

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 11th September 2023 at Murrow Village Hall, Murrow Bank, Murrow

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

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

Members of the public: 3

COUNCILLOR DAVID WHEELER

Before the start of the meeting the Chairman said a few words following the sudden death of Councillor David Wheeler on the 30th August 2023.

The Council then stood for a minute's silence.

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 speeding in WSM is still a concern to residents but due to the latest statistics is not a current concern to CSW; the main areas of concern to CSW remain as High Road – Guyhirn, Murrow Bank – Murrow and Main Road – Parson Drove with Gorefield yet to be assessed. A session planned for High Road, Guyhirn will be attended by Darryl Preston – Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Police & Crime Commissioner.
August Statistics
High Road, Guyhirn - 13% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 16% travelling between 31-34mph.
Murrow Bank, Murrow - 17% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 16% travelling between 31-34mph. With one session at the end of August recording 32% of vehicles monitored travelling in excess of 40mph. CSW will aim to raise awareness to the introduction of the new 30mph limit at the War Memorial by holding extra sessions.
Wisbech St Mary - One Session held on High Road and One Session held on Station Road with one vehicle recorded as speeding at both locations and 5% of vehicles monitored were travelling between 31-34mph.
- A resident from WSM came to provide information to the Parish Council regarding the sewage treatment plant connected between Goodfellows Terrace and the WSM Pond. The resident believed that the plant (that has sufficient capacity for coping with the three properties) was working correctly when made aware of the smell issue by the Chairman at the end of June 2023; as it was serviced in April 2023 and regularly maintained since. Following the conversation with the Chairman; the resident agreed that another service would be arranged and an independent water test would be undertaken, the results of which reported that the plant was working effectively and there was no problem with the discharge. The resident has explored the possibility of Goodfellows Terrace being connected to mains sewerage with Anglian Water (AW). Following an assessment by AW another pot would be required as there was insufficient capacity to connect 3 properties to the pots already installed on Church Road. The indicative cost supplied by AW for installation of a new pot would be in the region of £60,000 - £80,000 which the resident stated would need to be agreed to and divided between the owners of all three properties and would take a considerable amount of time to arrange as it a special order. The resident confirmed that copies of conversations between herself and the drainage company as well as with AW had been sent to the Clerk.
- The same resident from WSM requested extra Street Lighting to be installed in the vicinity of Goodfellows Terrace as she believed the area was poorly lit and requested that the grass verge to the front of WSM Pond was maintained more frequently.
- The Chair of Ely Church Uses Committee attended on behalf of the Ely Diocese and the Church Commissioners to aid discussions with item 14 – The possible relocation of Guyhirn War Memorial. Due to the distance travelled the Chairman agreed to move the item up the agenda.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Received and accepted from Cllr B Britain and FDC Cllr M Humphrey

3. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION – None Received

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

- Items 11.4.(i) and 12.2 Cllr Knight declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Handyman is his brother.

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5. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING dated 14th August 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 she had enquired with Npower for their reasons for increasing the unmetered energy supply as requested during August's meeting. The response received stated that this had been the first increase in price since 01/12/2021. The increase had been carefully considered with all factors for an out of contract Unmetered supply and the difference was considered relative to today's market compared to the last change in price almost 2 years ago. As there was no contract agreed, the option has been left with customers to take action on either agreeing a contract, moving supplier, or to continue with price increase. Following discussion Councillors agreed for the Clerk to try and negotiate a contract with Npower and also search elsewhere for energy quotes.

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 Fryett expressed frustration that the marker posts from Station Avenue, Murrow were still in his possession awaiting collection and the overgrown tree issue on Hooks Drove seemed to be no further forward.
- Cllr Fryett raised the question of when the new LHO will be in place and when there would be an opportunity to meet up with him?
- Cllr King responded that the new LHO is in place now and will be the point of contact for any new issues, but any pre-existing highways issues are being dealt with by the previous LHO as agreed by the Line Manager for a smoother transition.
- Cllr King recommended a virtual meeting with the new LHO to allow introductions to take place and to develop a mutually beneficial working relationship as he will be covering all the parishes to the North of Wisbech.
- Cllr King apologised for the lateness of his report as he was trying to obtain a timescale for the collection of the marker posts and what the current situation was with the Hooks Drove conifers, neither of which received a response from the previous LHO in time for the meeting, but he will continue to seek a conclusion.
- The Chairman summarised the point by recommending that Cllr King contacts the Line Manager to complain that many of the pre-existing issues go back months and a swift conclusion to these is needed before the LHO gets overwhelmed by issues in her new area. Cllr King to follow up.
- Cllr Fryett expressed frustration regarding the explanation offered from the Street Works Inspector at CCC for the recent simultaneous road closures on Barton Road and Sutton Road A1101, which stated that Flittermere Developments were getting desperate. Cllr Fryett stated that the Parish Council often gets desperate for action but still has to fight for problems to get solved. Cllr King apologised that this was an unfortunate situation where a concurrent closure occurred.
- Cllr J Humphrey expressed frustration that road damage to Rummors Lane, WSM has yet to be marked up for repair and is concerned that the road is no longer fit for use. Cllr Fryett recommended that it cannot be solved by the Dragon Patcher and needs complete repair. Cllr King apologised that this issue had been missed and will put the road forward for a retread scheme. Cllr King also stated that one of the Dragon Patchers can repair larger holes and in the short term could help restore the road to be used.
- Cllr J Humphrey also expressed frustration regarding the policy to not spray roadside weeds, which in his opinion is extremely short sighted and will cause lasting damage.
- Cllr King responded that included in his report were details of how individual Councillors or the Parish Council collectively could affect change; by emailing individual Officers and Members at CCC as well as signing the online petition to reverse the policy.
- The Clerk confirmed that a letter had been written on behalf of the Parish Council regarding the weed spraying policy addressed to CCC Chief Executive - Stephen Moir.
- Cllr Booth responded that the Parish Councils have received a letter from Frank Jordan the Executive Director for Place & Sustainability at CCC explaining that the Council acknowledges that engagement with its partners at District and Parish Council was inadequate, and in his opinion shows that changes are likely to be forthcoming.
- Cllr Booth expressed disappointment that the Highways Annual Open Day held at the March depot seems to have ceased post COVID, and in his opinion this was a good way to meet the team of Local Highways Officers and helped forge productive relationships. Cllr Booth recommended that this is reinstated and contact telephone numbers for LHOs are made easily available to the Parish Council. Cllr Booth also welcomed the idea of a virtual meeting to be introduced to the new LHO. The Chairman requested that Cllr King arranges the meeting as soon as possible.
- The Chairman expressed disappointment that the enforcement of the verge encroachment opposite WSM Shop on the High Road was no further forward and the report didn't really address how this matter was going to be progressed. Cllr King reported that he will continue to pursue this matter with the Assistant Director of Highways

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Maintenance.

- Cllr King reported a further item that had not been mentioned in his written report; regarding a footpath on Back Road, Murrow. Following discussions with Highways Officers; it was recommended that the Parish Council put forward an LHI bid for this; to be able to obtain a feasibility study (and not to actually install the path) but to see what would be required, which might help it to attract funding. Cllr King recommended that the Parish Council consider this next month when discussions are held to determine the LHI Application for 24/25.
- Cllr Booth reported that the next FDC Full Council meeting is not until October and the only meeting he had recently attended was as a substitute on Planning Committee held on Wednesday 23rd August 2023, where the application for a Builders Yard on Hooks Drove had been decided. Cllr Booth stated that Planning Officers had recommended that the application was deferred as they were waiting for some further information from CCC; however, Councillors decided to go against that recommendation and also voted in favour of the application. Cllr Booth raised the question whether the Parish Council wished to write a letter of complaint to FDC regarding this matter? At this point Cllr Fryett declared an interest and the matter of writing a letter of complaint was dismissed by Councillors.
- Cllr Cutler reported that she had been trying to get some overgrown areas cut back and was pleased to report that any land belonging to FDC was cut back within a few days of reporting it; unfortunately, the Greenwich Meridian Foot Paths that run through Murrow (which are the responsibility of CCC) were proving harder to solve. The Rights of Way Officer at CCC had stated that the foot paths had received the two scheduled cuts for the year and was unable to provide any more and suggested that the Parish Council undertake further needed cuts. Cllr Cutler asked the residents concerned by this matter to complete the CCC online reporting tool and this action seems to have worked, as she has been updated that the overgrown footpaths will now be investigated.

14. GUYHIRN WAR MEMORIAL

For Councillors to discuss the possible relocation of the Guyhirn War Memorial.

For full discussion the Chairman allowed two Members of the public gallery to speak on this item

Mr Richard Gilbert – Church Warden for Guyhirn & Wisbech St Mary Churches.

Mr John Thackray - Chair Ely Church Uses Committee.

The Chairman opened the item up for discussion.

Mr Thackray introduced himself and stated that he attended to see whether he could help with the process of moving the War Memorial, which had been alluded to by Councillors at the public consultation meeting (held in January 2023) for discussing the potential demolition of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Guyhirn. Whilst there were no further updates regarding the future of the church, he recommended the possible relocation to the Chapel of Ease.

The Chairman stated that this was a subject that had been debated before and whilst Councillors agree to the principle of moving the War Memorial, the bigger issue remains regarding where the funding will be obtained from to do this. In his opinion the proceeds from the sale of the church, whether bought for redevelopment or demolition, should fund the relocating.

Mr Thackray expressed concern that the War Memorial would be positioned in a poor place should the land the church currently rests on is redeveloped. There were also concerns raised regarding who actually owns the land that the War Memorial sits on. Mr Thackray stated that there was no pressure being exerted by the Diocese or the Church Commissioners to move it, but this concern was more to do with ensuring its safety into the future.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council does not receive CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) nor was it likely to receive any substantial S106 money in the future, so the only way to fund the movement of the War Memorial was through the Parish Council or the Diocese.

The Chairman requested that a site meeting involving the Guyhirn Councillors, Mr Thackray and Mr Gilbert be held to establish the best location for the War Memorial in the event that it was to be relocated.

Cllr Allen expressed the desire to hold the meeting in the near future, as the area surrounding the War Memorial looks untidy, which is a bad reflection on the War Memorial. The Clerk to follow up with Mr Thackray and arrange a meeting.

Cllr Allen requested clarification from Mr Gilbert whether there was any sufficient room towards the front of the Chapel of Ease [so it can be seen from the road] to place the War Memorial. Mr Gilbert confirmed that due to graves and the large tree there was not enough room at the front. In his opinion the best place for the War Memorial would be to the rear of the chapel on the vacant land.

The Clerk raised the question to Mr Gilbert on whether he knew if a War Memorial had to be visible from the road, to which Mr Gilbert didn't believe that was the case.

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Cllr Booth stated that a Parish Council has the right to make the decision on the best location possible, using the WSM Memorial as an example; which was inside the church, and therefore not visible from the road. The Chairman expressed the view that the land beside the Chapel of Ease that the Parish Council owns could also be a possible location site; next to the flag pole.

Cllr Booth raised the question whether permission would need to be sought should the War Memorial be moved to the Chapel of Ease. Mr Thackray confirmed that various approvals would indeed be necessary.

15. VILLAGE VOICES

For Councillors to discuss the imminent closure of the magazine and receive any updates.

For full discussion the Chairman allowed a member of the public gallery to speak on this item

Mr Richard Gilbert – Retiring Editor of Village Voices Magazine.

Mr Gilbert expressed concern that the magazines last published edition will be in October, as no one had come forward to continue the running of the magazine. In his opinion just one dedicated individual was needed to take ownership of the magazine rather than a committee. Mr Gilbert explained that the reason the last edition will be October was due to the annual advertising renewal, so if the magazine was to continue the first objective would be to invoice and attract new and existing advertisers back. The advertising cost would need to be a figure that could sustain the production of the magazine, as there had been many recent increases to costs. The finances of the magazine would need to run through a new bank account as it is currently run through the Church account. There are a few distribution rounds that would need to have new volunteers as the current deliverers have retired due to their age. From recent attempts to find someone to take over the running of the magazine; six people expressed an interest, but after being sent the details of what is involved, only one person remained. Once the magazine has been produced, printed and delivered the distribution to the individual deliverers is also required.

The Chairman thanked Mr Gilbert for giving an update on the current situation and brief explanation of what would be needed to continue the magazine into the future, but expressed sadness that the future looked bleak for the magazine. The Chairman reiterated from the previous month's discussion and agreement that the Parish Council would be willing to financially support the magazine if needed. The Clerk reported that both Gorefield and Parson Drove had also agreed to provide financial support.

Mr Gilbert stated that the financing of the magazine is not really the issue; as the advertising funds the production, it was finding that dedicated individual that could bring it all together.

Cllr Booth stated that Parson Drove Parish Council had agreed to £500 initially but also mentioned that funding could be available via grant funding from Wrydecroft Windfarm.

Cllr Booth recommended that a working group was created from members of WSM, Parson Drove and Gorefield Parish Councils to keep the spirit of the magazine alive until the group finds a way forward, to start up again possibly in the New Year.

The Chairman agreed that a working group could be the way to move forward, as it is clear to see that there are many elements to running this magazine from selling and invoicing advertising space, getting stories and content in, type setting and publishing, printing and distribution through to volunteers to deliver to residents' doors.

Cllr Booth requested clarification as to whether the one person that expressed an interest initially was still interested and could possibly join the working group? Mr Gilbert stated that the person had a few hours a month free and could possibly help set up the pages and they were still interested at the end of July.

The Clerk to follow up with the other two Parish Councils to try and set up a working group with Cllr Booth as the representative for WSM Parish Council.

The Chairman ended the discussion by thanking Mr Gilbert for his valuable contribution to the community running Village Voices over all these years.

Whilst Mr Gilbert was in attendance, the Clerk requested that clarification on the boundary line between the Guyhirn Pond and the land that verges up to Spencer Drove; as the 2023 RoSPA report had recommended that a fence is installed due to the deep water. Mr Gilbert was happy that the boundary of the pond was marked out to the right of the willow trees as the flat land meets the slope. The Clerk stated that she was intending to get the title deed amended to include this small piece of land and to make sure all parties were

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in agreement could a meeting on site be arranged, this was agreed by Mr Gilbert and the clerk to follow up.

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/YR23/0686/F	Erect a part 2-storey rear and part first-floor roof extension, and a triple garage with playroom above to rear of existing dwelling at Tahiri Rimmers Lane Wisbech St Mary Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4UB The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(b)	F/YR23/0724/VOC	Variation of conditions 01, 06 and 07 to allow changes to drawings to garage appearance and position relating to planning permission F/YR21/1490/VOC (Removal of condition 3 (materials) and variation of condition 2 (occupancy restriction) and 8 (list of approved drawings), relating to planning permission F/YR21/0425/F (Erect a dwelling (2-storey 4-bed) and detached garage, involving the demolition of the existing glasshouses) to allow changes to elevational details, and clarify extent of 'business operation' on site) at Land East Of Bank View Gull Road Guyhirn Cambridgeshire The Parish Council made the following comments: Councillors recommended conditions remain that sees the Garage/Annexe remain ancillary to the main property by occupation only by family members and unable to be sold or let independent of the main property.

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 – Complaint Update

The Clerk reported that she had requested the S278 technical drawings but due to some staffing issues at CCC, these had not been forthcoming. The Clerk also reported that due to imminent departure of Nick Harding (Head of Planning) she had requested that this matter is followed up by another officer as a matter of urgency as it had already been the subject of an official complaint. The Clerk to keep following up.

9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) FDC - Transport Planning Guide for Local Communities - **Noted**

Cllr Booth reported that at Parson Drove Parish Council they have been approached by FACT to look into getting a shuttlebus to join the X1 bus route. Cllr Booth stated that the Parish Council is interested and may look into joining with Sutton St James Parish Council and possibly applying to Wrydecroft for funding. Cllr Booth felt that the transport planning guide received from FDC was helpful for a process like this.

10. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

10.1. Street Lighting

The Chairman expressed concern that as the days get shorter it becomes noticeable that there are areas that are poorly lit, and made mention to the WSM resident in open forum. Councillors were requested to assess their own areas and bring forward areas that they feel needs more lighting, so the Parish Council could obtain a quote for them all at the same time.

Cllr Weldon expressed frustration that the trees that are beside the street lights to the front of Linden Close at Thorney Toll are over shadowing the lights rendering them useless. Cllr Weldon believes that the last time the trees in question were pollarded was at least 20 years ago and stated that if the trees were to fall it would be a dangerous incident as they are close to the houses in one direction or would fall onto a major A road in the other direction; so, they need some attention as a matter of urgency. The trees also have BT lines running through the canopy. The Chairman recommended that Councillors investigate any streetlights that are being overgrown by trees/foliage, take note of the Streetlight number and report to the Clerk, ideally with a photograph.

Cllr Fryett raised the question to Cllr Allen on whether the solar powered lights at the Guyhirn Playing Field were working adequately? Cllr Allen reported that the two over the playground were working well, but hadn't observed the ones working that have been attached to the new gates as part of the Car Park project.

10.2. Highways

(a) To discuss any matters relating to Bellamy Bridge junction.

The Chairman reported that the bridge repair works had finally been completed at the junction. The Chairman expressed disappointment however, that the red lines running down the centre of the road on Leverington Common were not repainted when the larger warning strips were completed. Cllr Booth stated that Cllr King had included this matter in his report and due to the recent painting of the white centre lines,

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the red warning line will not be renewed until the next financial year. The Clerk reported that a meeting between members of all three Parish Councils that converge at Bellamy Bridge junction (WSM, Parson Drove & Gorefield), including all FDC and CCC Councillors, as well as relevant officer from Highways will be held on Monday 30th October 2023, 7pm at WSM Community Centre – Bar and Sidings Room.

(b) To discuss complaint Letter sent to Stephen Moir – Chief Executive of CCC

The Clerk reported that the letter was acknowledged by Stephen Moir's PA but was then logged as a stage one complaint, which has not yet received an official response. The Clerk stated that the only contact received to date was via the telephone from the Line Manager of the LHOs at CCC for more information of the Highways report (regarding overgrown trees on North Brink) that was closed without any action, which was duly given.

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

Cllr Fryett raised the question whether the new yellow lines outside Murrow School need notice signs to be enforceable? Clerk to follow up with Highways.

11. FINANCE MATTERS

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

The bank reconciliation of 1st September 2023 balanced at £96,136.24 which was between the Barclays Current Account of £21,136.24 and £75,000.00 invested with the CCLA PSDF. The Clerk drew attention to the income of £250.00 received from RKM Utilities which will be reported on under item 12 (c) and that all the planter sponsorship had been paid apart from Bretts Transport who have confirmed that they will be renewing. The Clerk recommended a 6-month budget review which will be reported on at the next meeting. The report was agreed to and signed off by Cllr Charles Allen.

11.2. For Councillors to receive the External Audit Report for 2022/23.

The Clerk reported that the External Audit had completed with no matters of concern, and that the notice of conclusion of audit had been placed in the noticeboards and onto the website dated 21st August 2023.

The Chairman congratulated the Clerk on a clean audit, and thanks were received from the Council.

11.3. 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 £1297.97 since its inception on 17th March 2023 with a current yield of 5.0994%.

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

The Clerk reported that the investment had made £1087.57 since its inception on 16th May 2023 with a current yield of 5.0747%.

11.4. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk August Salary	£1356.11	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	Clerk HMRC Tax and NI	£265.25	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Clerk Monthly Expenses (August)	£66.20	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions – August (Direct Debit)	£93.78	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	Chairman Quarterly Allowance	£20.00	LG Act 1972 S15 (5)	Agreed
(f)	Councillor Quarterly Allowances (TOTAL)	£190.00	Local Authority (Members Allowances) (England) Regs 2003 S25 (1b)	Agreed
(g)	Npower Lighting August Energy	£477.42	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Agreed
(h)	Tamar IT – Microsoft 365 (Direct Debit)	£13.54	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(i)	Mr Stephen Knight – Handyman August Work	£319.19	Open Spaces Act 1906 S9-10	Agreed
(j)	Thorney Toll Village Hall – August Room Hire	£40.00	LG Act 1972 S134	Agreed
(k)	Brewers Decorator Centres – Handyman Materials	£29.21	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed
(l)	Rawlins – Anti Graffiti Paint 5L	£245.94	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed
(m)	Wisbech Electrical Fault Investigation SL134	£135.76	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Agreed
(n)	Rapier Signs – Seafood Shack Planter Plaque	£15.00	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976 S19	Agreed
(o)	Rapier Signs – Frankhams Timber Planter Plaque	£15.00	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976 S19	Agreed

11.4. 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)	PKF Littlejohn LLP – External Audit	£504.00	Accounts & Audit Regulations 1996 S11996/590	Agreed

The Council **resolved** to **authorise** the expenditure for the month of August and **ratified** the payments already made totalling £3877.60. The invoices and schedule of payments were checked and signed off by the Chairman and Cllr Humphrey.

11.6. Grant Applications - Nil

12. PARISH PROPERTY

The Chairman recommended that the Parish flags should be flown at half-mast for Cllr Wheelers funeral on 22nd September 2023, and also recommended that the Parish Council should have a Flag Policy for the future raising/lowering of the flags. Councillors agreed to this suggestion.

The Clerk reported an ongoing issue with the flags, in that two had recently broken and were about to be sent back to the supplier for repair.

Cllr Fryett recommended buying new flags for Cllr Wheelers funeral, which could also be used for remembrance, allowing for plenty of time to send the other flags back to be repaired. This was agreed to by Councillors; the Clerk with the Chairman to arrange the purchase due to the matter being urgent and under £500.00.

The Chairman recommended that the Flag Policy include the point that the flags are to be flown all year round and replaced when needed. The Clerk to produce a Flag Policy.

(a) For Councillors to receive an update on Wisbech St Mary Pond issues.

The Chairman reported that a letter had been received from the owners of Goodfellows Terrace which disputed the ADC water test that the Parish Council had undertaken due to the sewerage treatment plant only discharging periodically. The Chairman noted that the Parish Council were aware of this and that ADC had attached a bucket directly under the outlet pipe overnight to capture a sample. Included with the letter were water test reports from their drainage company, which stated that there were no issues with the treatment plant. The owners also questioned whether other connections could be contributing to sewerage entering the pond. The Clerk reported that the letter was sent over to ADC for their response; ADC confirmed that there are two other pipes to the front of the pond, which have both been jetted. One goes to the roadside gully outside St Marys Autos Garage and the other is an overflow pipe which goes under the road via a culvert into the North Level drain on the opposite side of the road. There are no other outgoing or incoming pipes apart from the treatment works connected to Goodfellows Terrace. This was proven when the pond was completely drained during the rejuvenation project. A description of the type of tests completed by ADC were received and the Clerk reported that ADC have stated that there may be a possible solution to divert the discharge pipe along the pond bank (buried) and connect it via a new manhole into the pond overflow pipe fitting a non-return valve to stop anything coming back, which would need permission from North Level IDB before carrying out. The Clerk added that the most recent water test undertaken by ADC has proven that the discharge plant is now working as it should do as the test was clear, but expressed concern that the damage had already been done and the pond waters were still testing positive for sewerage.

The Chairman recommended that the Clerk responds to the owners and (due to a conflict of reports) request that times and dates of their water tests are provided, so to prove that no corrective works had been completed prior to their water test.

Cllr J Humphrey raised the question of how much would the possible divert solution offered by ADC would cost? The Clerk stated that ADC have offered to quote on this if the Parish Council were interested. She also stated that ADC have offered to liaise with North Level IDB to try and seek permission.

Cllr Scrimshaw raised the question whether the outflow pipe had any kind of mesh over the exit? The Clerk

responded no; but that effluent was in a liquid form by the time it reaches the pond and a mesh wouldn't stop sewerage entering the pond.

Cllr Booth recommended leaving the pond alone now the treatment plant was running clear and to keep monitoring the pond waters.

Cllr J Humphrey expressed concern that if the discharge plant failed again over the course of time, it would contaminate the pond further without the Parish Council being aware until the smell is reported again, by which time serious damage has been done; so recommended regular water testing.

The Chairman requested that the Clerk obtains a quote from ADC for monthly testing of the pond waters.

The Clerk to follow up on all matters.

(b) For Councillors to consider quotes received from Fiona Davies for refurbishment of Murrow and Wisbech St Mary Village Signs.

The Clerk reported that refurbishment of WSM Village sign was £836.00 and Murrow was £705.00. Cllr Booth proposed to accept both the quotes as the Parish Council has a duty of care to look after community assets. The Clerk reported that if the quotes were approved immediate payment of 50% deposit was required which was approved by Council.

(c) For Councillors to note meeting and outcome with RKM Utilities (Land at Tholomas Drove)

The Chairman reported that he had attended a site visit along with the Clerk and Cllr Fryett, which met with a representative from RKM Utilities to discuss a proposed installation of what was believed to be an external exchange box on Parish Council land. On arrival the Chairman was informed that the works had been completed without Parish Council consent, for which RKM Utilities apologised. The Chairman stated that although works had been completed it was an underground installation which only required the enlargement of a cable box already in place and that no works were visible apart from the cover in the ground.

The Clerk explained that a company wishing to put cables through Parish Council land would normally be asked to enter into a wayleave agreement, with the requested financial compensation in the region of £500.00. The Clerk contacted RKM Utilities and requested a voluntary contribution be made to the Parish Council in lieu of a wayleave agreement and because the works had been completed without permission. RKM Utilities agreed to settle at £250.00 which the Clerk agreed to as this had been the initial amount suggested by the Chairman.

(d) For Councillors to note damage to WSM PC property on Front Road, Murrow and actions taken.

The Clerk reported that a car accident on 15th August 2023 had destroyed the bin, bench and information board placed on Front Road, Murrow. Following the accident, the Clerk had applied for quotes for replacements and was informed that the engraving on the bench is no longer an available option, so had asked Cllr Fryett to attend the accident site to retrieve the remains of the bench and to clear the area of any damaged items, which Cllr Fryett agreed to do. Thankfully the top slat of the bench which has 'Murrow' engraved into it was undamaged. The Clerk requested that the suppliers of the bench included in their quote for the swap of the top slat on installation. Also obtained was a quote for the reprint and replacement of the A1 Information Board, which have a combined cost of £1992.50 (Exc VAT). Fenland District Council have agreed to replace the bin free of any charge to the Parish Council. The Clerk reported that she was still awaiting driver details from the Police Collisions Unit, which is needed for the insurance claim.

12.1. Maintenance

The Chairman requested that the Clerk contact the maintenance contractor and obtain dates for cleaning the bus shelters as he expressed concern that were not being cleaned regularly enough.

Cllr Fryett raised the question of how many grass verge cuts were left for the year. The Chairman also requested the dates of completed grass verge cuts. The Clerk to enquire with the grass cutting contractor.

Cllr Booth highlighted that it had been a particularly bad year for grass and weed growth due to the weather and in his opinion the contractor was doing his best to keep on top of the contract.

The Clerk advised that the grass cutting contract will be going back out to tender in the New Year for commencement in April 2024.

The Chairman reported that Cllr Mann had cleared the land at Silt Pit Lane junction as agreed but had unfortunately discovered lots of tarmac under the shallow soil, however he did manage to remove the trees stumps that were found. Cllr Allen reported that he had researched that the wildflower seeds could not be

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sown until Spring. The Chairman requested that quotes were obtained for top soil and the Clerk recommended contacting Anglian Water as part of their Strategic Pipeline community work for them to provide top soil. The Clerk questioned the amount of top soil needed; Cllr Fryett recommended that 40 tonnes would be needed. The Clerk to follow up.

12.2. Handyman

(a) For Councillors to consider the renovation of all Parish Noticeboards by the Handyman

The Chairman reported that WSM noticeboard next to the school had been refurbished for Councillors to inspect. The Clerk explained the details and approximate costs equating to £250.00 - £300.00 per noticeboard. Cllr Booth proposed that works are completed, this was seconded by Cllr Weldon and agreed by all Councillors.

(b) For Councillors to consider any other potential work orders

The Chairman reported that the Bus Stop signs have now been placed on the four poles following the placement of the pole extensions. No other work orders were considered at this time.

12.3. Bus Shelters

(a) For Councillors to note damage to Back Road, Murrow Bus Shelter and actions taken.

Following discussion and based on the previously agreed procedure for glass breakage to bus shelters, the Clerk reported that she had instructed Paul Tibbs to replace the damaged side panel with 10.8mm laminated glass, which was quoted at £280.00 (Exc VAT). This was noted and agreed by Council.

The Chairman reported that he had received a complaint from a parishioner that as there are no windows within the bus shelter next to WSM Shop that an individual could get knocked over exiting the shelter by someone riding an e-scooter. The same resident also suggested that the bus shelter is showing signs of subsidence. The Chairman recommended that these points be noted by the Parish Council, and would undertake an inspection of the bus shelter with Cllr Humphrey.

12.4. Planters

The Chairman recommended that Winter Pansies for planters be ordered in the same quantity as the summer bedding, and in his opinion believed that compost was not required, but top soil would be useful and suggested that Cllr Humphrey could arrange.

The Clerk raised the question of who would be taking over the Barton Road planter following the death of Cllr Wheeler? Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk (In her capacity as the Chairman of WSM Street Pride Group) would email volunteers to see if anyone would be willing to look after it.

The Chairman to place order with Waverley Nurseries for Winter Pansies.

13. GUYHIRN PLAYING FIELD MATTERS

(a) CCC Land Licence for Community Room Car Park – Update

The Clerk reported that a quote had been received from Trevor Blackamore, for the annual cutting of the piece of land that is owned by CCC Farms (once it was cleared by CCC) would be between £800-£1000.

The Clerk also reported that she had made contact with the CCC Farms Officer to enquire as to the possible length of the licence, stating that at least 25 years would be preferable. A response had not yet been received.

Cllr Booth raised the question of whether Guyhirn Playing Field Association (GPFA) would be asked to pay all or part of this cost? Cllr Allen agreed to raise this matter at the next GPFA committee meeting to discuss a donation to the Parish Council. The Council agreed in principle to continue with discussions and the Clerk to chase up with CCC.

(b) Purchase of equipment from historic S106 money – Update

The Clerk reported that the available S106 was only £4000.00 due to the £1500.00 mentioned on the holding balances report already being drawn down to contribute to the new playground. An inclusive picnic table was approved for purchase by GPFA and had been ordered from the same supplier as the playground at a cost of £1971.00 (Exc VAT), which allowed for four benches (of the same specification as the Parish Council ones) to be ordered at a cost of £2420.00 (Exc VAT). During discussion with the GPFA it was noted that two of the handles had gone missing from the wooden seesaw and would the Parish Council order these at the same time for convenience. The Clerk noted that the see saw handles and the overspend on the benches of

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£391.00 would be paid for by GPFA and the Clerk will raise an invoice in due course. The Clerk also reported that the benches would be installed by GPFA at their cost.

16. POLICE MATTERS

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

The Clerk reported her attendance to a Police Forum meeting on Wednesday 6th September 2023, where items of discussion included an improvement with motor bikes within the neighbouring Parish of Leverington which had previously shown signs of displacement into WSM.

The Clerk circulated the Crime Statistics from the month of July 2023, the total amount of crime reported in the Parish was 20; with Wisbech St Mary at 11, having the most reported crime.

17. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To consider any items for a future meeting agenda.

- Cllr Blackmore – Current state of the old Guyhirn Churchyard and the weeds need removing prior to Remembrance – The Clerk to contact the Diocese again.
- Cllr Fryett requested an update regarding the adding of WWII fallen to Murrow Memorial. The Clerk reported that she cannot obtain quotes until the number of letters are known, and Cllr Booth was believed to be working with the Royal British Legion to obtain the information of names.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 9th October 2023	7:00pm	The Chequers Public House – Tholomas Drove
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DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/2024

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 9:10 pm

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

Chairman

Cllr Mark Knight MBE DL