

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday December 14th 2020 via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Attended by: Councillors D Wheeler (Chairman), J Humphrey (Vice Chairman), M Knight MBE DL, C Allen, P Davies, B Britain, G Booth, M Fryett, S Mann, D Scrimshaw & A Weldon.

FDC Councillors G Booth & S Bligh | CCC Councillor S King

Members of the public: 1

OPEN FORUM – Parishioners are invited to address the Council.

The Chairman of Murrow Street Pride Group thanked the Parish Council and Clerk for all their help and support throughout the year and looked forward to that continuing into the coming year.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None

2. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETINGS dated 9th November 2020.

Item 11. The minutes were requested to be corrected by Cllr Booth to say ‘the cost of an application for a Traffic Regulation Order had been halved’. Following this amendment, the minutes were then Proposed for approval by Cllr Booth and Seconded by Cllr Allen. They would be signed by the Chairman on 17th December 2020.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (information only)

PARKING ON THE GREEN AT THOLOMAS DROVE – The Chairman and clerk using their powers as outlined in the Financial Regulations under **Budgetary Control and authority to spend (4.1)** arranged for signs to be made and placed. - **Noted**

4. TO CONSIDER MEMBERS REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION – None Received.

5. MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST for items on this agenda

Councillor Wheeler – Item 9.4. (f) – Pecuniary Interest

Councillor Mann – Item 9.3 – Pecuniary Interest

6. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS

6.1: Councillors noted the report that is publicly available on our website for planning applications determined by Fenland District Council.

6.2: Planning Applications for discussion.

(a)	F/YR20/1011/F	Erect a dwelling (2-storey 3-bed) involving demolition of existing garages and Anglian Water pumping station at Site of Anglian Water Treatment Works Access Via Back Road Murrow Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on the scale of development, flood risk and over development of the site.
(b)	F/YR20/1017/O	Erect up to 4 x dwellings and the formation of 3 x vehicular accesses involving the demolition of an existing outbuilding (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land South East of Dove Cottage Gull Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL
(c)	F/YR20/1027/F	Erect a single-storey 1-bed annexe to rear of existing dwelling at 14 Selwyn Cottages High Road Guyhirn Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4EQ The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL
(d)	F/YR20/1056/TRTPO	Works to 1 no Beech Tree covered by TPO 07/1965 at 163 Front Road Murrow Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4JQ The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL
(e)	F/YR20/1082/F	Erect 6 x dwellings (2-storey 3-bed) at Land West of Sunset Rooms Station Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire

		The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on over development of the site and access concerns.
(f)	F/YR20/1096/F	Erection of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling and a detached 2-storey 4-bay garage/storage, detached 2-storey swimming pool/office building 2.4m high (approx) gates and mesh fencing to front boundary involving temporary stationing of 2-caravans and a shipping container (part-retrospective) at The Broad Willock Lane Wisbech St Mary Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4UE The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL
(g)	F/YR20/1098/F	Formation of an ostrich farm involving the erection of an agricultural building; the extension of an existing agricultural building; erection of a 2.0m metre high (approx) security fencing and 3.0 metre high (approx) entrance gates and the formation of a 1.0 metre high (approx) earth bund at Land East of New Bungalow Hooks Drove Murrow Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL
(h)	F/YR20/1112/F	Formation of a digestate lagoon with a 4.5m high surrounding earth bund and a 1.2m high chain-link fence (relocation approved under F/YR18/0648/F) at Anaerobic Digestion Plant Somerset Farm Cants Drove Murrow Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on the noise/smell/pollution generated being detrimental to residents. There is a substandard vehicular access and the surrounding roads are incapable of carrying increased traffic without suffering damage. The Council are concerned with the cumulative impact. They also note that the number of vehicle movements must be limited in numbers and restricted to day time hours.
(i)	F/YR20/1126/F	Erect 1 x dwelling (2-storey, 4-bed) involving formation of a new access at Land South and West Of 12 High Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL
(j)	F/YR20/1132/F	Erect a dwelling (2-storey 4-bed) at Plot 1 Pitt Farm Spencer Drove Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL

6.3. For members to note the letter to agent regarding planning application F/YR20/0952/VOC - Variation of conditions 10 (surface water drainage) and 20 (list of approved drawings) relating to planning permission F/YR17/1217/F (Erection of 76 dwellings: comprising 29 x 2-storey 4-bed, 6 x 3-storey 4-bed, 29 x 2-storey 3-bed and 2 x blocks of flats (4 x 1-bed and 8 x 2-bed) with associated garages, parking, play area and landscaping involving the formation of a new access road) at Land North Of Orchard House High Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire. - **Noted**

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) Letter from parishioner objecting to F/YR20/1011/F – Noted during discussion of the Planning Application

6.2. (a)

(b) Anglian Water – Land Access Request to land behind Guyhirn Football Field

The Clerk completed the form with the help of Cllr Davies and this has been returned by post allowing AW access for a walk through. Cllr Booth advised that the Parish Council should request a donation from AW should they wish to put piping through the land in the future.

(c) CCC – Innovate & Cultivate Fund – New Funding Round

Cllr King advised Councillors that this is a new funding round but with a lower limit due to being near to the end of the financial year. He encouraged local community groups that qualify to apply via the CCC website.

8. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

8.1. Street Lighting

The Chairman advised that the remaining lights will be replaced to LED during weekends. Two streetlights have been repaired, one in Lindens Close, Thorney Toll and one that was flickering in Wisbech St. Mary. The Chairman will continue to chase for completion on the remaining replacements.

8.2. Highways

(a) Guyhirn Roundabout Improvements – Start date and scheme details.

The Chairman advised that some Councillors had attended video conference meetings with Highways England (HE) during November for updates on the scheme. During the meeting he stressed the fact that traffic coming through the villages was a high area of concern and would there be any help with speed calming measures to help mitigate this. HE advised that a complete road closure of the A47 would only happen three times and would mainly be managed via traffic lights. Work would be starting as early as

February 2021 with an expected completion date of April 2022. HE also stated that the no right hand turn from Guyhirn out onto the A47 would be removed during the works and will be replaced by a mini roundabout. The Chairman asked HE whether this could remain after the scheme completes. Councillors also made representations to HE regarding the X1 Bus Stop on the A47 and pointed out that it needed a pull off point or this will continue to hold up traffic. HE advised that they have written to haulage companies and requested that they refrain from using the villages and adhere to the official diversion route which is 55 miles round. Cllr Booth also advised that a leaflet (with scheme details and relevant contact information) will be produced by HE and delivered to all residents that could be affected by the works. Cllr Britain questioned whether the scheme allowed for pedestrians to cross the road and the Chairman advised that there would be a pedestrian crossing included in the scheme. Cllr King added that he was a member of the working group and would also be pushing for the Bus Stop pull off to be included in the scheme.

(b) For members to note letter sent to Pretoria Energy and BioCow. - **Noted**

(c) Any other Highways issues to be raised by Councillors.

Cllr Weldon reported that the layby off the A47 at Thorney Toll was prone to flooding and asked that the drains be looked at – Cllr King to contact Highways England on the Parish Councils behalf. Cllr Weldon also commented on the state of the potholes on the service/access road to the rear of Lindens Close in Thorney Toll, this is believed to be Clarions responsibility. Cllr Weldon to send photographs to the Clerk so this can be reported to Clarion Housing.

Cllr Knight asked Cllr King what the situation was in general terms with regards to potholes and road defects stating that the potholes in Churchfield Way, Wisbech St. Mary were patched up and are now bad again and were repairs still going ahead? Cllr King stated that works are still ongoing but weather conditions do have to be favourable for this to take place.

Cllr Allen raised that the state of the Guyhirn High Road is poor and resurfacing was desperately needed - Cllr King advised that the road is scheduled to have Micro Asphalt treatment in the Summer of 2021.

Cllr Britain requested that Gull Road, Guyhirn has the same treatment as the surface is also poor – Cllr King to report back to CCC.

Cllr Fryett reported an unfinished footpath outside the Old Church on Front Road, Murrow and would like to see this finished. He is also is concerned that the grass has overgrown the footpath on Murrow Bank between Front Road and Mill Road, Murrow and needs edging back. Cllr Booth suggested contacting the local Highways Officer to arrange Community Payback help as they have helped in Parson Drove in the past.

Cllr Scrimshaw reported an accident down Gull Drove leading out to Black Drove where a vehicle failed to stop and he believes that this could be due to a lack of Give Way signage and white lines. He would like to see black and white chevrons installed to increase visual awareness to the junction.

Cllr Davies reported a 30mph sign post that has fallen down due to a rotten post near to 'ScruffyDog Grooming Parlour' High Road, Guyhirn. He also mentioned 'RueGar' was suffering from surface water flooding into the garden, he believes that the drains are blocked and causing this. He also noted the footpath outside 'Highlander' at Selwyn Corner, Guyhirn is in a poor state and is a trip hazard – Cllr King to follow up on all these issues.

9. FINANCE MATTERS

9.1. To receive the Budgetary Control Report for 2020/21 to date. The bank reconciliation balanced at £88,685.56 - **Noted**

9.2. Budget review 20/21 and for members to consider draft Precept.

Councillors were circulated reports for consideration for January's meeting where the Precept for 21/22 will be set.

9.3. Allotment Rent Review 21/22

Following discussion Cllr Knight proposed no increase to the Allotment Rent, with 2020 and COVID causing financial problems for many. This was seconded by Cllr Britain. Cllr Booth asked for clarification on the sizes of the allotments for future reviews.

9.4 To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk November Salary	£643.36	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£27.60	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (November)	£50.00	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions (November)	£14.15	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	E-on Lighting Energy October	£682.92	Parish Councils Act 1957	Agreed
(f)	D. Wheeler – Reimbursement of zoom charges	£14.39	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(g)	Clerks & Councils Direct Subscription	£132.00	LG Act 1972 S143	Agreed
(h)	K. Clarke Carpentry, Joinery & Brickwork	£160.00	War Memorials Act 1923 S1	Agreed
(i)	K. Clarke Carpentry, Joinery & Brickwork	£141.00	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(j)	Rapier Signs – Planter Plaques	£16.00	Misc Prov 1976 S196	Agreed
(k)	Rapier Signs – Grass Parking Signs	£60.00	Misc Prov 1976 S196	Agreed
(l)	SLCC Membership Renewal	£144.00	LG Act 1972 S143	Agreed

9.5 Grant applications:

(a) East Anglian Childrens Hospices (EACH) – Donation LG Act 1972 S137

(b) Service by Emergency Response Volunteers – Donation LG Act 1972 S137

9.6. For members to approve new Grant Application Form

Following discussion regarding the future process of Grant Applications, Councillors agreed the new application form with an amendment from Cllr Knight adding the need to see the current bank balance as well as the two previous years accounts. Councillors asked for the two grant applicants at 9.5 to be sent the form and to be brought back to Council on their return. Therefore, the two grant applications were deferred until an official application form (along with the documents required) were returned.

10. PARISH PROPERTY

10.1. Maintenance

Cllr Davies reported that the first dyke at the entrance to the Guyhirn Playing Field hasn't been cut this year.
– The Clerk to contact the maintenance contractor.

10.2. Bus Shelters

The Chairman reported that both of the new Murrow bus shelters had been vandalised and had suffered broken glass panels. This was caught on CCTV, reported to the Parish Council and those responsible have agreed to pay for damages caused. The incident has been reported to the Police for their information only. The glass has been cleared to make safe and measured up so replacement panels can be ordered. Clerk to invoice the responsible party in due course.

10.3. Planters

Cllr Britain reported that The Chequers Public House landlady would still be interested in putting a planter on the triangle of land at the Plash Drove junction. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk contact her outlining that the planter would be paid for, constructed and maintained by her and donated to the Parish Council to be added to their Asset register and Insurance. It would also be sponsored by The Chequers at the current cost payable to the Parish Council yearly.

11. MURROW BANK/FRONT ROAD JUNCTION

(a) For members to receive update and outcome from site visit with CCC Highways Officer.

Cllr Fryett reported that he met on site with a CCC Highways Officer to discuss what could be done to improve safety at the junction, it was proposed by the Officer that flexible black and white posts be added to highlight the junction. Cllr Fryett asked for signage to be improved but that would have to be paid for by the Parish Council, so as a solution the current sign is to be angled better so it's clearer on approach. It was also suggested that the white lines be refreshed, which Cllr Fryett reports that this has already been completed by Highways. Another suggestion was to paint the kerb stones in front of the Memorial white to highlight the junction but would again be at Parish Councils cost. Illuminous stripping could also be added to the railings at the Memorial. The Highways Officer considered there to be adequate signage currently in place along Front Road but agrees that the main problem here is speeding. – Cllr Fryett to paint the kerb stones.

(b) To consider a Road Traffic Order (RTO) to change speed limit on Murrow Bank from 40mph – 30mph Cllr Booth reported that if the Parish Council applies themselves via third party funding this could be actioned immediately. It is an online application and the Clerk would have to pay via debit card and be reimbursed as soon as paid for due to the size of the payment. Cllr Booth also suggested the Council applies for Sandbank to be changed from 40-30mph on the same application. The costs would include the roundels being changed as there is already enough repeater posts and the legal notices. It was agreed that the Parish Council will fund these changes. In Murrow it would start where the 40mph comes into force and runs to the National Speed Limit sign (approx. 300 yards) and on Sandbank, Wisbech St. Mary it would run from the junction at the Bridge Inn to the National Speed Limit sign.

12. WISBECH ST. MARY POND

FDC Environmental Officer has deferred this over to the EA to respond moving forward.

Councillors noted the response from the Environment Agency, which stated they would be coming out to look at the pond but not as a matter of urgency. Clerk to reply back requesting they complete a water test and try and obtain the maintenance records of the treatment plant to fulfil their statutory duty as the government body responsible for this matter.

13. ASSETS REGISTER

Cllr Knight to take new photographs of all the assets in January to assist in the updating of the Assets Register. Annual inspection of assets still to be completed.

14. THE MIDDLE PIT AND THOLOMAS DROVE WASH PIT CHARITY

No further update at this time. The Clerk circulated the trust deed so trustees could start considering how a new governing document may look. The Clerk to arrange a meeting of the trustees in the New Year.

15. WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Clerk along with Tamar IT have been working on the website to make sure it is accessible for all disabilities. The website is now utilising the 'Userway' widget and the Clerk is making sure all PDFs are accessible for screen readers. The site has produced a score of 96% compliant on www.siteimprove.com that checks websites for accessibility. The Clerk to add the statement to the Website.

16. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr King stated that much of his report had already been covered during the meeting but also reported on the overgrown hedge on Sandbank and that CCC will give the land owner a month to cut the hedge before they cut it themselves and send the bill to the land owner.

Cllr Booth reported that Anglian Water came to the December FDC Overview and Scrutiny meeting following lots of complaints about low water pressure. Cllr Booth asked whether they intend on refurbishing the pumping station at Friday Bridge? AW stated that they have no immediate plans for this. AW believe the problems could be from the poor quality of pipes in our area and investigations will be done particularly in Wisbech St. Mary. Cllr Booth believes AW have understood how unhappy residents are regarding their water pressure and also when there is a leak how long it takes for the supply to be restored. Cllr Booth has also recommended AW come back to O&S on a regular basis to obtain feedback, especially when huge growth is planned within the district.

Cllr Booth also reported that he had attended Full Council at FDC and the main points being the Polling places review, which left the Parish with their existing Polling places. Licensing Policy was agreed and there were some slight amendments to the Code of Conduct which focused on Social Media. A motion regarding sale of FDC land and stopping the incinerator was unsuccessful. There were also a few constitutional changes and committee amendments too.

Cllr Bligh echoed everything that Cllr Booth mentioned as she was in the Full Council meeting too, with nothing else further to report at this time.

17. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk reported that she had attended the Police Teams meeting and raised concerns regarding drug activities in areas of Wisbech St. Mary, parking on grass verges on Station Avenue - Murrow by School Parents and the imminent improvements to the Guyhirn roundabout and the speeding issues that could follow from increased traffic using the villages at rat runs. The clerk to arrange for liaising between Sergeant Arnold and Highways England before the scheme begins.

The Police reported that there had been a few crimes within the Parish during the month of November including burglaries, criminal damage, theft of a motor vehicle, common assault, malicious communications and threats to damage property. A number of the investigations are still ongoing and await final outcomes depending on the strength of the evidence.

Cllr Knight raised concerns regarding the Neighbourhood Change Program that will see the possibility of losing PCSO's from the villages. The Clerk informed the Council that the deadline for the consultation was tonight (14th December 2020) and that if Parish Council wished she could email in their response after the meeting to make the deadline. The Chairman felt that a presence was definitely needed in the villages and we should email in a response.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

Cllr Allen reported that the John Bends Charity payments had been issued and that they have a fall in recipient numbers and appealed for Councillors to approach any elderly parishioners that could make use of an extra sum of money at Christmas to apply. Cllr Knight recommended putting a notice outlining the criteria in Village Voices as it is possibly more of an awareness problem.

Cllr Britain reported that parishioners had complained that due to increased surface water on the roads in Guyhirn that when on foot, they are getting soaked by passing motorists. Cllr King commented that this can sometimes be because of irresponsible motorists and maybe we could add something to our newsletter about being considerate drivers in our community.

Cllr Knight wanted to urge community groups to apply to the Wrydecroft Windfarm as they offer grants of up to £5000.

Cllr Knight requested an update regarding the empty Clarion property in Wisbech St. Mary, Cllr Booth stated that he had raised it with Clarion again, and asked it as a question to the Portfolio holder for social housing at FDC as it has now been left empty for 10 months. – Cllr Booth to follow up.

Cllr Knight also requested an update on how things are progressing with Guyhirn Football Club and their new buildings. Cllr Davies reported that the new units were being installed next Monday (21st December 2020) and that the groundworks and drainage had all been completed.

The Chairman reported that there was 'A Carol Service in your Car' event on Sunday at 3pm in the Wisbech St. Mary Community Centre Car Park, which would be limited to 60 people.

The Chairman closed the meeting by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thanked the Councillors for their commitment to what has been a very challenging year.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING These are subject to possible change due to Coronavirus

Monday 11th January 2021 Murrow Village Hall

DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2020/21

Monday 8th February 2021 Chequers Inn Tholomas Drove

Monday 8th March 2021 Oliver Twist Country Inn Guyhirn

Monday 12th April 2021 Thorney Toll Village Hall

Monday 10th May 2021 Parish Assembly/Annual Meeting Wisbech St Mary Community Centre

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Signed: Cllr. D Wheeler, Chairman