesting their removal was to permit the occupier to park a second car in the front garden of the property.

The Clerk advised that the seat had been in situ for in excess of 25 years and the Council had refused a request for its removal previously. The Handymen had advised that they had been unable to cut the verge for some time because a car was being parked on a regular basis immediately adjoining the seat. This had prevented access and also raised the possibility of damage to the vehicle from stones thrown up by the equipment. The occupier had confirmed subsequently that she was the owner of the vehicle and would move it if asked when the Handymen wanted to cut the verge.

Members discussed whether the seat should be removed but having regard to the fact that the seat had been in situ for so long and agreement to the request could create a precedent for other locations in the village, it was

RESOLVED

that the request be refused and the Handymen requested to arrange for the verge to be cut on a regular basis.

37/23 CORONATION BENCH

Further to Minute No. 06/23(g), Members were invited to reconsider the location proposed for the coronation bench purchased with the support of a local businessman to celebrate the King's coronation. The position agreed by the Council had been on the open space at the junction of High Street and Forge Way but with the seat facing Forge Way which meant that it would be less conspicuous to passers-by. It was suggested that a more suitable location for the bench might be on the same piece of open space but with the seat facing High Street where it could be seen more clearly and would be more likely to be used.

RESOLVED

that the coronation bench be installed on the open space at the junction of High Street and Forge Way facing High Street.

38/23 FEAST WEEK

Members' attention was drawn to the programme of events taking place in Feast Week commencing on Sunday, 23rd July. Several groups in the village had organised special events during the course of the week, with the information collated by the Community Association and published in the Warboys Diary.

39/23 HUNTINGDONSHIRE VOLUNTEER CENTRE

Members declined an invitation from the Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre to attend their AGM on Wednesday 5th July at Hemingford Abbots Village Hall.

40/23 WELLNESS INTERVENTIONS FOR THOSE OVER 65

The Clerk reported on an approach by a company commissioned by the County Council to provide tailored wellness interventions for older adults over 65 in isolated locations with Warboys being one of the preferred areas. Members were advised that the information would be brought to the attention of the Community Association and relevant organisations within the Parish.

41/23 NATIONAL ENERGY FOUNDATION

The Clerk reported on an approach from Better Housing Better Health, a free service run by the National Energy Foundation which was offering free help for residents experiencing problems of fuel poverty. Again, the Clerk undertook to forward the information to the Community Association and relevant organisations within the Parish.

42/23 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 speed of traffic in Ramsey Road. A resident of the street had expressed concern about the growth in the number of motorists who were speeding and the amount of 'boy racers' during evenings and weekends. A lack of Police presence had been highlighted by the resident but she had been advised by Members that she and her neighbours should report cases to the Police without which the area would not be potentially allocated a Police presence.

Members also suggested that the complaint be drawn to the attention of the local Speedwatch team to ask if they could undertake some monitoring in Ramsey Road.

43/23 ACCOUNTS

Upon being moved and seconded, it was

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
W E Batterbee	Salary – May 2023	1,292.56
D A Warwick	Salary – May 2023	1,388.32

R Edwards	Salary – May 2023	340.00
R Reeves	Salary - May 2023	1,188.58
HMRC	Tax & NIC – May 2023	1,711.56
Councillor Dr S C Withams	Chairman’s allowance 2023/24	150.00
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Zoom subscription	15.59
R Reeves	Reimbursement – Printer cartridges	34.49
E.ON	Electricity supply - Parish Centre (paid by direct debit)	192.54
E.ON	Gas supply - Parish Centre	100.45
Chess ICT Ltd.	IT support (paid by direct debit)	104.54
Allstar	Card fee (paid by direct debit)	1.80
Allstar	Fuel (paid by direct debit)	102.56
Allstar	Ecopoint (credit note)	-4.02
Total Gas & Power	UMS 1 street lighting electricity supply (May)	7.61
Total Gas & Power	UMS 3 street lighting electricity supply (May)	6.34
ESPO	Miscellaneous supplies	37.56
M.A.M. Garden Maintenance	Grass cutting (3 cuts)	510.00
Business Watch	CCTV annual maintenance	146.28
Xerox (UK) Ltd	Photocopying charges	46.72
Cambridgeshire County Council	Grant for summer reading challenge	125.00
npower Business Solutions	Christmas lighting electricity (credit note for previous invoice 2021/22)	-100.40
npower Business Solutions	Christmas lighting electricity 2021/22	74.36
npower Business Solutions	Christmas lighting electricity 2022/23	88.03

Connections Bus Project	Visits summer half term (5 x £315)	1,575.00
Gawn Associates Ltd	Parish Centre replacement (January 2023 to date)	3,000.00
Warboys Communities Association	Reimbursement of expenditure for Coronation weekend events under Vibrant Communities Fund	2,245.82
N Blackwell	Refund of allotment deposit	25.00
ESPO	Cleaning materials	170.40

44/23 BUDGETARY CONTROL

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

45/23 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following items related to claims against the Council involving members of the public

46/23 INSURANCE CLAIM – SUBSIDENCE

The Clerk report that a claim had been received from loss adjusters acting for the insurers of a property in Stirling Close, claiming that damage from the roots of trees on land in the Council's ownership had caused subsidence to the property. As the alleged damage had been brought to the attention of the householder's insurers last summer, the Clerk explained that this was prior to the Council transferring its business to Ansvar Insurers. It had therefore been necessary to refer the claim to the Council's previous insurers, RSA and a reply was awaited.

47/23 INSURANCE CLAIM – BROKEN WINDOW

The Clerk reported on a claim for the repair of a broken window in a property in the High Street as a result of the strimming of the roadside verge by the Handymen. This had been referred to the Council's current insurers and a response was awaited.

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

Chairman.