

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 10th July 2023 at The Guyhirn Community Room on the Playing Field, Guyhirn

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

FDC Councillors: M Humphrey, G Booth & D Cutler | CCC Councillor: S King

Members of the public: 2

Also Present: Dan Horn & Tom Walczak – Fenland District Council

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

- Cllr Diane Cutler as the Co-Ordinator for the Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward Community Speedwatch (CSW) reported that the group has begun the process to include the village of Gorefield into the scheme. Gorefield Parish Council have agreed to fund the printing of a leaflet, which will be delivered to Gorefield homes as well as all existing villages and will appeal for residents to train as new volunteers. Roadside sessions continue as normal with all data being sent to Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Areas suffering from high percentage speeding rates are also sent to Fenland Policing Team, who then aim to do their own roadside enforcement.

2. DAN HORN FROM FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL - EXCEPTION SITES & AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Chairman opened the item for discussion by welcoming Dan Horn from Fenland District Council (FDC).

Dan explained that he was attending the meeting to discuss exception sites and affordable housing schemes; what that involves, the role of the Parish Council and to explore feasibility.

Dan introduced Tom Walczak, also from FDC, who was currently aiding him in his role as Assistant Director.

Dan reported that:

- FDC works in partnership with Cambs ACRE
- Homes are provided by a housing association, for rent or shared ownership.
- The size and type of home will be gauged by a housing needs survey.
- The design of the homes will be in keeping with the respective village.
- The homes will always be affordable and exempt from outright market sale.
- Priority allocation will always go to people with a local connection on a cascading scale:
 - i) persons who have been living within the parish for at least 1 year
 - ii) persons who have been working within the parish for at least 1 year
 - iii) persons with a strong family connection to the parish or who have previously been resident in the parish
 - iv) persons with a long-standing link with the parish
 - v) persons living or working in, or who have a long-standing connection with, an adjacent parish
 - vi) persons living elsewhere in the district
- The role of the Parish Council is to lead the process by working with the District Council, Cambs ACRE and housing associations; and to encourage residents to register onto 'Home-Link'
- Normally only affordable housing is permitted on an 'Exception Site' (sometimes a very small number of homes for sale on the open market may be permitted to make the scheme economically viable).
- The Parish Council would help identify potential sites/land for development working with philanthropic land owners and the LPA.
- Land owners could achieve more than agricultural value for their land but not as high as market value, but could be an excellent opportunity to develop land that has previously been considered by the LPA as unsuitable for housing.
- The housing needs survey will seek to gauge opinion on affordable homes development and assess the scale of need from the community, this will be via a questionnaire sent to every household in the parish (and will also be available online).
- The housing needs survey is usually sponsored/funded by a housing association but they cannot influence the results.
- The scheme could be funded via a grant from Homes England working with the housing association.

The Chairman then opened the floor for any questions from Councillors:

Cllr J Humphrey raised the questions:

- 1) What percentage of affordable housing has the parish got currently?
- 2) Would planning officers look favourably on a site that had previously been unsuitable for private development?

Dan was unable to provide the current statistics of the parish but would make sure he provided them to the Clerk as soon as possible.

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Cllr Booth stated that an exception site can slightly depart from planning policy and may be given planning permission that had previously been unsuitable for private development due to the provision of affordable homes.

Cllr Wheeler requested clarification regarding who would fund the scheme?

Dan responded that it would be funded through a combination of the housing association (through financing that they receive) and the grant funding available from Homes England.

Cllr Booth expressed a need for clear wording on the housing needs survey regarding the number of units, as the exception site in Parson Drove experienced problems when their questionnaire asked residents "Would you support a development of up to 10 houses?". The development then subsequently proved to only be viable if 12 houses were provided. Cllr Booth explained that only by using his casting vote as Chairman did this scheme get approved by Parson Drove Parish Council.

The Chairman then requested guidance from Councillors whether to progress the scheme and explore affordable houses across the parish any further and put it to a vote. This was unanimously agreed by Council.

The Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council thanked Dan and Tom for attending the meeting.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Received and accepted from Cllr B Britain and CCC Cllr S Count

4. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION - Nil

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

- Item 9.2(b) Cllr Humphrey declared a non-pecuniary interest as he currently farms the land for development.
- Item 9.2(i) Cllr Humphrey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and will be leaving the room for this item.
- Item 10(a) Cllr Booth declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Co-Ordinator of Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward Community Speedwatch.
- Items 12.3(g) and 13.2 Cllr Knight declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Handyman is his brother.
- Item 14 Cllr Allen declared a non-pecuniary interest as an Officer of Guyhirn Playing Field Association and will take no part in any vote.
- Item 14 Cllr Blackmore declared a non-pecuniary interest as an Officer of Guyhirn Playing Field Association and will take no part in any vote.

6. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING dated 12th June 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.

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

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

- Cllr King reported that the parishes 2023/24 LHI applications for traffic calming outside Guyhirn School and traffic calming/speed limit reduction to the Sandbank end of High Road in WSM had been successful.
- Cllr King circulated his report prior to the meeting and was happy to answer any questions relating to it.
- Cllr Allen noted that works to the overgrown hedging at the Horseshoe at the Gull were to be carried out by CCC Contractors due lack of action (following enforcement letters) by the land owner; and he raised the question on when these works were likely to be completed. Cllr King responded that works could take up to three months to be completed, but he will continue to monitor the situation.
- The Chairman raised the point; regarding Bellamy Bridge, that a meeting should be arranged between all the Parish Councils whose boundaries converge at the junction. The Clerk reported that Gorefield Parish Council had already made contact, and at their last meeting it was suggested that the Chairs of the three Parish Councils lobby the Highways Executive Director – Frank Jordan. Cllr Wheeler expressed frustration that the junction is in desperate need of proper signage as drivers are unaware who has right of way. Cllr J Humphrey kindly volunteered some of his own land close by to the junction, so Councillors and Officers could sit in cars and monitor the junction for a short time, to get a better idea of the problems faced. Cllr Booth confirmed that Parson Drove Parish Council meet on Wednesday (12th July 2023) and their clerk will make contact following that meeting. The Clerk to follow up and work with Cllr King to arrange a meeting.
- The Chairman expressed his gratitude to Cllr King for sending a report and following up the issues raised by the Parish Council.
- Cllr M Humphrey stated that he did not have a specific report and was attending to understand the current issues within the parish and in future will endeavour to attend meetings quarterly.
- Cllr Booth reported that FDC Full Council will meet next week (17th July 2023) and noted an item on the agenda to approve the set up of three new advisory committees for Rural Affairs, Projects & Culture.

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- Cllr Booth gave an update on Sayers Crescent, WSM footpath: Officers at CCC were negotiating with the developer, however following his report that the path was a health and safety hazard and due to the length of time it was taking, works have been commissioned by CCC and have already been started.
- Cllr Booth reported his attendance at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting, where a presentation from Freedom Leisure confirmed that they were getting back on track and FDC members asked for them to make sure they were open to all users. Fenland Police were also in attendance at the meeting to offer a Community Safety Partnership report where Cllr Booth thanked them for organising their own speed enforcement in the area by training more Officers.

9. TO CONSIDER PLANNING MATTERS

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

9.2. Planning applications for discussion:

(a)	F/YR23/0489/F	Erect a single storey front/side extension to existing dwelling at 110 Back Road Murrow Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4LE The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(b)	F/YR23/0512/O	Erect up to 9 x dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) at Land North Of 19 To 29 Chapel Avenue Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(c)	F/YR23/0518/VOC	Variation of condition 07 of planning permission F/YR20/1177/O (Erect up to 2no dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access)) to enable the finished floor levels to be reduced in height at Land South East of Corner Barn Mouth Lane Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(d)	F/YR23/0519/F	Erect 1 x self/custom build dwelling (3-storey 6-bed), and detached garage/1-bed annexe (ancillary to existing dwelling), involving the demolition of existing dwelling, garage and outbuildings (part retrospective) at Alvenor 42 Murrow Bank Murrow Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4HB The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(e)	F/YR23/0529/F	Installation of freestanding ATM (retrospective) at New Toll Service Station North Wisbech Road Thorney Toll Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4AT The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(f)	F/YR23/0530/A	Display non-illuminated signage on external ATM (retrospective) at New Toll Service Station North Wisbech Road Thorney Toll Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4AT The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(g)	F/YR23/0541/F	Erect 5 x dwellings (2-storey 5-bed) involving the formation of a new access at Land North of The Barn High Road Bunkers Hill Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL subject to the following points and conditions: Bunkers Hill has a known speeding problem and based on the fact that there will be at least 20 properties within 200 yards the Council recommended an amendment to the speed limit to 40mph and the provision of an MVAS/SID by the developer. The Council would also like to recommend the provision of a footpath in both directions to allow walking access to the bus stop, which would be required to be installed prior to commencement.
(h)	F/YR22/1133/F APPEAL	Erect 2no dwellings (3-storey, 5-bed) including front boundary wall 1.2m (max) at Land South East of Corner Barn Mouth Lane Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council wished to make representation by reiterating their original comments; that they recommend refusal based on the development being in elsewhere location and not in keeping with the surrounding area.
(i)	F/YR22/0706/O APPEAL	Erect up to 4no dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at Land East of Sandbank Farm House Sandbank Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire The Parish Council decided to make representation by reiterating their original comments. The Council recommend approval of this application as they consider these 4 plots to be within the village boundary and not in the open countryside nor an elsewhere location. They would like to request that the footpath up to and including plot four (4) is a condition on planning permission.

9.3. 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 – Complaint Update

The Clerk reported that the agent (Alexandra Design) was submitting the technical drawings to Highways and that the FDC Head of Planning will check that they have been submitted next week.

10. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) Parson Drove & WSM Ward Community Speedwatch – New Poster

The Clerk reported that the poster had been updated to incorporate the village of Gorefield, the names of the villages and the Parish Councils are to appear in alphabetical order. It will also have some new text to

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outline that each session will only need an hour of each volunteer's time. Cllr Allen supported the new poster as the scheme needs to appeal to find new volunteers. This was approved by the Council.

(b) Thorney Toll Village Hall – Thank You - **Noted**

11. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

11.1. Street Lighting

11.2. Highways

(a) For Councillors to consider response from the Executive Director for Place & Sustainability CCC

The Clerk reported that the letter had been circulated to Councillors via the OneDrive and the Chairman recommended that it was noted.

(b) For Councillors to consider progression of 20mph LHI Scheme for Back Road, Murrow.

Cllr Booth reported that Parson Drove Parish Council agreed to move forward with the scheme following their consideration of the survey results. Cllr King agreed to look into when the next round of applications start, and stated that the criteria for applying was on the CCC website. The Clerk queried how the application was to move forward and would Parson Drove Clerk be helping her with the administration of the application. Cllr Booth to ask Parson Drove Clerk to make contact when the application window was known. Cllr Booth also raised the question to Cllr King whether any progression had been made to put in a footpath on Back Road, as he believed it had been put forward for a funding scheme. Cllr King agreed to investigate and obtain an update.

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

The Clerk ran through all pending issues to make sure Councillors and Cllr King was aware. Cllr King to follow up any outstanding issues.

Item	Issue	Location	Date Reported
1	Over Grown Hedging	Horse Shoe, Gull Road, Guyhirn	09/05/2022
2	30mph Roundel Missing	Opposite Newsagents, Front Road, Murrow	15/11/2022
3	Give Way Markings Missing	Gull Drove Junction with Black Drove, Guyhirn	15/11/2022
4	Bus Stop Markings	Outside WSM Shop, High Road	12/12/2022
5	Verge Encroachment	High Road, WSM	03/03/2022
6	Sunken Dip	Gull Drove, 400 yards from junction with Black Drove	15/11/2022
7	30mph Roundel needs replacing	Junction of Chapel Avenue, WSM	16/01/2023
8	Red Lines Refresh	Bellamy Bridge Junction, WSM	21/07/2022
9	Footpath in poor condition	Church Road, at the junction of Sayers Crescent, WSM	14/02/2023
10	Passing Place Signs Missing	Back Road, Murrow	14/02/2023
11	Road Resurfacing	Western End of Cants Drove, Murrow	14/02/2023
12	Flooding Problem	Barton Road, Wisbech/WSM	14/03/2023
13	Give Way Markings Missing	Mouth Lane Junction with High Road, Guyhirn	14/03/2023
14	Road Surface Breaking Up	Plash Drove Junction with High Road, Tholomas Drove	14/03/2023
15	40mph Roundel & Pole Repair	Murrow War Memorial, Murrow Bank, Murrow	11/04/2023
16	Marker Post Replacement	Top of Station Avenue, Murrow	11/04/2023
17	Large Pothole	O/S Flagg House, Cants Drove, Murrow	18/04/2023
18	Horses Crossing Sign	High Road Opp Rat Row, Bunkers Hill	01/05/2023
19	Broken Road Surface	New Drove, WSM	17/05/2023
20	Large Pothole	Murrow Lane, Murrow	26/05/2023
21	Broken Kerbing	High Road O/S Briar Croft, Guyhirn	26/05/2023
22	Bridge damage	Bellamy Bridge, WSM	30/05/2023
23	Lack of Signage	Junction Murrow Bank/Back Road, Murrow	01/06/2023
24	Overgrown Conifers	Hooks Drove, Murrow	28/06/2023

12. FINANCE MATTERS

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

The bank reconciliation of 30th June 2023 balanced at £101,576.51 which was between the Barclays Current Account of £26,576.51 and £75,000.00 invested with the CCLA PSDF. This was following last month's agreement to increase the investment held in the CCLA PSDF to £75,000. The Clerk drew attention to the income of £4660.00 received from Fenland District Council granted for Concurrent Functions, and

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noted the transfer of £25,000.00 across to the CCLA PSDF. The report was agreed to and signed off by Cllr Charles Allen.

12.2. To receive the Investment Reports for 2023/24 to date.

(a) CCLA PSDF – Current yield and return.

The Clerk reported that the investment had made £662.45 since its inception on 17th March 2023.

(b) CCLA COIF – The Middle Pit & Tholomas Drove Wash Pit Fund Charity – Current yield and return.

The Clerk reported that the investment had made £406.26 since its inception on 16th May 2023.

12.3. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk June Salary	£1355.91	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£275.45	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (June)	£86.21	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions – June (Direct Debit)	£93.78	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	Npower Lighting June Energy	£474.10	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Agreed
(f)	Tamar IT – Microsoft 365 (Direct Debit)	£13.54	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(g)	Mr Stephen Knight – Handyman June Work	£758.27	Open Spaces Act 1906 S9-10	Agreed
(h)	Swarco – Accessories for MVAS/SID	£122.40	Highways Act 1980 S274A	Agreed
(i)	Wisbech Electrical Ltd – Streetlight 136	£479.83	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Agreed
(j)	Graffiti Removal Ltd – Graffiti Wipes	£83.70	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed
(k)	Viking Direct – Office Consumables	£95.35	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(l)	Rawlins – Anti Graffiti Paint 5L	£245.94	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed
(m)	Brewers Decorator Centre – Handyman Materials	£36.70	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed

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

Item	Date	Amount	Subscription (In)	Redemption (Out)
(a)	15 th June 2023	£25,000	✓	
	Current value of shares held	£75,000		

12.5. 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	VAT Element
(a)	Buddson Ltd T/A Lifebuoys Direct – New pole WSM	£104.39	Public Health Act 1936 S234	Agreed

The Council **resolved** to **authorise** the expenditure for the month of June and **ratified** the payments already made totalling £4225.57.

12.6. Grant Applications - **Nil**

13. PARISH PROPERTY

(a) For Councillors to discuss new problems with Wisbech St Mary Pond

The Clerk reported that she had been made aware that fish were dying in the pond, and neighbours reported that it was exuding a potent smell. Concerned that the waste unit that discharges into the pond from Goodfellows Terrace had faltered again, arranged for ADC Drainage Ltd to undertake a new water test. The first test proved positive and highly likely for sewerage but as decaying leaves can also cause a high reading ADC attached a container directly to the outlet to be collected for testing the following day. The sample taken directly from the outlet pipe was found to have high levels of permanganate which suggests unsatisfactory levels of sewerage was entering the pond.

The Charman visited a resident of the terrace to discuss his concerns, and was invited to look at the discharge unit. He was made aware that the owner of the terrace intends to arrange his own water test (as the results of the ADC test were disputed) as the unit was serviced in April. The Chairman recommended that a letter is written to the owner asking for a copy of their report to continue the investigation into the smell and dying fish. The Clerk to follow up.

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(b) For Councillors to discuss damage to 'Little Jetty' footpath in WSM and arrangements made.

The Clerk reported that following the asset inspection an issue had been discovered with the boundary line of a property being developed beside the Little Jetty. The inspection also discovered that the tarmac had been disturbed and broken up due to the development. The Chairman and Clerk met on site with the developer who was shown photographs from the previous asset inspection, which clearly proved the encroachment of the development into the footpath. The developer agreed to remove the fencing and reposition in alignment with the previous boundary and fully repair the tarmac path. Cllr Wheeler reported that this had already been completed.

13.1. Maintenance

Cllr Booth reported that weeds had overgrown across the Little Jetty footpath towards the High Road end and was concerned that it was now a trip hazard. The Clerk to ask Grass Cutting Maintenance Contractor to trim and spray as soon as possible.

The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had met with the Grass Cutting Maintenance Contractor to confirm areas of verge cutting and to explain how the maintenance contract would be changing and going out to tender at the end of this current year. As the bus shelter and seats looked quite dirty following the asset inspection there was a concern that they needed cleaning more often so the main change would be the implementation of a separate cleansing contract. The Chairman concluded that it was a good meeting and the contractor would make contact with the Clerk to inform her when his team was in the area, and what jobs were being undertaken.

13.2. Handyman

(a) For Councillors to consider any potential work orders

The Clerk reported that the Handyman had now been supplied with the anti-graffiti paint for the internal works to three brick bus shelters and these will be done shortly. A canopy had also been purchased for attaching to the Chapel of Ease information board to stop the bird dropping issue, and this will need to be fitted. Other than those jobs, she was continuing to work with the handyman through any issues found during the asset inspection.

13.3. Bus Shelters

13.4. Planters

(a) For Councillors to discuss relocation of Seadyke, Murrow planter

Cllr Scrimshaw reported that he met with Cllrs Fryett, Booth and FDC Cllr Cutler following the last meeting and it was decided to move the planter further into the village onto a small piece of land beside 16 The Pigeons. During the asset inspection it was noted that two of the sleepers were rotten and needed replacing, Cllr Scrimshaw volunteered to obtain these and the Clerk confirmed he can be reimbursed by the Parish Council by supplying a copy of the receipt.

14. GUYHIRN PLAYING FIELD

For Councillors to consider matters arising from Guyhirn Playing Field Committee Meeting

(a) CCC Land Licence for Community Room Car Park

The Clerk reported that in January, a Rural Surveyor from the CCC County Farms Team arrived at a Guyhirn Coffee Morning inquiring why cars attending the Guyhirn Community Room were parking on their land and how long had this been happening for? At the request of the Guyhirn Playing Field Association (GPFA) the Clerk issued a reply stating that there had been a long-standing gentleman's agreement to allow Guyhirn Football Club to utilise this land as a car park and have access over it, but nothing more official than that. In June, a complaint was received by the Clerk that the land was looking untidy and could contact be made with CCC Farms Team asking for it to be cleared.

Following discussions via email CCC agreed to issue a licence to the Parish Council which will officially document the use of the land as parking and on commencement would hire a contractor to clear the site but thereafter as a condition of the licence the Parish Council would be required to maintain the whole field. Cllr Allen confirmed that GPFA agreed with the proposal, but would like the mature trees to remain when the land is cleared.

Cllr Booth raised the question, how long would the licence last for? The Clerk confirmed that she hadn't gone into any more detail with CCC until discussion had been had by the Parish Council but would discuss this as

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part of the negotiations going forward.

The Chairman recommended that a quote be obtained from the Grass Cutting Maintenance Contractor to consider how much the maintaining of the field would cost the Parish Council before any decision was made. This was agreed by Council and the Clerk to follow up.

(b) Purchase of equipment from historic S106 money

Following discussions by GPFA it was agreed to purchase an inclusive picnic table from the same supplier as the playground, and any funds remaining would be used to purchase benches the same as the recycled ones installed by the Parish Council. This would be subject to the successful draw down of the historic S106 money showing on the recently circulated FDC Holding Balances Report. The Clerk to contact FDC.

(c) Emergency Contact Number Sign on new gates for unlocking code.

Following discussions by GPFA it was felt that it was unfair for volunteers to have their personal phone number available so publicly. The Clerk reported that she also felt uneasy about it being her number. The Chairman reported that he had discussed the matter with a member of the emergency services, who confirmed that an ambulance would likely park in the car park and run over to wherever needed. The Council agreed that no further action is required.

15. ASSET INSPECTIONS 2023-2024

For Councillors to receive an update on remedial works

The Clerk reported that Shelter Solutions have agreed to provide a whole new roof for the Murrow Bank Bus Shelter that the powder coating had peeled off from, they will also tend to the wobbly seat whilst on site. The Handyman has cleaned the graffiti from inside the shelter.

The Clerk requested confirmation from Council whether to drill 5-6mm holes into the bottom of the A1 Information Boards, as recommended by Cllr Fryett to stop water damage creeping up the board. Council agreed to this process and the Clerk will put the Handyman in contact with Cllr Fryett to discuss.

The Clerk had asked for a quote from Fiona Davies (Signwriter) to refurbish the Thorney Toll Village Sign but needed confirmation that it can be removed and replaced by the Parish Council as she currently doesn't have any one to help her with the lifting. Councillors agreed to help and decided that Murrow and then Wisbech St Mary Village Signs will also be refurbished once Thorney Toll has been completed.

16. NOTICEBOARDS

For Councillors to receive quotes for new Parish Noticeboards

The Chairman opened the item up for discussion and noted how expensive the quotes were for new noticeboards and recommended that the item be deferred until the budget and precept are considered for 2024-2025. The Clerk explained that the item was included on the agenda due to most villages having issues which were brought up on the respective asset inspections. Issues included the woodwork sticky to touch, doors sticking, locks not working properly and the backboard becoming difficult to place pins into.

The Chairman raised the question whether refurbishing what we currently have could be an option.

Cllr Weldon expressed a desire to replace the backboard with metal sheeting so magnets could be used instead of pins.

Cllr Fryett suggested removing the stickiness from the noticeboards by rubbing down the wood and re varnishing.

Councillors agreed to defer further discussion until the November meeting.

17. MURROW WAR MEMORIAL

For Councillors to discuss new project to update Murrow War Memorial with names of the fallen from WWII. Cllr Booth reported on the item as a resident had requested for the update to the Memorial be looked into, he stated that the names of the fallen could be obtained from the Royal British Legion. The Clerk confirmed that two sides of the obelisk are currently blank, so there was room for the names to be added. Cllr Wheeler recommended that quotes be obtained to take this forward, but the Clerk advised that most engravers charge by the letter, so asking for quotes may have to wait until all the names are confirmed. The Clerk recommended applying to the War Memorials Trust to try and receive a grant. Cllr Booth, Wheeler and the Chairman all preferred to apply to Wrydecroft Windfarm. Cllr Booth recommended applying in the Spring round of funding to be able to obtain all the relevant information and quotes. This was agreed by Councillors.

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18. PAPERLESS PARISH COUNCIL

For Councillors to consider quote and potential way forward for the project.

The Clerk reported that a quote had been obtained from Amax Ltd for 10 iPads, Projector and screen for £3245.20, this would be her preferred supplier as internet searches resulted in higher costs. There was the possibility for virement of £3000 from Community Projects to Capital Expenditure to be able to fund the expenditure as the grant application had proven unsuccessful, this would leave £5000 in the Community Projects budget.

The Clerk reported that she had made contact with Connecting Cambridgeshire for advice regarding Wi-Fi in rural areas, and was subsequently informed that there wasn't currently any funding available to put any more village halls onto a public Wi-Fi network, they would however contact FDC to see whether there was any new funding available. The Clerk reported that there were devices available which would create a Wi-Fi network for all Councillors to connect to utilising 4G/5G if needed.

Cllr Booth agreed that the Parish Council should be moving towards a more digital future but was reluctant to vire from the Community Project budget, and suggested deferment into 2024 financial year.

The Chairman was concerned that deferring the item would cause the project to lose momentum.

Cllr Booth then suggested virement from unallocated cash reserves, with the agreement to replenish the reserves in the next year's budget.

The Clerk reported that training had also been looked into and a company from WSM had given a rough quote at this initial stage of £70 per hour on the proviso that all Councillors are trained together in one sitting.

The Chairman requested a vote from Councillors whether this project continues to move forward and Councillors agreed to purchase the iPads by virement of £3000 from unallocated cash reserves.

19. POLICE MATTERS

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

The Clerk reported that the Police Forum meeting had been cancelled and was now due to take place on Friday 14th July 2023.

The Clerk circulated the Crime Statistics Report from the month of May 2023, the total amount of crime reported in the Parish was 21; with Wisbech St Mary at 8, having the most reported crime.

The Clerk also circulated graphs created from the data collected from the new WSM MVAS Speed Indicating Device which shows that the majority of road users adhere to the speed limits in place.

The Chairman reported that he had spoken to a CCC Highways Design Engineer and requested that any available speed data is forwarded to Highways for their information.

Cllr Wheeler reported an issue with motorbikes in the area and following a conversation with Sergeant David Arnold advised that any concerns are officially reported.

Cllr Booth reported that he learnt from the FDC Overview & Scrutiny meeting that there is also a problem with motorbikes in Leverington which Police are trying to stop; and believed that this may be displacement from current enforcement actions. Also, as part of that meeting Cllr Booth recommended mobile CCTV for rural areas, which he was assured would be looked into.

20. THORNEY TOLL VILLAGE HALL – No further updates

For Councillors to receive any updates.

21. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To consider any items for a future meeting agenda.

Cllr Booth expressed concern regarding the potential closure of the 'Village Voices' magazine, and believes all three Parish Councils should consider funding and recommends communicating with the Parochial Church Council as it currently under their control.

The Clerk reported that she had posted in various locations on social media appealing for new volunteers to come forward.

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The Chairman recommended contacting the current organiser/distributor to obtain information including time currently spent on collating all information, advertising revenue as well as prepress and printing costs, to be able to create a business plan to appeal as a commercial concern.

Cllr Allen reported that he had been approached by Guyhirn residents concerned with the condition of the Chapel of Ease grounds, and asked whether the Parish Council would be able to fund a grant. The Clerk advised that this was a very grey area but awards had been given in the past for maintenance/grass cutting at the WSM Churchyard.

The Chairman asked Councillors opinion on whether the August meeting should be cancelled, following discussion Councillors decided to leave the August meeting in place so not to make the September meeting too long.

Cllr Mann reported that the Georges Field litter bin has not been emptied and is suffering from maggots. The FDC Councillors would report to FDC refuse team.

Cllr Fryett reported that the street name plates previously reported had yet to be repaired/replaced including the junction of Black Drove with Gull Drove, Black Drove with Cants Drove and Cants Drove with Black Drove.

The Chairman ended the meeting by congratulating Parson Drove Parish Council (Via Cllr Booth) on the Lancaster Bomber Memorial event.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 14th August 2023	7:00pm	Thorney Toll Village Hall
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DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/2024

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 9:15pm

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

Chairman

Cllr Mark Knight MBE DL