

# Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday April 12th 2021 via Zoom Video Conferencing.

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

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

Members of the public: 3

**OPEN FORUM** – Parishioners are invited to address the Council.

Prior to the Open Forum the Chairman commenced a one-minute silence by the Council in recognition of the passing of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

The Co-Ordinator for Parson Drove and Wisbech St. Mary Ward Community Speedwatch advised the Council that Cambridgeshire Constabulary has allowed the scheme to re start after May 17<sup>th</sup> and proposed dates will be sent to the volunteers allowing sessions to resume.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Received from Cllrs C Allen, P Davies and M Fryett

### **2. PRESENTATION AND QUESTIONS – ANGLIAN WATER**

The Chairman opened the floor to Anglian Water for their presentation.

Rose Shisler introduced herself as the Stakeholder Engagement Program Lead for Anglia Water and thanked the Council for allowing them the opportunity to come and speak about the scheme for Wisbech St. Mary in the Summer.

Nathan Clark introduced himself as the Projects Engineer who will be looking after this scheme from start to finish along with the contract partners when they start on site in July.

Rose commenced the presentation of slides which included information about the scheme, the purpose and duration of works, and benefits resulting from them.

Nathan stated that the current pipes are not fit for purpose and need updating to keep up with demand today and in the future.

Anglian Water have received lots of complaints regarding low water pressure and they hope these works will regain customer satisfaction.

A new upsized plastic main that runs the length of Station Road and Bevis Lane will improve performance within Wisbech St. Mary at a cost of £650,000.

They are aiming for the impact of the works to be as little as practical, they are liaising with the Parish Council, Highways, Schools, affected businesses, WSM Football Club and the Community Centre to make this possible.

Works will start on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 with an expected end date of the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021 with a rolling road closure in place on the two roads affected.

Anglian Water assured the Councillors that they will work in line with the current COVID regulations in place at the time of the works.

Nathan mentioned that some of the problems that need to be overcome were access for the home owners, parking on the street, co-ordinating the works around community events and schools as well as minimising the impact to the local businesses. Nathan finished by requesting the Parish Councils support the scheme.

Rose asked Councillors for any questions or comments:

Cllr Humphrey asked where the water comes into the village and Nathan confirmed that the flow comes in via Leverington Common through Station Road.

The Chairman mentioned that his business that is located on Bevis Lane has not been contacted and is concerned that the road will be closed during their harvest. Nathan responded by explaining that they will pick up all points like this from this meeting and will follow them through to make sure everyone is aware.

The Chairman asked for confirmation that they will be liaising with the Community Centre, which Nathan confirmed will be happening in the following week and offered to go and speak with Alan Hudson Ltd on the same day.

The Chairman mentioned that these works are essential as Wisbech St. Mary has suffered with low water pressure for a while and has led to many complaints. Nathan confirmed he had been on site 4/5 times now and has been questioned regarding the problems by residents.

Cllr Humphrey asked the age of the existing pipework that's being replaced. Nathan stated that they are predominately old cast mains and probably over 50 years old.

Cllr Knight asked how much bigger the new pipe will be in relation to the current one. Nathan stated that the current one is 4-inch cast iron main and this will be replaced by a plastic 6-inch main.

Cllr Knight wanted confirmation that during the 1000m rolling road closure that no resident will be denied access to their own home. Nathan stated that they are required to work in 1000m parcels and no vehicles will be allowed through that closure other than for access. The residents that fall into that closure will be supplied with an Anglian Water printed letter as a permit.

Cllr Booth asked whether there will be testing afterwards to make sure the scheme delivers what you are expecting? Nathan confirmed that they have hydraulic modellers that test where the pinch points are in the network - this was done initially and proved there was an issue and will be redone after the works to prove that the pressures have increased. Rose also stated that the material the new pipe is made from can allow them to flex the pressure whereas cast iron didn't allow that to happen.

Cllr Booth asked whether there will be improvements in Anglian Waters diagnostics that allows them to know there are problems that need rectifying as they happen? Nathan confirmed that this is an ongoing project within the region by installing proactive pressure loggers that feed information back to an office. Nathan also mentioned that the housing growth being planned for the area would be able to be supplied without problem, as that is all factored into the scheme.

The Chairman asked whether residents will be supplied from a bowser? Nathan confirmed that won't be necessary as customers are only likely to be off water for 20-30 minutes while they do their service transfer, which Rose confirmed that they will door knock residents to give them fair warning of this.

There may be a possibility of being off for an hour when they connect to adjoining roads eg: Church Road, where residents will be warned 5 days in advance of this.

With no further questions the Chairman thanked them for attending and Rose and Nathan left the meeting.

**3. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING** dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The minutes were taken as read and agreed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Scrimshaw and seconded by Cllr Mann. They would be signed by the chairman as soon as COVID lockdown restrictions allow.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES** (information only) - Nil

**5. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION - None Received**

**6. MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST** for items on this agenda

Cllr Humphrey declared a pecuniary interest in item 7.2. (a) and will take no part in the discussion or vote.

**7. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS**

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

7.2. Planning applications for discussion:

(a)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0209/RM</a>	Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (for 1 x plot only) pursuant to outline permission F/YR20/0416/O to erect a dwelling (2-storey 3-bed) and associated works at Land South East of The Poplars Bevis Lane Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(b)	<a href="#">F/YR20/1233/F</a>  RECONSULTATION	Erect single-storey and second floor rear extensions, insertion of 3no windows to front and detached gym/study and games room to existing dwelling involving demolition of existing outbuilding and formation of a new vehicular access at The Old Poor House High Road Bunkers Hill Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4SQ <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>

(c)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0249/VOC</a>	Variation of condition 11 (list of approved plans) of planning permission F/YR20/0377/F (Erect a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling) - to enable amendment to red outline of application site at Land North West of Gull View Gull Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(d)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0074/F</a> RECONSULTATION	Erect a 2-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling, convert loft and install dormer to side to form additional living accommodation, install render to all elevations, erect a detached garage and widen existing vehicular access, involving demolition of existing conservatory and stores at Philmar High Road Wisbech St Mary Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4RA <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(e)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0257/F</a>	Erect a domestic 4-bay garage with hobby room above (for use for the occupants of Hollycroft Bungalow), and change of use of land for domestic purposes at Land North West of Hollycroft Bungalow High Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(f)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0290/F</a>	Erect a single-storey 2-bed dwelling in association with existing business at Land North East Of 347 Leverington Common Leverington Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(g)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0300/F</a>	Change of use of existing day room to a dwelling, and the erection of a single-storey rear extension (for a temporary period of 5 years) to form 2 x additional bedrooms, involving the removal of existing mobile home at Ponderosa Farm Garden Lane Wisbech St Mary Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4RZ <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(h)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0309/F</a>	Change of use of land to a traveller's site involving the siting of 1 x mobile home and 1 touring caravan, erect a dayroom, timber shed and fence (1.8m high max) and access gates (part retrospective) at Common View Garden Lane Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL, however Councillors questioned when the Travellers Housing Needs Assessment Policy will be completed?</b>

7.3 Beckett Hamlett, High Road, WSM – Planning Reference F/YR17/1217/F – For Councillors to note response received from developers and an update from the Chairman and Vice Chairman following onsite meeting regarding bus shelter opp. The Gables, High Road, WSM.

The Chairman reported that both he and Cllr Humphrey met with Mr. Joao Gervastoski the Construction Manager from Queensbridge Homes who stated that due to financial pressure delivering the houses, do not have the facility to pay for any improvements to the village. The relocation of the Bus Stop was discussed and a site for it agreed in principle, which will be of glass construction on a concrete pad like the large new one in Murrow.

The Chairman advised Joao that the designs for the shelter and communications with the home owner that the bus shelter will be in front of will need to be done by Queensbridge Homes and not the Parish Council. It was also agreed that the existing Bus Shelter will not be knocked down until the new one is erected.

Cllr Humphrey did question the use of the word 'Hamlett' in the naming of the development and expressed that there may be confusion. Joao commented that it was too late to do anything regarding this as all the publicity had been produced and printed.

Cllr Knight commented that he is concerned regarding these new homes and the owners on this development struggling to obtain home insurance as some residents in the Parish are being refused insurance based on flood risk and those that can are obtaining it at huge premiums. The Chairman has heard of this issue but feels these new homes are being raised to mitigate the flood risks and should be able to obtain insurance. He also commented that as the Fens are so well drained, we shouldn't be uninsurable in this area, but was unsure where the connection lies between planning and insurance.

Cllr Booth commented that the previous Winter was the wettest since 1938 and some areas were close to flooding, and as a board member of North Level IDB was concerned that these amounts of rainfall are becoming more common. – The Clerk to send a question to FDC Head of Planning for insurance advice for home owners.

Cllr Booth returning to the Bus Stop issue, is disappointed that Queensbridge Homes couldn't offer the village any financial support and feels we should still stop them moving the shelter. The Chairman felt that we need to just allow the movement to happen as we risk getting nothing if we keep fighting it. This way WSM will get a new Bus Shelter costing around £8,000. Cllr Booth feels that a small sum of money eg. £2000 towards speed calming shouldn't be out of reach. The Chairman will revisit the site to speak to the Construction Manager once they commence building.

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

### (a) FDC – Town & Parish Allotments in Fenland

The Clerk read out the email that stated “As part of the Council’s ongoing Local Plan work and the consideration of local green space, we would like to know about allotments that your organisation manages and also the demand for allotment space at the moment.” Following discussion, the clerk will reply outlining our current allotment details and that the demand is low, however Cllr Booth noted that parishioners from WSM Parish often approach Parson Drove and that there may be a hidden desire. The Chairman deferred an in-depth discussion regarding the future of allotments in the Parish until the June meeting.

## 9. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

### 9.1. Street Lighting

Update from Chairman on LED replacement progression

The Chairman apologised regarding the Thorney Toll replacements still not having been started but parts are still awaited. Cllr Weldon reported that there are two streetlights currently out at Thorney Toll. The Chairman also reported that the two in Guyhirn that cannot be replaced fully, will have their bulbs changed to LED.

### 9.2. Highways

#### (a) CCC LHI Bid – WSM High Road – Update

The Clerk advised that the scheme has moved a step further after successfully being selected by Highways and were two above the cut off on their assessments and so as long as the CCC Committee do not change this, the scheme will go ahead.

#### (b) Guyhirn High Road – programmed in for Gripfibre resurfacing in June 2021 - **Noted**

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

Cllr Britain asked whether anything further was being arranged with Cants Drove? The Chairman asked Cllr King to come in this item. Cllr King explained that the upgrading of Cants drove was a condition placed on the planning application put in by Biocow, but due to Biocow being sold, the new company would have to resubmit a new planning application. At the previous meeting Cllr Count sought to arrange a meeting on site. Cllr King was not aware of the date the meeting that went ahead between highways, a local resident and Cllr Fryett, and due to Cllr Fryett not being at the Parish Council meeting could not update any further. Cllr King did however offer to attend any further meetings to help support the upgrading of Cants Drove.

## 10. FINANCE MATTERS

10.1. To receive the end of year Budgetary Control Report for 2020/21 – The Clerk circulated the BCR via the One Drive. The final bank balance for the year was £70,466.28. The Clerk explained the detailed report and noted the fact that it would be prudent to complete the year with a general fund amount around the same as one year’s precept, and the end of year balance plus the VAT reclaim of £9789.36 does successfully achieve this. The Clerk then outlined her recommendations for the cash reserves for the following year based on the end of year budgeted figures, it was agreed to earmark £12,000 for streetlighting, £4000 for the LHI and PFHI bids and £5000 for the upgrading of the parish benches, leaving £49,466.28 as unallocated cash reserves – This was agreed and proposed by Cllr Booth and seconded by Cllr Britain - **Noted**

10.2. To receive the Budgetary Control Report for 2021/22 to date. The balance as at 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 was £110,874.28, which included the first precept payment - **Noted**

### 10.3. Risk Assessment for Finance

The Clerk reported that these needed to be updated slightly to include online banking risks. This was agreed and proposed by Cllr Booth and seconded by Cllr Humphrey. - **Noted**

### 10.4. Risk Assessment for Assets

The Clerk outlined the changes made to the document, mainly to the streetlighting as these were now under Parish Council care. The Chairman mentioned that once all the streetlights are changed over to LED a date will be set for a routine inspection in the future. – This was agreed and proposed by Cllr Knight and seconded by Cllr Booth.

10.5. Corporate Governance Questionnaire for certification by the Chairman.

This will be completed, checked and added to the internal audit files - **Noted**

10.6. Approval of the 2020/21 Accounts and AGAR as they stand prior to internal Audit.

The Clerk detailed all the sections of the end of year accounts and these were approved unanimously by the Council. Proposed by Cllr Weldon and seconded by Cllr Britain.

10.7. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk March 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 (March) Inc Zoom Charges	£64.39	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions (March)	£14.15	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	E-on Lighting Energy February	£616.84	Parish Councils Act 1957	Agreed
(f)	E-on Lighting Energy March	£682.92	Parish Councils Act 1957	Agreed
(g)	CCC – PFHI (Murrey Bank and Sand Bank Speed Limits)	£500.00	Highways Act 1980	Agreed
(h)	Rapier Signs – Private rented land sign	£22.50	Misc Prov 1976 S196	Agreed

10.8. Grant Applications:

(a) WSM & Guyhirn PCC – For Sand Blasting Church Gates £420.00 LG Act 1972 S214

The grant was **approved** unanimously. Proposed by Cllr Booth and seconded by Cllr Weldon.

## 11. PARISH PROPERTY

11.1. Maintenance

(a) General Maintenance 21/22.

For Councillors to note that the new Contractors have returned signed contracts and started 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021- **Noted**

(b) Verge Maintenance Renewal for 21/22 – For Councillors to note this was renewed successfully as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 - **Noted**

(c) Parish Benches – For Councillors to discuss received quotes and new sites in line with 21/22 budget.

The Chairman discussed how this was a project that originated from the inspection of assets, it was noted that some of the wooden benches were looking tired and could the Council spend money to replace all the benches to sustainable plastic material, the same as the one in place next to WSM village sign. The Clerk obtained various quotes and these were circulated to Councillors via the One drive. It was previously noted that Murrey only has one bench and Cllr Fryett supplied various options for new sites, however due to the fact that Cllr Fryett offered apologies to the meeting the item will be deferred.

11.2. Bus Shelters

(a) For Councillors to note payment received for damage to Murrey Bus Stops - **Noted**

(b) The Chairman and Clerk using their powers as outlined in the Financial Regulations under **Budgetary Control and authority to spend (4.1)** accepted a quote of £190 for a bench to be installed in the Bus Shelter O/S the WSM Village Shop. - **Noted**

11.3. Planters

(a) For Councillors to discuss requests for new planters on High Road, Guyhirn opposite the Old Post Office and opposite the Playing Field.

The Clerk notified the Councillors that two requests for new planters in Guyhirn had been received. The Chairman felt this should be deferred until the June meeting to be discussed before the invitation to renew sponsorship invoices go out in July.

## 12. MURREY BANK/FRONT ROAD JUNCTION

(a) Update on junction improvements and Speed Limit changes.

The Clerk advised that other than Councillors agreeing to pay the application fee earlier, there were no further updates.

(b) Update on Murrey MVAS/SID (Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign/Speed Indicator Device)

The Clerk advised that the decision on funding by the wind farm was expected by the next meeting, other than that there were no further updates.

### 13. PARISH PONDS

(a) Update on progress with Environment Agency / NL IDB – Wisbech St. Mary. – No further updates

(b) ROSPA response and costs associated with inspections.

The Clerk advised Councillors that ROSPA have quoted £68.50 + VAT per pond, and Councillors felt that this was something that needed to be done to protect the parishioners and be a proactive Council. The Clerk to agree their quote and arrange inspections.

Cllr Knight commented that it's great that we are chasing EA to do water tests, having NLIDB assessing the culverts and drainage and arranging ROSPA to come out and assess safety aspects but he feels we need a pond expert to come and tell the Council how to make it a scenic place for both parishioner's enjoyment and the environment. – The Clerk to look into finding companies that could help us.

### 14. ASSETS REGISTER

Update on progress of Inspection of Assets.

The Clerk advised that she is still working on the updated Assets Register but the inspection is complete.

### 15. POLICE MATTERS

For Councillors to note report received following Police Forum on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

The Clerk attended the Police Forum held virtually on 'Teams' and asked the Police for an update on the burglary on Churchfield Way, the Police provided a more in-depth response and was circulated to Councillors via email. The Clerk also brought up the potential issue of speeding and HGVs through the villages due to the Guyhirn Roundabout Improvements, the Police offered to carry out Speed Checks when we envisaged the most issues/dangers potentially could occur and they will look to oblige as best they can.

The Police reported that there was a total of 14 crimes recorded in February (for both Parson Drove Parish and Wisbech St. Mary Parish combined) which was a reduction of 7 on last month. In terms of the crime type there was nothing that stood out. There were still sporadic incidents of attempt CAT converter thefts, however some arrests were made in relation to this and numbers have dwindled dramatically.

### 16. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr King struggled with his internet connection and the Clerk will obtain a report via email. An email from Cllr King was received on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and circulated to all Parish Councillors.

Cllr Booth reported that there hadn't been any FDC meetings and the only update was a further round of business grants coming up, which he believed would be more automated.

Cllr Bligh agreed that there hadn't been any significant FDC updates and moved the meeting along.

### 17. 2021/2022 MUNICIPAL YEAR PARISH COUNCIL DATES & LOCATIONS - Noted

Proposed Date	Time	Proposed Location
Monday 14th June 2021	7pm	New Community Room, Guyhirn
Monday 12th July 2021	7pm	Murrow Village Hall - <b>CONFIRMED</b>
Monday 9th August 2021	7pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
Monday 13th September 2021	7pm	The Chequers Public House - Tholomas Drove
Monday 11th October 2021	7pm	WSM Community Centre - <b>CONFIRMED</b>
Monday 8th November 2021	7pm	New Community Room, Guyhirn
Monday 13th December 2021	7pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
Monday 10th January 2022	7pm	Murrow Village Hall - <b>CONFIRMED</b>
Monday 14th February 2022	7pm	The Chequers Public House - Tholomas Drove
Monday 7th March 2022	7pm	New Community Room, Guyhirn
Monday 11th April 2022	7pm	Murrow Village Hall - <b>CONFIRMED</b>
Monday 9th May 2022	7pm	WSM Community Centre - <b>CONFIRMED</b>

### 18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

Cllr Knight is concerned regarding the appearance of brown advertising signs for a local business being placed around the village and asked how we stand legally with them? The Clerk to enquire with Highways as to whether these have the relevant permissions in place.

Cllr Britain mentioned that he had been contacted by Andrew Deptford regarding a possible recall of defibrillators. Cllr Britain supplied the clerk with photographs he took of the potentially affected defibrillators to be forwarded to Andrew Deptford for checking. – The Clerk to forward photographs.

Cllr Britain is concerned that the Thorney Toll defibrillator hasn't been checked in a while and asked whether Cllr Weldon could continue to look after this one in future? Cllr Weldon was unaware it wasn't being checked but is more than happy to continue to do so if shown what to do, Cllr Britain agreed to show Cllr Weldon what is to be completed.

Cllr Britain also reported that he had been approached by some parishioners regarding the mowing of the riverbank and whether an extra strip could be mowed on the lower part for walkers, Cllr Britain has been in touch with EA and was told there was no money available for this, however if he was to get it funded locally, they could approve it. The Chairman felt that this wasn't something that Parish Council could help with.

#### **19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Parish Assembly/Annual Meeting - Wisbech St Mary Community Centre

For Councillors to note that the Government announced that it would not be extending powers for local councils in England to meet remotely. Councillors need to be aware of all risk assessments in place for returning to face to face meetings.

The Chairman announced that it was looking extremely likely that this meeting cannot take place due to current COVID regulations, as the Government will not be extending the right for Parish Councils to hold meetings virtually after May 6<sup>th</sup>, but also community buildings were unable to hold meetings indoors until May 17<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, the Chairman proposed that the Council put back the meeting until Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May when we can hold a meeting indoors. This was unanimously agreed.

Meeting closed at 9:30 pm

Signed: Cllr. D Wheeler, Chairman