

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 10th October 2022 at Guyhirn Community Room on the Playing Field, Guyhirn.

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

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

Members of the public: 1

Prior to the Open Forum the Chairman commenced a one-minute silence by the Council in recognition of the passing of our beloved Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022.

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

- The Chairman of Murrow Street Pride expressed thanks for the refurbishments at Murrow War Memorial as well as the addition of the flagpole.
- A Murrow resident informed the Council that a community engagement event had been held in Murrow where FDC Community Safety Officers and two Police Officers were in attendance; the only major issue raised was speeding.
- The Co-Ordinator for the Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward Community Speedwatch (CSW) reported that data was now being downloaded from the MVAS in Murrow and was being sent to the Police. The group are also utilising Parson Drove's MVAS due to the poles not yet being in place within their village.
- The CSW group will also be arranging instructions and training for the MVAS to future proof its use.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Received and accepted from Cllrs Allen & Scrimshaw

3. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION - None Received

4. MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST for items on this agenda.

Item 13 – Cllr Fryett declared a personal interest, due to being an acquaintance of all the companies quoting for the extension to Guyhirn Playground Car Parking area.

5. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING dated 8th August 2022. The Council resolved including any amendments to accept as a true record, the minutes of the meeting. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

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

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

Cllr King circulated his report prior to the meeting and was happy to answer any questions relating to it.

Cllr Count reported

- CCC Staffing issues in Children's Services and Highways
- LHI Scheme has been reviewed, to which he doesn't agree with, and will be approaching officers to try and make further changes.
- Budget concerns surrounding disparities in wages.
- Frustrations with the bus service cuts and that CCC won't be offering to match fund the lost services with the Combined Authority due to that motion being voted down.

Cllr Booth reported his attendance at FDC Full Council on the 3rd October where he raised issues with FDC streetlighting contractors and drops in recycling rates. He also reported the possibility of increased costs to Parish Councils associated with new legislation surrounding the need for ID when voting and obligations to provide private booths at polling stations.

Cllr Bligh also reported her attendance at FDC Full Council where she thanked the portfolio holder for Parks & Open Spaces for the officer's time and assistance to provide the new Guyhirn Playground. She reported that a competition will be undertaken at Guyhirn School to name the car piece of equipment, and the winner will get to officially open the playground on Monday 31st October 2022.

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Cllr Booth & Bligh both raised questions at FDC regarding the empty homes in Thorney Toll. Cllr Bligh asked the portfolio holder for Housing to support an investigation into why so many properties were now vacant. The latest figure being seven empty homes.

Cllr Booth reported a response from Clarion to his previous raised concerns and that Clarion had given assurances they are not forcing any existing tenants out of their homes. Cllr Booth also reported that Clarion will be attending the December meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting at FDC to answer questions.

Cllr Weldon – a Thorney Toll resident, reported that Clarion had been on site asking residents whether they felt concerned about ASB, and had acknowledged their intentions to sell the empty properties, but were having to wait for a response from FDC.

Cllr Booth explained that when the housing association was set up, agreements were made that permission had to be sought from FDC before Clarion could sell any social housing.

8. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS

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

8.2. To note planning applications from September (**Cancelled Meeting**) - **Noted**

(a)	F/YR22/0871/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 PENDING CONSIDERATION
(b)	F/YR22/0918/F	Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving the demolition of existing extension at 4 Follies Drove Guyhirn Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4EL GRANTED
(c)	F/YR22/0901/O	Erect 1 x dwelling involving the demolition of existing building (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land South East of The Chimneys Gull Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire PENDING CONSIDERATION
(d)	F/YR22/0949/F	Erect a single-storey front, rear and side extension and detached carport to front of existing dwelling at Pambeth Church Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire PE13 4RN PENDING CONSIDERATION
(e)	F/YR22/1014/F	Change of use of equestrian land (and stables) to Builders Yard (B2) with office, including erection of aggregate bays, 2.4m high fence and sliding gates, the formation of a Swale, and extend existing access (part retrospective) at Land South and West of Beats Lodge Hooks Drove Murrow Cambridgeshire PENDING CONSIDERATION
(f)	F/YR22/1016/F	Erect part 2-storey part first-floor (to enable loft conversion) rear extension and single-storey side extension to existing dwelling at 22 Chapel Avenue Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire PE13 4RD PENDING CONSIDERATION

8.3. Planning applications for discussion:

(a)	F/YR22/1029/F	Change of use of land for the stationing 1 x mobile home residential purposes and 1 x touring caravan, and the erection of an ancillary dayroom (part retrospective) at Land North of The Spinney Galls Drove Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on the lack of an up-to-date Gypsy/Travellers Housing needs assessment which determines whether plots are needed and the fact that this is within Flood Zone 3.
(b)	F/YR22/1031/F	Erect single-storey rear and side extensions to existing dwelling, involving partial demolition of rear and side extensions and relocation of access at Gatehouse 75 Murrow Lane Murrow Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4JH The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(c)	F/YR22/1085/O	Erect up to 2no dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land East of The Bell 8 Murrow Bank Accessed from Front Road Murrow Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on concerns regarding the access being too close to the corner and the visibility splays, over development of the plot and the loss of a public amenity to the village of Murrow as the land is used as a bowls green.

Planning applications discussed not on the agenda:

(d)	F/YR22/1052/F	Conversion of existing outbuilding to a self-contained annexe (2-storey, 3-bed) at The Poplars Bevis Lane Wisbech St Mary Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4RR The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
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9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) FDC – Draft Fenland Local Plan Public Consultation, open until 19th October 2022

Cllr Booth reported on the item as he is a member of the working group at FDC.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the consultation response should list the villages individually with recommendations to each site that has been put forward by the LPA as suitable for future development. Also noting the Parish Councils support for development boundaries over a criteria approach as well as reporting known issues with viability, parking spaces, flood zones, infrastructure and traveller plot assessments.

Other points included correctly placing villages in the settlement hierarchy and including Thorney Toll, which hadn't been included in the draft. – The Clerk to respond to the consultation

(b) Memorial Plaque request for Georges Field, Tholomas Drove

Following discussion, the Clerk was asked to respond to the request with the Parish Councils support for a plaque but permission would need to be granted by the Tholomas Drove residents' association as they lease the field and recommend contacting them to move the request forward.

(c) CCC – Draft Transport Strategy Consultation, open until 7th November 2022

Cllr Count advised a response that included the following points:

- With regards to the area of Fenland, cars are a necessity due to cuts in public transport.
- Murrow mentioned as the least accessible area of Fenland
- Concentrate on the list of action points that specifically affect this area
- To be investigated isn't good enough, when is it going to be investigated, when and how?
- Wisbech Access Study only funded as far as design and land purchase.
- Traffic Calming between Gull Road, Guyhirn – Murrow Bank, Murrow – Parson Drove is vital to the area.
- Feeder buses to the X1 at Guyhirn from Murrow & Parson Drove would make the Parish more accessible.
- Updates required for Wisbech Rail and the dualling of the A47
- The possibility of a new bridge that enables better connectivity from the parish into Wisbech avoiding congestion at North Brink.
- Opening up cycle routes between Wisbech and Wisbech St Mary.

(d) FDC – Polling Places Review Consultation, open until 11th November 2022

Following discussion, the polling places recommended by the Parish Council were:

- Wisbech St Mary - Wisbech St Mary Community Centre
- Murrow - Murrow Village Hall
- Guyhirn - The New Guyhirn Community Room on the Playing Field
- Thorney Toll - Thorney Toll Village Hall

10. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

10.1. Street Lighting

The Clerk reported that she had met an engineer from Electrical Testing Ltd at the site of the destroyed Streetlight at Selwyn Corner, Guyhirn for confirmation that they could replace as an outreach bracket and not have to install a new column as the insurance company was wanting to close the claim off. This was confirmed positively and installation is still pending along with the two new lights in Guyhirn and Murrow and another replacement in Chapelfield Road, Guyhirn following another vehicle collision.

10.2. Highways

(a) LHI Matters

I. LHI Process Review.

The Chairman reported that following the review the Parish Councils greatest concern regarding fairness alongside other Parish Councils had been completely ignored. The Parish Council will still only receive one bid, but the opportunity has been opened up for one more bid from a community group/organisation.

Cllr Booth suggested putting in Guyhirn as the bid from the Parish Council and re applying the failed 22/23 WSM bid from a community group.

II. LHI 22/23 Complaint – Update.

Following brief discussion it was agreed to move the complaint to Stage Three as per the CCC complaints process by arguing that the original points haven't been answered, specifically on re- reviewing the application and whether the application was predetermined.

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III. LHI Bid 23/24 Arrangements – Guyhirn - **Deferred**

This item was deferred until next Month when the application window should be open.

IV. 20mph LHI Scheme 24/25 – Back Road, Murrow – **Deferred**

This item was deferred until sufficient guidance on the scheme becomes available.

Cllr Booth raised concerns on whether CCC are adhering to legislation that refers to speed limits. If more than 20 houses are within 200 yards distance then the speed limit through should be 30mph and recommends that the Parish Council explores this further with CCC. The Chairman recommends working with other Parish Councils on this matter as this will affect them all similarly.

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

Cllr Knight raised a concern regarding road repairs in general. He requested that an article be put into Village Voices pointing residents towards the online reporting mechanism for reporting and complaining about road issues.

Cllr Fryett raised a concern that our current Local Highways Officer is hard to get a response from and can the CCC Councillors try and push her to be more responsive to our requests.

11. FINANCE MATTERS

11.1. To receive the Finance & Budget Report for 2022/23 to date. The bank reconciliation of 30th September 2022 balanced at £148,293.21 which was agreed to and signed off by Cllr Gavin Booth. The Clerk drew attention to the income of £38,537.00 received from Fenland District Council for the second half of the Precept for the financial year 2022/23 and that all the planter sponsorship invoices have now been paid. The Chairman requested that a budget review be added to next month's agenda to look at it in more detail.

11.2. For Councillors to receive the External Audit Report for 2021/22.

The Clerk explained that the External Audit for 21/22 was now complete and has received the certificate, which outlined a perpetual error regarding the Tholomas Drove Wash Pit Fund Charity and as there are six individual trustees (that are Parish Councillors) and not the public body 'The Parish Council' as a sole managing trustee, it should have stated N/A on assertion nine (9) of the Annual Governance Statement and Box 11 of the Accounting Statement. This will be adhered to by the Parish Council in future.

11.3. For Councillors to note proposed Internal Audit Arrangements for 2022/23

The Clerk explained that this will be done similar to the previous year by means of an interim audit until 31st December 2022 and then a follow up audit until 31st March 2023. It will also continue to be completed by virtual means. The Council agreed to this process.

11.4. For Councillors to approve the ordering of wreathes for Remembrance Sunday. Cllr Booth reported that the wreathes have increased to £25 each, so three would be £75 in total. This was agreed to by Council and Cllr Booth to arrange delivery to individual Councillors prior to Remembrance Sunday.

11.5. To note payment of accounts from September (**Meeting Cancelled**)

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk August Salary	£1220.12	LG Act 1972 S112	Approved
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£212.25	LG Act 1972 S112	Approved
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (August)	£83.35	LG Act 1972 S112	Approved
(d)	Nest Pensions – August (Direct Debit)	£76.84	LG Act 1972 S112	Approved
(e)	Npower Lighting August Energy	£479.05	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Approved
(f)	Tamar IT – Microsoft 365 (Direct Debit)	£11.32	LG Act 1972 S111	Approved
(g)	Swarco – Combined Silver Maintenance Cover	£265.32	Highways Act 1980	Approved
(h)	Murrow Village Hall – August Hall Hire	£45.00	LG Act 1972 S134	Approved
(i)	Maynard Memorials – Lettering refurbishment	£866.64	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923 S1	Approved
(j)	Harrison Flagpoles – 3 x 8m Flagpoles	£1903.11	Highways Act 1980 S144	Approved
(k)	PKF Littlejohn LLP – External Audit	£480.00	Accounts & Audit Regulations 1996 S11996/590	Approved
(l)	K Clarke – Guyhirn Village Sign Post	£38.00	LG Act 1972 S111	Approved

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The Council **resolved** to **ratify** the expenditure for the month of August totalling £5681.00. The invoices and schedule of payments that were made were checked and signed off by the Chairman and Cllr Knight.

11.6. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk September Salary	£1220.12	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£212.25	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (September)	£71.60	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions – September (Direct Debit)	£76.84	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	Npower Lighting September Energy	£501.53	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Agreed
(f)	Tamar IT – Microsoft 365 (Direct Debit)	£11.32	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(g)	Paul Tibbs Glazing – Thorney Toll Bus Shelter	£180.00	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed
(h)	K Clarke – Murrow Memorial Finials	£86.00	War Memorials (Local Authorities Powers) Act 1923 S1	Agreed
(i)	K Clarke – Guyhirn Pond Gate	£388.00	Public Health Act 1875 S164	Agreed
(j)	Scribe – Annual Subscription	£561.60	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed

11.7. For Councillors to ratify payments made by the Chairman and Clerk using their powers as outlined in the Financial Regulations under **Budgetary Control and authority to spend (4.1)** arranged for the following invoices to be paid due to time constraints:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	South Coast Flagpoles – 6 Flags	£565.00	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed

The Council **resolved** to **authorise** the expenditure for the month of September and **ratified** the payments already made totalling £3874.26. The invoices and schedule of payments to be made were checked and signed off by the Chairman and Cllr Knight.

11.8. Grant Applications - **Nil**

12. PARISH PROPERTY

(a) For Councillors to consider quotes for lifebuoys at Guyhirn and WSM Ponds.

Following discussion and consideration of three quotes, Councillors approved the purchasing of 2 Lifebuoy cabinets, with sub surface mounts and life rings (inc throw line) from Lifebuoys Direct at a cost of £521 (Exc VAT and delivery). Proposed by Cllr Fryett and Seconded by Cllr Humphrey.

Cllr Booth recommended replying to Guyhirn School advising them that following their request for a lifebuoy at Guyhirn Pond could they talk to pupils about the dangers of tampering with lifesaving equipment and ask that they attempt to utilise the pond within their scientific studies by pond dipping.

Cllr Knight recommended that the clerk search for a local company to concrete the lifebuoy housing in place.

(b) The Clerk asked for permission from the Council to purchase a further Hi-Viz for Cllr Blackmore following his Co-Option at a cost of £3.99 (Exc VAT and delivery) – This was approved by Councillors.

(c) The Clerk advised Councillors that she had received a quote for the follow up improvements to Guyhirn Memorial after the agenda was circulated and due to the closeness of remembrance felt it needed to be considered. Councillors considered two options:

- **Option 1 – £280.00 (Exc VAT)**
Replace Missing Lead Letters & Oxidise.
- **Option 2 - £978.00 (Exc VAT)**
Replace & Paint All Missing Lead Letters & Hand Paint 652 Flush Lead Letters.

Councillors agreed to Option 1. Proposed by Cllr Weldon and Seconded by Cllr Booth.

Cllr Britain expressed concern that the Church land surrounding the Guyhirn memorial needed to receive some attention prior to remembrance as it was overgrowing inside the memorial railings – Clerk to contact The Diocese.

12.1. Maintenance

(a) For Councillors to note Swarco Maintenance Policy – Combined for Guyhirn & Murrow at a Silver level. This was **noted** by Councillors. The Chairman brought forward for discussion the MVAS for WSM which is conditioned as part of the planning application at Trafford Farm. He reported that the Parish Council had

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been offered £2110.00 as the contribution from Richard Knight Homes Ltd and could Councillors give approval for the MVAS/SID to be purchased at an approximate cost of £3000.00, with the Parish Council paying the difference. This was approved by Councillors and the Clerk will follow up with the Chairman once the exact cost is known.

(b) For Councillors to consider quote from ADC for complete dredging of Guyhirn Pond and funding options. The Quote received from ADC for the complete dredging of Guyhirn Pond was £14,250.00 (Exc VAT). The Clerk explained that there is a possible funding stream from Anglian Water for Flourishing Environments that could grant a maximum of £10,000. Councillors agreed to the Clerk applying for this funding and if successful would look at jigsaw funding from other avenues for the rest of the cost. – Clerk to follow up.

12.2. Bus Shelters

(a) WSM High Road – Queensbridge Homes Bus Shelter – Possible CCC enforcement action.

Cllr Booth recommended advising CCC that the Parish Council have no preference over its current placement, the only concern expressed was that its positioning was compliant with the visibility splays for the current 40mph speed limit, as the Parish Council will be the owner of the asset once the development was finished. This was agreed to by Councillors.

(b) For Councillors to note damage to Thorney Toll Bus Shelter and actions taken.

The Chairman expressed concern at the frequency of the Parish Council having to pay for replacement glass panels in the bus shelters and asked Councillors whether they agreed with other options being explored should this happen again, for example using Perspex. This was agreed to by Councillors and the Clerk will liaise with the Chairman on the event of another broken glass panel being reported.

12.3. Planters

Cllr Knight thanked Councillors for planting the Parish planters up with the Winter Pansies, and advised anyone that hadn't yet put them in, to do so as soon as possible as rain was expected.

13. GUYHIRN CAR PARK EXTENSION

For Councillors to receive a report from the working group.

Cllr Fryett reported that the working group met on site to draw a plan up of what was required, and has so far spoken to three different contractors to quote for the work.

The Clerk reported that she has received two quotes so far:

- JD Plant - £13,455 (Exc VAT)
- Warden & Son Ltd - £11,950 (Exc VAT)

Cllr Fryett expressed concern that opening up the car park to the extent of an extra (approximately) 22m x 14m would require a height restriction barrier where the current gate is situated.

- JD Plant had quoted an additional cost of £2,750 (Exc VAT) for the barrier.

Cllr Booth expressed concern that a third quote was needed before a decision could be made due to the size of the purchase.

Cllr Fryett agreed to try and obtain additional quotes and would also give Warden & Son Ltd the opportunity to further quote on the height restriction barrier.

The Chairman recommended that this is deferred until November's meeting and if no further quotes can be obtained a decision must be made. Councillors agreed to this recommendation.

14. LAND AT SILT PIT LANE JUNCTION

(a) For Councillors to note that £500 has been received from Galliford Try for reimbursement of the invoice paid to have the fallen tree cut up and removed. - **Noted**

(b) For Councillors to discuss options for progression.

The Chairman recommended adding this piece of land to the maintenance contract for it to be kept tidy until further notice. Councillors agreed to this recommendation – Clerk to advise Maintenance Contractor.

15. REVIEW & ADOPTION OF POLICIES

(a) Co-Option Policy – Agreed and adoption proposed by Cllr Booth and Seconded by Cllr Weldon.

(b) Investment Policy

Cllr Booth expressed concern that Section 8 - Governance and Risk; should change from "the Parish Council will give due regard to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme" to "the Parish Council will adhere to

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the Financial Services Compensation Scheme". This was agreed to by Councillors. The Policy with this amendment was proposed by Cllr Booth and Seconded by Cllr Humphrey.

16. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Following the review and successful adoption of the Investment policy, Councillors are asked to consider (a) CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) as a source of investment.

Following discussion, the Council agreed to using a CCLA PSDF to invest reserves to make prudent use of these funds.

(b) Giving delegated authority to the Clerk to move funds from the PSDF back to the Barclays Current Account to ensure liquidity. This was approved by the Council unanimously.

(c) Amount to be deposited into the PSDF. The Parish Council adhering to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme agreed to invest a maximum of £85,000.

17. MIDDLE PIT & THOLOMAS DROVE WASH PIT FUND

(a) To consider investing the funds into a CCLA Charity Account.

Following on from the previous discussion, and as the amount held by the charity was under £85,000, the Parish Council agreed to invest all the funds of £82,923 into a CCLA Charity Account. This was proposed by Cllr Blackmore and Seconded by Cllr Booth.

18. POLICE MATTERS

For Councillors to note report following Police Forum.

The Clerk circulated the most up to date crime data statistics from August 2022, which showed that the most crime reported that month occurred in Guyhirn.

19. A1 INFORMATION BOARDS PROJECT

For Councillors to receive any updates.

The Clerk reported that three of the boards are made and ready, however to have these delivered on their own would incur extra delivery costs to what was quoted initially for all six. To have these three delivered would cost an extra £115 (Exc VAT)

Cllr Knight proposed agreeing to the extra cost to get these three delivered and installed, pending the completion of the other outstanding three boards. This was Seconded by Cllr Fryett and unanimously agreed by Councillors.

20. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW

For Councillors to note results of the LGBCE Review of Fenland District Council ward boundaries.

Cllr Booth stated that in his opinion correspondence from so many residents saved the ward from being split, good arguments were put forward from nearly 90 representations and common sense prevailed. The ward now includes Gorefield and has increased to be represented by three Councillors.

21. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To consider any items for a future meeting agenda - Nil

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 14th November 2022	7:00pm	The Chequers Public House – Tholomas Drove
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DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2022/23

Monday 12th December 2022	7:00pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
Monday 9th January 2023	7:00pm	Murrow Village Hall
Monday 13th February 2023	7:00pm	New Community Room – Guyhirn
Monday 13th March 2023	7:00pm	The Chequers Public House – Tholomas Drove
Monday 3rd April 2023	7:00pm	Murrow Village Hall
Monday 8th May 2023	7:00pm	WSM Community Centre – Sidings Room

Meeting closed at 9:45 pm

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

Chairman

Cllr David Wheeler