

# Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at Wisbech St Mary Community Centre.

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

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

Members of the public: 8

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

- The applicant for planning application F/YR21/0483/F outlined their aims to change part of their garage to a Hairdressing Salon.
- The applicant for planning application F/YR21/0552/F requested support from the Parish Council.
- The Co-Ordinator for Community Speedwatch reported that road side sessions have resumed under a new COVID safe working system. Statistics show speeding is high, but they are optimistic to drive that down by a continued presence moving forward.
- The Chairman of Murrow Street Pride reported that the team has remained operational during COVID by going out individually or in household couples. The group is now maintaining the grass beside the Methodist Chapel and will be maintaining the Seadyke Bank planter as soon as group meetings resume. Their AGM scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> June will be held providing government restrictions allow. Murrow Primary Academy had contacted MSP regarding working together on a project.
- A representative for Wisbech St. Mary Community First Responders gave a presentation on what services they deliver in the community and outlined the equipment they need to do their volunteering in support of their grant application to be decided by the Council later in the agenda.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - None**

**2. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING** dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The minutes were taken as read and agreed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Britain and seconded by Cllr Allen and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES** (information only) - **None**

### **4. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION - None**

### **5. MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST** for items on this agenda

Cllr Britain declared an interest on agenda item 7.2 (b) and will be leaving the room for this item.

Cllr Humphrey declared an interest on agenda item 7.2 (c) and will not be taking part in discussion or vote.

Cllr Booth declared that he had been contacted by the applicant to support agenda item 7.2 (c) but would not enter into discussion until after the Parish Council meeting and was not predetermined in any way.

### **6. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Simon King thanked the Parish Council for moving the Cllr reports to earlier in the agenda.

Cllr King apologised regarding the lack of action from CCC regarding Sandbank and the overgrown hedges, he was given incorrect information from an Officer, following a conversation with the Director of the department things are now receiving attention and should be completed in a couple of weeks unless problems arise with nesting birds.

Also, regarding Sandbank, the undulations in the road have been reported and will be inspected with a view to being corrected.

Cllr King happily reported that the road resurfacing of High Road, Guyhirn was almost complete. It was delayed slightly due to a breakdown.

A planning application for Beats Lodge, Rogues Alley, Hooks Drove, Murrow as a waste transfer site has now been submitted but the application was invalid and hence needs to be resubmitted before enforcement action proceeds.

Guyhirn Roundabout: Cllr King met with Highways England regarding HGVs and the possibility of weight limit restrictions but due to Government process this could take up to three months, so as a temporary solution, warning signage of 'Unsuitable for HGVs' will be placed along the areas rural roads. Unfortunately, there will be more road closures before its completion. The Chairman asked for joined up thinking between Highways England, the Contractors and The Police to stop the speeding of HGVs and cars in the Parish.

The Chairman requested a SID (Speed Indicating Device) for Wisbech St. Mary to be supplied by Highways England to help support the problems arising from closures.

Councillors showed disappointment at the lack of current updates being forwarded from Highways England. Cllr Fryett requested an update on Cants Drove, and Cllr King responded that repairs were going ahead as planned.

Cllr Fryett also queried whether any investigation into repairs of the Parish verges had been started and Cllr King stated that was an issue that Cllr Count was attending to.

Cllr Fryett reported an overgrown hedge on Back Road, Murrow that is encroaching onto the highway, Clerk to forward photographs and Cllr King to follow up.

The Chairman brought to Cllr Kings attention that the footpath where the site access for Beckett Hamlet is on the High Road, Wisbech St. Mary is getting destroyed and becoming dangerous to pedestrians.

Cllr Booth reported his attendance at the Full Annual Meeting of Fenland District Council where items included a new Member allowance being agreed, Cllr Booth questioned when the Parish Councillor allowance scheme would be published and was advised it was imminent. Also discussed, a boundary review for the District Council wards and a policy was agreed regarding COVID absences from FDC Council meetings. Cllr Booth reported a possible end date regarding the Helping Hands scheme, this was planning to finish when lockdown ends, which was now likely to be July.

Cllr Bligh reported that WSM Street Pride had finally managed to get back out as a group to do a community litter pick, the village was quite tidy and was a credit to all the volunteers that went out under their own steam and litter picked during lockdown. She also thanked the Parish Council for stepping in and helping to replace all the plants in the WSM planters as Street Pride hadn't been able to organise an approach to look after them before lockdown started.

Cllr Bligh also reported that she was now a permanent member of FDC Planning Committee.

## 7. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS

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

7.2. Planning applications for discussion:

(a)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0487/F</a>	Change of use of land for the use as 10 x traveller's plots including the siting of 10 x mobile homes, 10 x touring caravans and erection of 10 x day rooms (part retrospective) at Land South East of Greenbanks Garden Lane Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on the need for a completed Gypsy &amp; travellers housing needs assessment to determine if there is a need for additional plots, the school being at capacity and the concerns of the drainage board. The Parish Council note that as this is for 10 plots should the LPA be at odds in their decision to that of the Parish Council that this should be referred to the Planning Committee.</b>
(b)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0483/F</a>	Change of use of part of existing detached domestic garage to hairdressers at Hollycroft House 180 Front Road Murrow Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4HU <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>
(c)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0552/F</a>	Conversion of existing building to form 1no dwelling (single-storey, 3-bed) and erect a shed at Unit 3 Sandbank Barns Industrial Units Sandbank Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL. The Council wish to support a local business with its need to be on site for the future security of the business. They also recognise that Wisbech St. Mary is designated as a growth village and as it is a brownfield site, they have no concerns by supporting the application as we do not consider it to be development in the open countryside.</b>
(d)	<a href="#">F/YR20/1011/F</a> <b><u>APPEAL</u></b>	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

		<b>The Parish Council resolved to change their recommendation to SUPPORT by majority vote, the reasons being they feel the access onto Back Road, Murrow is more preferable and a dwelling on the site would enhance the area by tidying up a derelict plot of land.</b>
(e)	<a href="#">F/YR21/0577/F</a>	Erect a single storey rear extension, formation of a pitched roof to existing garage involving removal of car port and external alterations to existing dwelling (part retrospective) at Hunting Lodge Gull Road Guyhirn Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4ER <b>The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.</b>

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

### (a) FDC – Fen Bio Sphere

A motion was agreed by Fenland District Council on 19th May to oppose plans for a Fens Biosphere and circulated to all Parish Councils - **Noted**

### (b) CCC – Walking & Cycling Consultation - **Noted**

CCC asked for the public's input as to where they would like to see new and improved walking and cycling routes across the County. Councillors asked the Clerk to respond to the consultation noting that a safe route between Wisbech St. Mary and Wisbech would improve connections for cyclists and pedestrians.

## 9. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

### 9.1. Street Lighting

(a) Extra streetlight request - located on Gull Road near sharp bend.

(b) Replacement streetlight request on Front Road, Murrow opp 100-104

(c) Streetlight fault on Mill Road, Murrow – Marked as DC4.

The Chairman will liaise with Electrical Testing regarding the new and replacement sites to conduct feasibility assessments and the repair of the Streetlight in Mill Road is in hand.

### 9.2. Highways

(a) Any Highways issues to be raised by Councillors.

Cllr Booth highlighted how dangerous Cants Drove, Murrow has become and feels that this is now unfit for use.

Cllr Knight requested more information be given to residents regarding 'who does what' grass cutting and the frequency of it, as the Parish Council can be blamed for areas that aren't their responsibility and could this go into the Village Voices for our next newsletter? He would like to appeal to residents to help out and cut the verges that grow long in front of their properties.

Cllr Weldon reported that the weeds surrounding the bus shelter in Thorney Toll were bad, and the weeds growing up along the disabled ramp needed attention – Clerk to make enquiries to contractor and Clarion.

Cllr Britain questioned whose responsibility it was to cut the verges between Murrow Bank and Guyhirn – Clerk to check verges contract and action accordingly.

Cllr Mann mentioned the poor condition of Foleys Drove and was concerned that the road is practically impassable for anything other than agricultural vehicles.

### (b) Local Highways Improvements – Bids for 22/23

Following discussion there are four sites proposed for consideration and would be decided upon at July's meeting:

- 1) Continuation of WSM High Road – Speed change from 40mph – 30mph and traffic calming.
- 2) Traffic calming (Chicanes) for Guyhirn High Road.
- 3) Speed Management/Traffic calming to Gull Road, Guyhirn.
- 4) Speed limit change in Tholomas Drove (Residential Area) from 60mph – 40mph.

## 10. FINANCE MATTERS

10.1. To receive the Finance & Budget Report for 2021/22 to date. The Clerk drew attention to the VAT reclaim having been received and £1750 from Cambridgeshire Community Foundation which was the grant money from Wrydecroft Windfarm for the defibrillator at Tholomas Drove. The bank reconciliation of 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 balanced at £115,979.62.

10.2. To complete and approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021. Agreed by Council and Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

10.3. To approve the completed Section 2 Accounting Statements for 2020/2021. Agreed by Council and Signed by the Chairman.

10.4. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk May Salary	£732.74	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£64.10	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (May)	£50.00	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions - May (Direct Debit)	£25.15	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	E-on Lighting Energy May	£681.85	Parish Councils Act 1957	Agreed
(f)	Commercial & Domestic Property Maintenance	£190.00	LG Misc Prov Act 1976 S196	Agreed
(g)	Waverley Nurseries (B. Wakefield) Plants	£350.00	LG Misc Prov Act 1976 S196	Agreed

10.5. Grant Applications

(a) Wisbech St. Mary Community First Responders | £500 - £2000 Update Equipment LG Act 1972 S137  
Cllr Knight and Cllr Booth both spoke in support of the application and recognised the local good work they do. Cllr Fryett proposed the Parish Council award £1500.00 and was seconded by Cllr Weldon. This was unanimously agreed.

## 11. PARISH PROPERTY

11.1. Maintenance – No Issues raised.

11.2. Bus Shelters

Councillors asked the Clerk to arrange for the Bus Shelter opp Chapelfield Road, Guyhirn to be repainted by the Maintenance Contractor.

11.3. Planters

(a) For Councillors to discuss sponsorship amount for renewals to be invoiced in July. Councillors agreed to leave the sponsorship at £50 a year per sponsor.

(b) For Councillors to discuss requests for new planters on High Road, Guyhirn opposite the Old Post Office and opposite 'Millies Place' – Deferred item.

Councillors agreed in principle to supplying the materials so long as volunteers can create the planters and continue to maintain them and sponsor them. Cllrs Davies and Allen to approach residents.

11.4. Defibrillators

(a) Tholomas Drove Defibrillator Quotes

Following discussion of the three quotes provided to Councillors, Cllr Booth proposed using Andrew Deptford as the Parish Council currently work with him for the other four defibrillators, Cllr Weldon seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed to order a defibrillator and cabinet at a cost of £1500 +VAT.

## 12. MURROW BANK/FRONT ROAD JUNCTION

(a) Update on junction improvements and Speed Limit changes. – No further updates.

(b) Murrow MVAS/SID (Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign/Speed Indicator Device) Quotes

Following discussion of the two quotes provided to Councillors, Cllr Allen proposed to accept the quote from Swarco for £4448 +VAT which included the SID, all fixings, configured laptop, accessories and training, this was seconded by Cllr Fryett and agreed unanimously.

## 13. PARISH PONDS

(a) Update on progress with Environment Agency / NL IDB – Wisbech St. Mary.

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr Knight met with a representative from Aquamaintenance Ltd that specialised in rejuvenating community ponds, however the quote received to turn the area into a beauty spot exceeded the financial abilities of the Parish Council at £127,655.58 + VAT and this option was quickly dismissed. Cllr Booth suggested creating a working group for this project of himself (as he was heavily involved with the Pond Project at Parson Drove), Cllr Knight and Cllr Humphrey who had both had an input thus far. Cllr Booth also offered the suggestion of using barley straw as a temporary option to clear the waters of the pond.

Cllr Knight expressed frustration at the lack of action from the Environment Agency with regards to the water test requested back in October and the lack of urgency when the pond smells of sewerage.

The Clerk advised that she has requested a price for a water test from ADC but hasn't received that yet. Councillors requested that the Clerk sends a complaint to the EA over their lack of action. Cllr Knight questioned the jetting of the culverts of the pond, the Clerk reported this was in hand with ADC and they would be inviting the Chairman along when they are on site.

#### **14. POLICE MATTERS**

For Councillors to note report received following Police Forum on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021. – Report not received.

#### **15. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF POLICIES**

(a) Rules for Public Participation

(b) Complaints Procedure

Cllr Booth recognised they were both good documents, but cautioned that they need to reflect what is stated in the Standing Orders namely 'Rules and expectations of the public during the formal council meeting' Item 4 regarding disorderly conduct.

Cllr Booth asked for the Complaints Procedure to state 'Refer to the Complaints Procedure' rather than 'Refer to the Clerk' due to concerns regarding GDPR and data control. His final point was to ask FDC to look the Complaints Procedure over as Councillors sign up to the Code of Conduct, to make sure the document ties up with their processes.

Councillors approved both Policies for adoption based on Cllr Booths recommendations.

#### **16. PARISH BENCH PROJECT**

(a) Update on project progression

(b) Placement sites including two objections from residents on Front Road, Murrow.

The Chairman conducted site visits with KBS Depot and the following sites were approved for new or replacement benches:

- 1) (REPLACEMENT) The Jetty, Wisbech St. Mary – No village name on slat – Memorial Plaque
- 2) (NEW) Outside Church next to planter, Church Rd, Wisbech St. Mary – WISBECH St. MARY on slat
- 3) (NEW) Outside School next to notice board, Churchfield Way, WSM – WISBECH St. MARY on slat
- 4) (REPLACEMENT) Outside Codfather, High Road, WSM – WISBECH St. MARY on slat
- 5) (NEW) Opposite Chequers on grass triangle, Plash Drove – THOLOMAS DROVE on slat
- 6) (REPLACEMENT) On Village Green (Georges Field), Plash Drove – THOLOMAS DROVE on slat
- 7) (NEW) Guyhirn playing field facing Chapel of Ease – GUYHIRN on slat
- 8) (REPLACEMENT) Chapelfield Road bench – GUYHIRN on slat
- 9) (NEW) At Pond, High Rd, Guyhirn – GUYHIRN on slat
- 10) (REPLACEMENT) Linden Close, Thorney Toll bench – THORNEY TOLL on slat
- 11) (NEW) Back Road planter plot – MURROW on slat
- 12) (NEW) TBA (Subject to arbitration) – MURROW on slat

During the discussion Cllr Weldon mentioned there was another bench belonging to the Parish Council next to the Village Hall at Thorney Toll, and The Chairman mentioned the Murrow Bank replacement had been missed. Councillors agreed to order two more benches to cover these.

The two extra sites added:

- 13) (REPLACEMENT) At Village Hall, Thorney Toll – No village name on slat – Memorial Plaque
- 14) (REPLACEMENT) On Murrow Bank, Murrow replacement bench – MURROW on slat

Cllr Fryett felt sure site 12 (that was in dispute) had a bench there years ago and hoped a solution could be found to have a new one put there, Cllr King has been asked to act as arbitrator to approach both parties as well as Highways and seek a solution.

The Chairman was pleased that the project was progressing and hoped a solution could be sought for site 12.

The Clerk advised that the planned budget was £5000 for the project and the projected cost was now almost double in view of this Councillors agreed that the overspend to be funded by adding £5000 from unallocated cash reserves.

There was discussion regarding bins next to each bench and possibly new noticeboards in the Parish but this was a separate project deferred to a future date.

#### **17. PARISH ALLOTMENTS**

For Councillors to discuss the future provision of allotments in the Parish – Deferred item.

The Clerk reported that there was now another person on the waiting list for an allotment.

Cllr Booth mentioned that Parish Councils have powers to buy land to use as allotments. The Chairman asked the clerk to contact land agents in the area and for the Parish Council to be contacted should a suitable sized piece of land become available and to defer discussion until such time.

#### **18. CONCERNS REGARDING THE BELL INN, MURROW**

For Councillors to discuss concerns raised from parishioner regarding The Bell Inn Building and Grounds. Following discussion, it was agreed for the Clerk to write a letter of concern to Elgoods.

#### **19. REVIEW OF CLERKS HOURS – Confidential Item members of the public and press were asked to leave.**

It was unanimously agreed to increase the Clerks hours to 20 hours per week with immediate effect. The Chairman suggested that office hours would be 10:00am – 4:00pm Monday to Thursday and asked Councillors to try and respect these hours unless in an emergency.

#### **20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)**

Cllr Britain mentioned the gate at Guyhirn pond needed some attention but was happy to look at fixing it himself.

Cllr Fryett was concerned that four plots on Mill Road, Murrow had conditions as part of their application to provide a footpath, and this has not been completed and he was concerned that this had been ignored. The Clerk to look at the conditions on the FDC planning portal and advise Cllr Fryett.

#### **21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**This may be subject to change due to capacity restrictions and social distancing**

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 – 7pm – Murrow Village Hall

#### **DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2021/2022**

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 – 7pm – Thorney Toll Village Hall

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – 7pm – The Chequers Public House, Tholomas Drove

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 – 7pm – WSM Community Centre

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 – 7pm – New Community Room, Guyhirn

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 – 7pm – Thorney Toll Village Hall

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – 7pm – Murrow Village Hall

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 – 7pm – The Chequers Public House, Tholomas Drove

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 – 7pm – New Community Room, Guyhirn

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 – 7pm – Murrow Village Hall

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 – 7pm – Parish Assembly/Annual Meeting – WSM Community Centre

Meeting closed at 9:50 pm

Signed: Cllr. D Wheeler, Chairman