

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 8th November 2021 at The New Community Room, Guyhirn Playing Field, Guyhirn

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

FDC Councillors: G Booth & S Bligh

Members of the public: 7

1. OPEN FORUM - Parishioners are invited to address the Council

- The Co-Ordinator of Community Speed Watch reported that speeding in High Road, Guyhirn still remains a serious concern, although there is a noticeable drop in speeding in the other villages. Sessions will only be held in mornings and afternoons due to the loss of daylight hours.
- The Chairman of Murrow Street Pride reported that the War Memorial site in Murrow is currently being worked on by volunteers to make sure it looks its best for Remembrance. Maintenance of the other Murrow planters are on-going. The group are working hard to futureproof the group by interacting with the school and families. Recycling projects with the school children are being progressed.
- A Murrow resident requested some clarification from the September minutes regarding the rented Murrow Pond – Explanations were given to the resident by the Vice-Chairman.
- A member of the public (MOP) discussed his concerns regarding the possible demolition of the Guyhirn Church of St. Mary Magdelene and the possibility of a future development on the land and the adjoining glebe land to the rear – The Vice-Chairman agreed to bring agenda item 17 forward to allow full discussion by Councillors as the MOP had to leave.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Received and accepted from Cllr Wheeler & Cllr Weldon and CCC Councillors S King & S Count.

3. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION - None

4. MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST for items on this agenda

As members of Guyhirn Playing Field Association both Cllr Davies and Cllr Allen declared a pecuniary interest for item 11.4 (a) and as such neither Cllr will discuss the grant application or vote.

Cllr Humphrey declared a personal interest in item 18 (b), he would be discussing the proposal but not be included in any vote.

5. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING dated 11th October 2021. The Council resolved including any amendments to accept as a true record, the minutes of the meeting. These were duly signed by the Vice - Chairman.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (information only)

(a) Letter sent to tenants of Murrow Pond to arrange a site visit – awaiting a response. The clerk reported that a response from all 3 tenants had now been received and agreed. The clerk to liaise with tenants and arrange a suitable date and time for the meeting to take place.

17. CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDELENE, GUYHIRN

To discuss concerns raised by Parishioner about the possible future of the Mary Magdalen Church, Guyhirn. Cllr Britain raised concerns regarding subsidence of the church and the derelict nature of the grounds that often cause Guyhirn residents' problems on the footpath. A petition has been created by a Guyhirn resident to support the church not being demolished and has many signatures on. The clerk agreed to send this off to the diocese of Ely and Church Commissioners of England.

The MOP outlined his desire to retain the church for his own commercial venture to display artifacts that would be of interest to the community.

The Parish Council advised the MOP of their reluctance to support a venture of a commercial nature, however, they assured the MOP that they are all in support for the church to not be demolished and if/when a planning application comes before the Council, they will give their comments accordingly.

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7. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS - Agenda item time limited to 10 minutes

Cllr King gave his apologies and circulated his report, which was read out at the meeting by the Clerk and no further comments were made by Cllrs.

Cllr Booth reported his attendance at O&S where Freedom Leisure, Community cohesion and Planning were all discussed. He drew attention to the planning validation process and how long this was taking along with requesting when the Gypsy & Travellers housing needs assessment was to be completed. Cllr Booth added that the biggest issue surrounding FDC currently is the boundary review but this will be discussed further in the agenda. Cllr Booth also added that Clarion will be at the next O&S meeting where he will raise the empty homes issue in Thorney Toll.

Cllr Bligh had nothing further to add following Cllr Booths report.

Cllr Knight expressed frustration at how long it is taking to get through to FDC on the telephone and asked when normality will resume following COVID?

8. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS

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

8.2. Planning applications for discussion:

(a)	F/YR21/1194/F	Erect 3 dwellings and garages (1 x 3-storey, 5/6 bed and 2 x 2-storey, 4-bed) at Plots 3 And 4 Land North West of Greenacres Gull Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.	Applicant: Mr J Atkins Agent: Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd
(b)	F/YR21/0800/F RECONSULTATION	Erect a commercial unit (E1) with 1 x 1-bed flat above at Land West of The Cod Father High Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire The Parish Council made no further comment, and their original recommendation still stands.	Applicant: Mr J Singh Agent: Swann Edwards Architecture Ltd

8.3. Update regarding Bus Shelter movement at Beckett Hamlet.

Following an on-site meeting between the Parish Council and Queensbridge Homes (QBH), the clerk had received their confirmation that the shelter would be placed outside 'Moatfield' and QBH had emailed requesting confirmation for them to proceed. However, the shelter still appeared too far forward towards the path and the Clerk to email them back with a 5-bay specification for a bus shelter with two asphalt paths to connect the shelter to the footpath. It would also be stated that the current bus shelter must not be demolished until the new one is in place. Cllr Booth requested that the Parish Council make another attempt for contributions from QBH toward traffic calming within the village. Cllr Fryett asked when the roadway into the site would be finished so they could use the correct site access. The clerk reported that as far as she was aware there were still ongoing issues with the drainage before the road could be laid.

9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Electoral Review Initial consultation at

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/cambridgeshire/fenland>

As part of the working group at FDC, Cllr Booth lead the discussion on this item. It was explained that the suggested recommendation was that FDC needs 42 Councillors instead of 39 currently. However, the draft proposals coming forward will split the ward of Parson Drove & Wisbech St. Mary. If the draft proposal is successful, WSM Parish will be joined with Elm Parish combining to make a three-candidate ward. Parson Drove would be added to Gorefield, Tydd & Newton to be a two-candidate ward. Leaving Leverington to lose its village identity and being added to Wisbech town. The reason behind the review is to provide electoral equality so each elector is represented well by their elected member. Cllr Booth reported that he has made a counter proposal which looks at 41 Councillors for FDC which would leave our ward intact and focuses on the main changes in Chatteris where the biggest development and growth have occurred. In theory the flexing from 42 to 41 is possible and could be agreed by the Boundary Commission.

Following discussion, it was broadly expressed that the Parish Council do not wish to change the boundaries of the ward, and would not support the proposed draft.

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(b) E-on – Further Price Increases

The Clerk reported that the Parish Councils unmetered energy costs will be increasing from 25.40p per kWh to 33.80p per kWh from 1st December 2021 - **Noted**

10. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

10.1. Street Lighting

(a) Asset tags update

The Clerk reported that the assets tags had been ordered and should arrive in a week. An interactive map had been created to show all the locations of the streetlights to help and assist with figuring out a new numbering system from 001 – 144. Cllr Knight outlined how the map could adapt to show the ///what3words locations and even add all the assets. With the ability to use street view it would be a good addition to our website.

10.2. Highways

(a) Speed Limit changes to Tholomas Drove as a potential PFHI.

Following discussions to refresh Councillor's memories as to the proposed project, it was agreed to leave this application pending the outcome of the PFHI on Murrow Bank & Sandbank speed limit changes had been submitted from Highways.

(b) Update on PFHI – Murrow Bank & Sandbank – No further progress

(c) Update on MVAS/SID for Murrow – The Clerk reported that the poles should be in by December.

(d) Drainage works on land at Tholomas Drove – update

Following an on-site meeting between the Parish Council and Highways it was agreed that the projects team at CCC would design a scheme with soakaway crates and refilling the bowl in the land back up to level ground. This would continue to allow the drainage to be successful for the resident affected by flooding but also allow the Parish Council to maintain the land with grass cutting equipment.

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

Cllr Davies reported that complaints had been received that following the resurfacing of High Road in Guyhirn that some of the service covers and gullies are still not secure in places and make noise and vibrate when vehicles go by.

A Tholomas Drove resident asked for salt refill for the grit bins in the hamlet – Clerk to enquire with Highways.

11. FINANCE MATTERS

11.1. To receive the Finance & Budget Report for 2021/22 to date - The Clerk drew attention to the income received of £2660.00 from Anglian Water for the works they agreed to contribute to at WSM Pond together with allotment payments being received. The bank reconciliation of 2nd November 2021 balanced at £142,816.85

11.2. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk October Salary	£860.83	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£155.46	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (October)	£88.69	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions - October (Direct Debit)	£43.13	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	E-on Lighting Energy October	£457.56	Parish Councils Act 1957	Agreed
(f)	K. Clarke Noticeboard Maintenance	£153.00	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(g)	K. Clarke War Memorials Painting	£425.00	War Memorials Act 1923 S1	Agreed
(h)	Murrow Village Hall – First Aid Event	£20.00	LG Act 1972 S134	Agreed
(i)	Tamar IT Ltd – Emails & New website Domain	£105.60	LG Act 1972 S142	Agreed
(j)	Viking Direct - Clerk Stationery	£211.30	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(k)	Royal British Legion x 3 wreaths	£60.00	LG Act 1972 S137	Agreed
(l)	DAB Graphics – 50% Deposit for A1 Pond Board	£600.00	LG Act 1972 S144	Agreed
(m)	Waverley Nurseries – Winter Pansies	£360.00	LG Misc Prov Act 1976 S19	Agreed

11.3. For Councillors to approve Direct Debit payment for Microsoft 365 and 1TB of OneDrive at a monthly cost of £9.43 (exc VAT) - **Agreed**

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11.4. Grant Applications

(a) Guyhirn Playing Field Assoc | £2500 - Grass Cutting, Maintenance & Insurance LG Misc Prov 1976 S19
The grant was **approved** unanimously. Proposed by Cllr Fryett and seconded by Cllr Booth.

12. PARISH PROPERTY

12.1. Maintenance

(a) Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign – Maintenance Contract Renewal 2021 – 2022.

Councillors agreed to renew the current SILVER level maintenance agreement.

Cllr Fryett raised his concerns regarding the railings at the Murrow War Memorial, and feels they should be looked at with a view to being repaired. Cllr Fryett volunteered to obtain quotes.

Cllr Britain raised awareness via the Memorial maintenance contractor that the stone base of the memorials are becoming very hard to get clean by only using a gentle jet wash – Clerk to follow up.

12.2. Bus Shelters

Cllr Knight thanked FDC for cleaning the graffiti from a WSM bus shelter on request.

12.3. Planters

Cllr Britain queried that the winter pansies have not been planted in the two planters on the Gull, as these are maintained by a volunteer, the Clerk will enquire when the plants will likely be planted as there were concerns regarding them becoming pot bound.

12.4. Defibrillators

Cllr Knight raised concerns regarding the current state of repair of the cabinets and surmised that the time has come for the Parish Council to fund new polycarbonate cabinets for the five locations – clerk to defer to next agenda.

(a) For Councillors to give any feedback from the First Aid Training Event held on 21st October 2021.

Cllr Fryett thanked the clerk for an evening very well organised and attended. Thanks also went to the Community First Responders (CFR), Paramedics and Ambulance staff that attended and gave overviews into their roles. The Clerk to raise the question with the CFR whether it could be held again next year.

13. LAND AT SILT PIT LANE JUNCTION

For Councillors to receive progress report.

Cllr Fryett asked whether this could be put forward as a community support project with Galliford Try – The Clerk to follow up.

14. ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENTS

For Councillors to receive update on progress and issues surrounding tenancy land not technically being allotments.

The Clerk requested an extension of time on this item until December, as there are many issues surrounding reclassifying our land. This was agreed and deferred until next month.

Cllr Booth wanted to clarify which Councillors will be attending the site visit with the tenants of Murrow Pond and if this could be arranged quickly. It was agreed that Cllr Humphrey and Scrimshaw would attend along with the clerk with a proposed date of November 18th 2021.

Councillors continued to discuss the Murrow Pond and how this would go forward as their main desire was for Murrow to have a community area where people can sit however, whilst this piece of land is under tenancy this is not possible. There were other points raised that it should remain in the hands of the tenants as they have maintained it on behalf of the Parish Council for 30+ years. It was agreed for the attendees to bring their report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

15. POLICE MATTERS

For Councillors to note report following Police Forum on 22nd October 2021.

The Clerk attended the Police Teams meeting and asked on behalf of the Parish Council for Murrow School to receive a visit from Officers regarding School parents and their parking.

Cllr Knight brought up concerns raised by many residents of WSM and the surrounding area regarding the chaos on the High Road as a direct result of the parking/traffic for the WSM Fireworks Extravaganza and felt

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that it needs a Police presence in future to maintain traffic moving freely through the village especially for emergency services. Cllrs requested that a letter goes to the school and asks whether they have a traffic management plan and that the Parish Council is happy to work with them to come up with possible solutions for the future. – Clerk to follow up.

16. PARISH BENCH PROJECT

Completion of project including Site 12

The Clerk reported that the final step was site 12 which is now located to the front of 60 Front Road, Murrow; permission was granted by the residence and the concrete base has been laid, the bench was due for installation today, which completed the project.

The benches that have been removed will be delivered to the Chairman and they will be distributed fairly.

18. QUEENS GREEN CANOPY

a) Proposal from Cllr Knight regarding planting a tree in each village, with a tree guard and plaque.

The proposal was explained that five trees (field maple) with tree guard and plaque, would be situated in WSM, Murrow, Guyhirn, Tholomas Drove and Thorney Toll to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee. It would ideally involve the schools to help plant the trees along with the respective Councillors for each village/hamlet. The trees had been donated by the Environment Agency and quotes had been obtained for the tree guards and plaques. The tree guards would be £60 each and the plaques would be £33.35 each, both exclude VAT and any carriage.

The proposal was **supported** unanimously and Councillors **resolved** that the guards and plaques be ordered.

b) Proposal from Cllr Humphrey regarding utilising his own land to plant 200+ trees in WSM

The proposal was explained for all the school children at WSM Academy (209 pupils) to plant a tree provided by the Woodland Trust onto a piece of land owned by Cllr Humphrey under the umbrella of the Queens Green Canopy. The land would still be owned by Cllr Humphrey and it was suggested that the Parish Council be granted a 99-year lease at a peppercorn rent to ensure the longevity of the copse in future years. However, the Parish Council would be responsible for the maintenance of the trees, which would be mixed woodland varieties and create a nature area where the school children could visit. The proposal was agreed in principle by the Parish Council with the clerk to look into the legalities surrounding it. It was suggested that a working group be formed as the project moves forward.

19. CODE OF CONDUCT

For Councillors to agree to the revised code of conduct issued by FDC. – **Agreed & Noted**

20. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To consider any items for a future meeting agenda

- WSM School Fireworks - Issues
- Tholomas Drove Village Sign

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13th December 2021 – 7pm – Thorney Toll Village Hall

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DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2021/2022

Monday 10th January 2022 – 7pm – Murrow Village Hall

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

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

Meeting closed at 9.00 pm

.....Date:.....

Chairman

Cllr David Wheeler