

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 12th December 2016 at 7pm in Thorney Toll Village Hall.

Attended by: Councillors B Britain (Chairman), M Knight (Vice-Chairman), C Allen, D Broker, P Davies, J Fish, J Humphrey, S Mann, J Newland, D Scrimshaw, D Wheeler.
Fenland District Council (FDC) Councillor G Booth.
Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Leader and FDC Councillor Steve Count.
PCSO Sue Clarke.
Members of the public 1.

OPEN FORUM Nil

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Nil

15. POLICE MATTERS

This item was taken out of order so that the PCSO was not unduly delayed.

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Sue Clarke. Sue reported recent and ongoing issues in the Parish; Murrow – fixed penalty parking tickets had been issued. Safety at schools was a high priority. Police could not be in attendance every day. Regular offenders could be reported to her and action taken. She stressed that if Schools, the community and Police work together the situation can be improved. Vehicles speeding – Speedwatch can be an effective deterrent and could be expanded (Gavin Booth and Helen) are contacts.

Wisbech St Mary - Two cannabis factories had been discovered.

Guyhirn – Hare coursing continued to be a significant problem. Recently five people were reported for the offence and a vehicle seized. Offenders are now allowed to keep the dogs. This month there had been twenty-three incidents. Hare coursing is a blood sport, usually involves gambling, and is illegal. It has a high impact on farming communities and is often linked to wider criminology. Sue said that the team dedicated to tackling the problem could be reformed if justified by the number of incidents reported. Offenders have been prosecuted. Please report issues direct to Sue preferably by text stating vehicle registration numbers and number of people and dogs.

Sue explained the role of a PCSO including attending road traffic collisions to support the police which was the most time-consuming task.

Thorney Toll – a high value theft had recently been reported.

In response to questions vandalism should be reported via 101. If such issues were not reported the police cannot take action.

Cllr Knight raised the A47 junction at Guyhirn where drivers regularly ignored the 'no right turn' onto the A47. Sue replied that it had been reported and she would further research the action taken.

The Chairman thanked Sue for attending which had been valuable and very much appreciated.

2. COUNCILLOR STEVE COUNT LEADER CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Steve Count and invited him to address the meeting.

Boundary changes that affected representation by County Councillors – Steve explained that the number of county councillors would reduce from 69 to 61, The Boundary Commission for England led the change in boundaries and had insisted on two councillors to cover the area which included apart of March, Thorney Toll and Christchurch despite opposition from every political party whose preference was for one councillor per division. The consultation has been completed.

CCC Challenges – need to identify savings of £50m this year, £33m next year with government funding continuing to go down. 75% - 80% of the budget goes to social care or vulnerable children which included help to those who need care in the home and for children who are unable to care for their parents. Despite these pressures it was hoped that cuts to road winter gritting could be rescinded.

Devolution – this was the initiative to devolve government budgets, £50m for transport and £170m for affordable housing, to a local combined authority which would consist of a Cabinet of eight; the leaders of Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council, the District authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership. A mayor would be elected in 2017.

Cllr Count explained that he was seeking to rebalance the aid that could be given to areas in greatest need.

Cllr Davies raised the issue of encroachment on the highway by fencing/vegetation which had been reported by no action taken. Cllr Count asked for these to be reported to him by email.

Cllr Broker asked if devolution was simply another tier of government. Cllr Count replied that it was a move by the government to devolve budgets to a local level. Consultation had shown 2:1 in favour. It would enable closer working and cooperation between those involved which had the potential to reduce costs. Powers would be devolved to the local agency best placed to deliver the service most effectively. Parishes could suggest initiatives and bid for funding from the £1m transformation fund.

Cllr Allen raised charging for brown bins. Cllr Count said that it was a choice of where savings could be secured – for example through car park charging or by seeking savings elsewhere. On balance the decision was to reduce costs, hence the charge for brown bins. An early bird discount was available for those who sign up to it.

Cllr Count said this years budget was £541m. Support Grant from Government would cease in 2019. Business Rate Retention would fund all councils eventually. This system would be fairer for Cambridgeshire which had always received one of the lowest funding settlements in the country.

Cllr Knight raised sign cleansing. Cllr Count said he would look into the planned frequency. There will be reductions in some services but volunteers schemes can help.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Count for attending.

3. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETINGS dated 14th November 2016

The minutes were taken as read, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (information only)

(a) A47 Thorney Toll Safety Camera – the Clerk read a response from PCSO Russ that said that the camera had been checked and was functioning. Cllr Fish insisted that it was not. The Clerk agreed to contact both so that a dialogue could be opened.

(b) F/YR15/0189/F Community Benefit – the Clerk read a response from the Planning officer that a Unilateral Undertaking Legal Agreement for payment of £4000 towards the provision of a bus shelter had been signed and that they were awaiting confirmation of whether or not the payment had been received. The Clerk will seek an update. Cllr Booth added that FDC were returning to the Section 106 procedure.

5. MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST for items on this agenda

Cllr Davies declared a pecuniary interest in item 11 (k) as he is on the Playing Field Committee.

6. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS

1. Planning applications determined by the Fenland District Council (FDC).

(a) F/YR16/0922/F Erection of 4 x 3-storey dwellings comprising of 2 x 5/6 bed with detached double garage with playroom above; 1 x 5-bed with detached double garage with playroom above and 1 x 5-bed with attached hovel. Land West Of Sunset Rooms Station Road Wisbech St Mary. **Refused**

(b) F/YR16/0932/O Erection of 4no dwellings (outline with matters committed in respect of access only). Land North West Of Drummond Lodge Spencer Drove Guyhirn. **Pending Consideration**

(c) F/YR16/0933/F Erection of a 2-storey 5 bed dwelling with attached double garage and a 1m high (max height) fence to front boundary. Plot 3 Land South East Of Gore Villas Mill Road Murrow. **Granted**

2. Planning applications for discussion:

(a) F/YR16/0978/F Conversion of existing garage to 2-bed annexe ancillary to existing dwelling. Fen View Gull Drove Guyhirn.

Applicant Mr G Epps. Agent Swan Edwards Architecture Ltd. **Recommend Approval**

(b) F/YR16/1013/F Erection of a 2-storey side extension to existing dwelling. Laburnham House Garden Lane Wisbech St Mary.

Applicant Mr A Shouler. Agent Mr Nick Mitchell. **Recommend Approval**

(c) F/YR16/0300/O Land South of 14 Garden Lane Wisbech St Mary. Appeal under section 78 Town & Country Planning Act 1990. Deadline for additional representations 5 January 2017. **Noted**

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) Murrow Pre-School – thank you **Noted**

(b) BT – Proposals to remove a payphone **No Objections**

(c) FDC – Electoral Services Visiting Officer. The Clerk reported that the notice had been posted in notice boards. **Noted**

8. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

(a) Local Highway Improvement 2016/17 – Pigeons Corner and Back Road, Murrow
The Clerk circulated copied of the latest design. Cllr Booth reported that there may be objections to the proposed waiting restrictions. Following discussion it was agreed that the design with the addition of a SLOW on the Front Road approach to Pigeons Corner be approved.

(b) Local Highway Improvement Bid 2017/18 – Wisbech St Mary: High Road, Sandbank and Station Road and Murrow: Murrow Bank and Mill Road part.
The Clerk reported that the application had been submitted, total cost estimated at £13k Parish Council contribution £3k. He added that there may be additional costs in relation to the associated traffic regulation order. Cllr Booth agreed to present the proposals to CCC in February 2017.

(c) Street Lighting
Cllr Booth understood that Wimblington and Doddington were challenging FDC and seeking advice from NALC.

9. REVIEW OF CLERK'S WORKING HOURS Confidential Item

This item was considered at the end of the meeting. The Clerk reported that pressures had eased and systems set up during the year were proving effective. He added that council must be mindful of the obligations for workplace pensions. It was agreed that hours would be 16 per week from April 2017.

10. BUDGET FOR 2017/18 FOR PRECEPT

(a) FDC Letter 11 November 2016
The Clerk referred to predicted figures from FDC for 2017/18; Council Tax Support Grant £3,799 (£5,698 2016/17), Concurrent Functions Grant £4,660 (no change) and Net Tax-base 1096 (1,047 2016/17) **Noted**

(b) Draft Budget 2017/18
The Clerk circulated a Draft Budget for 2017/18. He drew attention to capital expenditure, maintenance and street lighting provision and that the budget would be set at the meeting in January 2017. **Noted**

11. FINANCE MATTERS

(a) To receive a budgetary control report for 2016/17 to date
The Clerk circulated the budgetary control report. He highlighted the additional income yet to be received from allotments and the remainder of the Concurrent Grant. He reported the bank reconciliation again balanced and invited a councillor to check and approve the figures. This was completed by Cllr Wheeler. **Noted**

(b) Budget Review to 12 December 2016
The Clerk circulated figures taking into account anticipated spend to the end year. He estimated year end reserves at £98,224. He considered that this was a healthy position given pressures to renew street lighting and future commitments. Cllr Knight suggested that future commitments should be reviewed. Cllr Allen said he would seek a report from the football club as to progress. It was agreed to review future commitments at the next meeting. **Noted**

To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

(c) Clerk October salary	£698.99 LG Act 1972 S112 Agreed
(d) Tax and NI	£242.72 LG Act 1972 S112 Agreed
(e) Andrew Deptford – two defibrillators	£3324.00 Public Health Act 1936 S234 Agreed
(f) Murrow Village Hall – hire 14 November 2016	£30.00 LG Act 1972 S134 Agreed
(g) Society of Local Council Clerks	£157.00 LG Act 1972 S143 Agreed
(h) Association of Local Council Clerks	£10.00 LG Act 1972 S143 Agreed
(i) Bowles Tree & Garden Services – invoice 427	£1000.00 LG Misc Prov Act 1976 S196 Agreed
j) Bowles Tree & Garden Services – invoice 435	£1220.00 LG Misc Prov Act 1976 S196 Agreed

Grant application

(k) Guyhirn Playing Field Association - grounds maintenance £2500. Local Govt. (Misc. Prov.) Act 1976 S19. Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Allen, seconded by Cllr Newland that £2500 be granted. **Agreed**

(l) Emmanuel Churchyard Southea – churchyard maintenance. Local Govt. Act 1972 S214 Following discussion and clarification that the Council has powers to contribute to the maintenance of any churchyard that contains the remains of a parishioner it was proposed by Cllr Davies seconded by Cllr Fish that £750 be granted. **Agreed**

12. PARISH PROPERTY

(a) Maintenance

(i) Bowles Tree & Garden Services clear vegetation at ramp at Guyhirn. It was proposed by Cllr Broker seconded by Cllr Mann that the quotation be accepted. **Agreed** The Clerk to notify Environment Agency in advance.

(ii) Seat Chapel Avenue Wisbech St Mary – nameplate.

It was proposed by Cllr Davies seconded by Cllr Scrimshaw that the plate be screwed to the new seat. **Agreed**

(b) Bus Shelters

Cllr Broker reviewed progress on the provision of four new bus shelters at existing bus stops:

- i. Lay-by at Thorney Toll
- ii. High Road Wisbech St Mary opposite The Wheel
- iii. Gull corner Guyhirn
- iv. Gull Road/Gull Drove junction

He explained that a full safety audit would not be required and that raised kerbs to suit low floor busses were preferred but not obligatory. The cost of providing raised kerbs was estimated at £1200 at each site. Following discussion it was agreed that the benefit was negligible and the cost prohibitive. It was agreed unanimously to progress plans for four standard designs.

(c) Defibrillators

Cllr Knight suggested the need to raise the profile of where defibrillators were sited. It was agreed that sites would be publicised in Village Voices and councillors would consider lighting the units for discussion at the next meeting.

Cllr Broker explained that Wisbech St Mary Community Centre have offered to pay for a box so that the one at the Community Centre can be fixed outside and to fund one to go in the centre of the village.

(d) Planters

Cllr Knight reported that winter planting was complete. Cllr Britain produced a template for a sponsorship sign – approved. Sponsorships have been secured for some of the planters, other potential sponsors are being explored. Play2Day will sponsor an additional planter at Guyhirn if provided by the Parish Council. People have responded well to taking on maintenance.

13. HIGH ROAD WISBECH ST MARY – SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

Cllr Booth reported that he had met with North Level District Internal Drainage Board (NLIDB). The estimate could be £10k - £20k. It was considered that the responsibility rests with residents and was not directly an issue for the NLIDB to fund. Similarly, it was not directly an issue for the Parish Council to fund. However both parties recognised that there were wider community benefits if a solution could be found. Following discussions it was suggested that a jointly funded approach with NLIDB, Parish Council and residents be considered. It was proposed by Cllr Knight seconded by Cllr Humphrey that the Parish Council contribute 25% of the cost of the scheme with a limit of up to £5k. **Agreed**

14. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Booth reported:

1. Tholomas Drove - Cllr Booth will continue to press CCC for action regarding the sunken gully.
2. Brown bin charges – there will be further information going to the public during December.

15. POLICE MATTERS (followed item 1 above)

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

Cllr Britain raised meeting venues. All were happy with the current arrangements.

Cllr Fish reported that the Bus Shelter, seat and area around the seat needed cleaning. It was agreed that this could be done through the maintenance contract.

Cllr Britain asked if councillors had been satisfied with performance of the maintenance contract. The Clerk confirmed that the quotation documents included an option to extend the contract if councillors were content with performance. Cllr Britain confirmed that the current contractor had offered to continue for a further year at current rates. It was agreed unanimously to extend the contract for a further year.

Cllr Britain presented Cllrs Humphrey and Wheeler with certificates having both completed a Councillor Training course. He commended them for doing so and encouraged others to follow suit.

The Clerk reported that Land Registry had raised several queries including that a valuation of the land was required. The Clerk was authorised to seek a valuation.

The Clerk had received from Cambs ACRE copies of deeds to Murrow Village Hall which Cllr Scrimshaw agreed to pass on.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 16th January 2017 Wisbech St Mary Community Centre

DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2016/2017

Monday 13th February 2017 Guyhirn Village Hall

Monday 13th March 2017 Murrow Village Hall

Monday 10th April 2017 Thorney Toll Village Hall

Monday 8th May 2017 Parish Assembly/Annual Meeting Wisbech St Mary Community Centre

Meeting closed at 9.35 pm

Signed: Cllr. B Britain, Chairman