

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 17th April 2023 at Guyhirn Community Room on the Playing Field, Guyhirn.

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

FDC Councillors: S Bligh & G Booth

Members of the public: 4

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

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Received and accepted from CCC Cllr S King.

3. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION - Nil

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

Item 8.2.(c) – Cllr Booth declared that he had been lobbied by the applicant but is not pre-determined and would approach the application with an open mind.

5. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING dated 13th March 2023. 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).

The Clerk reported that the RoSPA pond inspections have been booked in.

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

- Cllr King sent his apologies for the meeting and circulated his report via email, which received the following comments:
- Cllr Booth expressed confusion as to why the Sayers Crescent pavement issue in WSM is being passed to development control. Cllr Booth referred to the comments made by the LPA, that the developer complied with the planning conditions to make up the road and pavement 5m from the centre point, however the area of issue is the pavement beyond this 5m which hasn't been made up following the completion of the development; where the utility covers sit and Cllr Booth considers this area to be highways responsibility regardless of whether the Sayers Crescent development has been adopted. Cllr Knight agreed that this pavement is trip hazard and was raised previously; around two years ago and expressed concern for the welfare of pedestrians. Cllr Booth commented that ultimately the duty of care lies with Highways, and remains hopeful towards a reasonable conclusion as his report is still open on the online fault reporting tool.
- Cllr Booth reported that during the election period; due to purdah rules, not many meetings take place and therefore does not have a public report to make, however he remains busy on case work during this time.
- Cllr Bligh agreed that this statement also applies to her too.

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/YR23/0207/F	Erect a single-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling at White Cottage Plash Drove Tholomas Drove Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4SP The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(b)	F/YR23/0224/TE1	Installation of a 17.8 metre high (max height) monopole and antennas and 3 x transmission dishes, involving the removal of existing monopole and antennas at Telecoms Mast North of Bridge House High Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(c)	F/YR23/0230/O	Erect up to 3 x dwellings with garages (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land South East of Tall Trees Station Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL. Councillors noted the current development on the opposite side of Station Road beside Wingfield and the placement of caravans at Volmary. The Council therefore consider this plot to also be within the development boundary of the growth village of Wisbech St Mary and do not consider it an elsewhere location.

--

8.3. Planning Enforcement (ENF/257/19) Land south east of Gore Villas, Mill Road, Murrow relating to a breach of condition 6 of planning permission F/YR18/0190/VOC – Update

The Clerk reported that the case was now being looked at by the head of FDC Planning Services, who advised via email that he is struggling to ascertain who the developer(s) were and states that unless this can be ascertained there is every chance that an enforcement case would fail in the event of an appeal/court action. Cllr Fryett confirmed that there were four different developers involved in this land, and at least one of these developers is aware that the footpath was an outstanding condition.

Cllr Booth expressed frustration that the footpath was conditioned to be put in at the end of the development, this poses a greater problem should any of the building companies cease trading.

The Chairman expressed his frustration that footpaths aren't installed first and believes that in the borough of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk pre-commencement of development conditions are placed upon footpaths.

Following further discussion, the Clerk was asked to write to Fenland District Council and formally complain regarding this case as a Stage One complaint; expressing the Parish Councils concern surrounding the enforcement of footpaths on developments and including a suggestion for a change in policy for the future.

9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED – Nil

10. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

10.1. Street Lighting

(a) For Councillors to consider the quote for a Streetlight Inspection from Electrical Testing Ltd for £2915.00 (Exc VAT)

The Chairman opened the item for discussion by explaining we have a legal requirement to have our streetlights electrically tested every six years and there are sufficient funds held in allocated cash reserves for this. Cllr Allen raised the question that as many of the streetlights are only a few years old; why would this be required? The Chairman explained that the oldest category one replacements were completed in 2017 and to date align all the streetlights so they can be tested every six years it makes sense to do them all now. Cllr Booth raised a question regarding the database that Electrical Testing created and the Clerk advised that she has created her own database which Electrical Testing is more than happy to work from as it held all the required information including the updated numbering system. Based on this information Cllr Britain proposed that the inspection be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Weldon and approved unanimously.

10.2. Highways

(a) For Councillors to note feasibility reports for both LHI Scheme applications

- I. Guyhirn High Road, Speed Calming - **Noted**
- II. WSM High Road, Speed Calming - **Noted**

The Chairman noted that the panel meetings will be held next Wednesday (April 26th 2023) and expressed frustration that they are still happening via video conferencing. The Clerk advised that she is required to submit a 500-word report for both of the applications as a backup in the event of technical problems.

(b) 20mph LHI Scheme – Back Road, Murrow – Update

The Clerk advised that Parson Drove Parish Council have approved the paper survey and she will now get them printed. The Chairman recommended that these are delivered in June. Cllr Booth advised that the closing date for the current round of applications is at the end of April so this survey is for a potential scheme in 2024/2025.

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

- Cllr Fryett raised that Silvers Lane is in poor condition, Cllr Booth confirmed that this is within Parson Drove Parish area and has been discussed at their Parish Council meeting and the dragon patcher was due on site to make repairs.
- Cllr Allen reported two Anglian Water (AW) covers that are loose within their casing along the High Road, Guyhirn. The Clerk to report these on the AW online fault reporting tool.
- Cllr Fryett reported that there were also some in Murrow loose and will email the Clerk exact locations.
- Cllr Scrimshaw reported that there was a substantial pothole on Cants Drove, Murrow.
- Cllr Knight expressed frustration at the state of many of the roads in the area and recommended the Parish Council keep highlighting [via an article in Village Voices] that residents can send in reports directly to CCC.
- The Chairman expressed frustration over the flooding on Barton Road, Cllr Fryett recommended that CCC utilise a grip cutter. The Clerk will pass this information over to the Local Highways Officer.

--

11. FINANCE MATTERS

11.1. To receive the end of year Finance & Budget Report 2022/23

The Clerk circulated the report via the OneDrive. The final bank reconciliation for the financial year balanced, with a closing balance of £55,648.59 with £50,000.00 being held within the CCLA PSDF Investment Account and £5648.59 held in the Barclays Current Account. This was signed off by Cllr Barry Britain.

11.2. To receive the Finance & Budget Report for 2023/24 to date.

The Clerk explained that this could not be completed as the next bank statement wouldn't be available until the May meeting, however she did confirm that income of £66.08 had been received from the CCLA PSDF and the first portion of the Precept of £39,115.00 had also been received.

11.3. Corporate Governance Questionnaire for certification by the Chairman

The questionnaire was certified and signed by the Chairman for forwarding to the Internal Auditor.

11.4. Approval of the 2022/23 Accounts and AGAR as they stand prior to internal audit.

The clerk had circulated the accounts via the OneDrive and explained that she had completed the accounts on both excel and Scribe to make sure they agreed. The agreed figures were duly entered onto the AGAR for submission to the internal auditor. The accounts were unanimously agreed by the Council and signed off by the Chairman.

11.5. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk March Salary	£1356.11	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£275.25	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (March)	£88.17	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions – March (Direct Debit)	£93.78	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	Npower Lighting March Energy	£426.68	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Agreed
(f)	Tamar IT – Microsoft 365 (Direct Debit)	£13.54	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(g)	Mark Fryett Reimbursement – Combination Locks	£83.76	Road Traffic Reg Act 1984 S57 (1) (b)	Agreed
(h)	Rapier Signs – Frankhams Timber Signs x2	£30.00	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976 S19	Agreed
(i)	Brown & Co – Thorney Toll Land Valuation	£307.63	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(j)	The Chequers Public House – March Meeting Room	£40.00	LG Act 1972 S134	Agreed
(k)	CAPALC Affiliation 2023-2024 (Inc DPO Scheme)	£843.72	LG Act 1972 S143	Agreed
(l)	Warden & Son Ltd – Height Barrier Guyhirn	£2070.00	Road Traffic Reg Act 1984 S57 (1) (b)	Agreed
(m)	Warden & Son Ltd – Gate Guyhirn	£930.00	Road Traffic Reg Act 1984 S57 (1) (b)	Agreed
(n)	D J Rowell – Concrete setting of lifebuoys & sign	£216.00	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976 S19	Agreed

11.6. 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)	MCP Solicitors – Thorney Toll Village Hall Title Deed	£850.00	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed

The Council **resolved** to **authorise** the expenditure for the month of March and **ratified** the payments already made totalling £7624.64. The invoices and schedule of payments were checked and signed off by the Chairman and Cllr Knight.

11.7. For Councillors to note internal transfers made to/from the CCLA PSDF Investment Account. - **Noted**

Item	Date	Amount	Subscription (In)	Redemption (Out)
(a)	16 th March 2023	£25,000	✓	
(b)	21 st March 2023	£15,000	✓	
(c)	29 th March 2023	£10,000	✓	

11.8. Grant Applications – **Nil**

--

12. PARISH PROPERTY

12.1. Maintenance

The Chairman raised the question whether the knitted poppies could be removed from the railings around the Guyhirn War Memorial so they could be preserved ready for remembrance 2023. Cllr Allen was unaware who made them or put them there, but will remove them and look after them to ensure their longevity.

Cllr Knight raised the question whether there had been an update regarding the assessment and subsequent quote for the works to the wall at the WSM Churchyard. The Clerk did not have a recent update.

12.2. Bus Shelters – No items of discussion

12.3. Planters

Cllr Knight agreed to get in touch with Waverley Nurseries to discuss the arrangements for the summer bedding plants delivery.

13. INSURANCE RISK ASSESSMENT & RENEWAL

For Councillors to consider Clerks report regarding amendments to policy prior to renewal.

The Clerk recommended increasing the individual items on the policy to include the WSM MVAS (which was due for delivery on Thursday 20th April 2023), the eight information boards, three flagpoles and increasing the sum insured for 'Other Street Furniture' to £10,000 to include adequate cover for railings, fences and lifebuoys. This was agreed to by Councillors, the Clerk to forward this information to Zurich to be included in the renewal.

Cllr Knight raised the question regarding the new Bus Shelter at the WSM Queensbridge Homes Development as to who now owns the asset for insurance purposes. The Clerk advised that it was a direct replacement for the one knocked down, so in theory it's the Parish Councils asset, however she will make contact with Queensbridge Homes and ask for documentation to officially hand the asset over to the Parish Council.

14. GOVERNANCE REVIEW & ADOPTION

(a) Members Code of Conduct

Cllr Booth raised the question whether these were the same as Fenland District Council, and the Clerk confirmed they were apart from the name of the Council change. These were approved and re adopted.

(b) Investment Policy

Cllr Booth suggested that the yield amount be removed from the document so it doesn't have to be updated constantly. With this part removed the policy was approved and adopted.

15. GUYHIRN CAR PARK EXTENSION

For Councillors to receive a report from the working group.

Cllr Fryett reported that the project was almost complete, the only item left is to obtain a quote for the solar light to illuminate the lock to the height barrier. Cllr Fryett surmised that one was also probably needed to illuminate the entry gate, which is likely to get used more often. The gate could be adapted to also hold a light for illumination when using the lock.

The Chairman recommended the Parish Council obtaining them from the internet with an agreed spend limit of £500.00, this was agreed to by the Council.

The Clerk reported that she had written a letter to the farmer that has access over the land to the field at the rear of the playground asking that they move as slowly as possible over the gravel and try to keep the wheels as clean as possible.

16. KING CHARLES III CORONATION

For Councillors to receive any updates regarding commemorative coins and presentation assemblies.

The Clerk issued the coins for the WSM & Murrow assemblies which are due to take place on Monday 24th April 2023. Cllr Allen reported that Guyhirn had had their assembly today (Monday 17th April 2023). Cllr Weldon also attended the Guyhirn presentation and expressed her delight at how well received the coins were and how excited the children were to have the Councillors visit the school.

--

17. POLICE MATTERS

For Councillors to note Police Report & Crime Statistics for the Parish.

The Clerk circulated the Crime Statistics Report from the month of February 2023, the total amount of crime reported in the Parish was 36; with Murrow at 16, having the most reported crime.

18. THORNEY TOLL VILLAGE HALL

For Councillors to receive any updates. – **No further update**

19. CAPALC AFFILIATION

For Councillors to consider future affiliation with CAPALC

The Chairman opened the item for discussion by expressing his concern regarding the availability of help from the Office of CAPALC, and whether the Parish Council should in future pay to be affiliated with them. Cllr Allen expressed a view that their services are unique to Parish Councils and where else would be able to get help from should it be needed. Cllr Booth declared that as a member of the board at CAPALC he could raise the Parish Councils concerns but would need specific examples, he also confirmed that they are in the process of appointing more staff. The Clerk explained that she needed to be able to have a helpdesk that can answer a question over the phone, as this is less time consuming and problems can often be explained better during a conversation than in a lengthy email. The Clerk also requested that the Parish Council remain affiliated until her CiLCA was completed as they provided the mentoring service. The Chairman asked for the item to be deferred until the membership renewal next year.

20. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To consider any items for a future meeting agenda.

- Cllr Fryett requested an update for purchasing iPads – The Clerk advised that she is still waiting for the outcome of a grant application (submitted for this purpose) to the National Lottery at the beginning of March 2023.
- Cllr Weldon requested help from Cllr Booth (as FDC District Councillor) for Clarion to come and do some rubbish clearance work at Thorney Toll.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 15th May 2023 7:00pm Annual Meeting - WSM Community Centre, Sidings Room

DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/2024

Monday 12th June 2023	7:00pm	The Chequers Public House – Tholomas Drove
Monday 10th July 2023	7:00pm	Guyhirn Community Room
Monday 14th August 2023	7:00pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
Monday 11th September 2023	7:00pm	Murrow Village Hall
Monday 9th October 2023	7:00pm	The Chequers Public House – Tholomas Drove
Monday 13th November 2023	7:00pm	Guyhirn Community Room
Monday 11th December 2023	7:00pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
Monday 15th January 2024	7:00pm	Murrow Village Hall
Monday 12th February 2024	7:00pm	Guyhirn Community Room
Monday 11th March 2024	7:00pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
Monday 15th April 2024	7:00pm	Murrow Village Hall
Monday 13th May 2024	7:00pm	WSM Community Centre – Sidings Room

Meeting closed at 8:25pm

.....Date:.....
Chairman