

Wisbech St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council held on Monday 9th October 2023 at The Chequers Public House, Tholomas Drove

Attended by: Councillors: M Knight MBE DL (Chairman), M Fryett, A Weldon, B Britain, R Blackmore & G Booth

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

Members of the public: 7

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

- A parishioner from Bunkers Hill raised a concern regarding the speed limit through the hamlet, which is currently 60mph. She expressed frustration that areas surrounding the hamlet have recently had their speed limits reduced and believes that Bunkers Hill should also be reduced to 30/40mph. The parishioner also highlighted that the public footpath that leads into the main settlement of Wisbech St. Mary doesn't extend the whole way, meaning any pedestrians would be walking on the road within a 60mph limit to reach the village; which has obvious safety concerns.
- Another parishioner from Bunkers Hill echoed the previous mentioned concerns, and also expressed frustration that the horse warning signs; in her opinion, are not far enough out from the equestrian centre. She also questioned as to why the 40mph commencement point for Tholomas Drove did not start prior to the residential properties.
- The next parishioner to speak raised his concerns regarding a bus stop and a post box being situated on the bend of a 60mph carriageway.
- Following a recommendation from Cllr Booth; the Chairman explained to the parishioners the powers that the Parish Council has regarding speed limit changes and Highways, and briefly outlined the LHI and PFHI process.
- A parishioner from Murrow also raised his concerns regarding speeding outside his property on Murrow Bank towards the Guyhirn end of the village, he expressed particular concern with agricultural vehicles and their drivers apparent lack of respect for safety by using mobile phones whilst driving. The parishioner questioned whether the entire length of Murrow Bank could be changed to 30mph.
- The Chairman responded to the resident by advising him that unfortunately many of his concerns are matters for the Police rather than the Parish Council and again reiterated that speed limit changes are not a simple procedure; he also recommended approaching Community Speedwatch to see whether roadside sessions are possible as their presence may help.
- Cllr Booth elaborated on the complexity of the LHI process and how the Parish Council only gets one bid a year to make a highway change within the entirety of the Parish, which is also not guaranteed to successfully receive funding for a scheme.
- Cllr Fryett addressed the parishioner and recommended that he makes contact with Adapt Biogas to raise his concerns regarding agricultural vehicles which could potentially be from their company; and advised that they run a scheme where they can track all their vehicles movements if a registration was reported.
- Cllr Diane Cutler as The Chairman of Murrow Street Pride reported that the containers on the Back Road planter plot have been treated and replanted with winter Pansies; and work has commenced on the planters and War Memorial site on Murrow Bank in preparation for Remembrance Sunday.
- Cllr Diane Cutler as the Co-Ordinator for the Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward Community Speedwatch (CSW) reported that Police enforcement is still taking place and the PCC Daryl Preston has endorsed it continuing for our area. October sessions are underway and all-day sessions are planned for each village during November.

September Statistics

High Road, Guyhirn - 11% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 19% travelling between 31-34mph.

Murrow Bank, Murrow (Near War Memorial) 20% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 28% travelling between 31-34mph.

Murrow Bank, Murrow (Near School) 8% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 12% travelling between 31-34mph.

High Road, WSM 0% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 3% travelling between 31-34mph.

Station Road, WSM 2% of vehicles monitored were travelling in excess of 35mph with 12% travelling between 31-34mph.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Received and accepted from Cllrs J Humphrey, S Mann, C Allen & D Scrimshaw, FDC Cllr M Humphrey & CCC Cllr S King.

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3. ELECTION OF VICE - CHAIRMAN

(a) For Council to elect a Vice - Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year 2023-2024.

Cllr Britain proposed Cllr J Humphrey for Vice-Chairman, seconded by Cllr Weldon. With no further nominations; and with Cllr J Humphrey provisionally agreeing to the position prior to his absence from tonight's meeting was duly elected Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year 2023/24.

(b) To receive elected Vice - Chairman Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Chairman agreed to deliver the declaration to Cllr J Humphrey for him to arrange with the Clerk the signing and returning within 28 days.

4. TO CONSIDER MEMBER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION– None Received

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

- Item 10(c) Cllr Booth declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Vice-Chairman of Murrow Community Facilities.
- Items 12.5.(g) and 13.2 Cllr Knight declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Handyman is his brother.
- Item 19 Cllr Weldon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of Thorney Toll Village Hall.

6. TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING dated 11th September 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).

(a) Following the funeral of Cllr David Wheeler on 22nd September 2023, Fenland District Council's election notices for the Councillor vacancy have been received and are displayed in the Parish Noticeboards and Website.

The Clerk also reported the following matters:

- Two emails had been sent to the owners of Goodfellows Terrace regarding the pollution of WSM pond with sewerage from the waste treatment plant, with no response received.
- A quote was requested from ADC regarding monthly testing of WSM pond, this had just been received prior to tonight's meeting and will be on November's agenda for consideration.
- A request for the pollarding of the trees at Lindens Close had been submitted to Clarion Housing.
- A reminder to attend the meeting on 30th October 2023 7pm WSM Community Centre regarding Bellamy's Bridge.
- An officer from Highways had confirmed that signage is not needed to make the Murrow School double yellow lines enforceable.
- The village signs of Murrow and WSM have been removed and are with the signwriter/artist for refurbishment.
- An email had been sent to the Maintenance Contractor requesting verge cutting dates and bus shelter cleaning dates, with no response received.
- The overgrown weeds at the old Guyhirn Churchyard had been reported twice to the diocese, with no response received.
- An error had occurred on the minutes that were agreed and signed from the meeting of 14th August 2023 in which Cllr Britain was not included as present.

8. 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.
- Cllr Count reported that a new special school is to be built in March to take 210 pupils, which negates the need for an expansion to Meadowgate School in Wisbech.
- Cllr Count thanked the Parish Council for their support regarding the cessation of cyclical weed spraying and reported that a motion to reverse this policy will be heard at CCC Full Council on 17th October 2023.
- Cllr Count reported a second motion will be heard regarding peat soil affected roads in the County; a few of which are within the parish and in a poor state of repair. Cllr Count expressed concern regarding a potential solution of restricting speed or access to some of these roads.
- Cllr Count reported that he was greatly pleased that the area has a new LHO; and hopes the Parish Council builds a good working relationship with him. Cllr Count reported that the new LHO prefers that all highways' issues are entered onto the CCC reporting tool and considers this the best way to keep a track of outstanding matters.
- Cllr Count reported that the congestion charge for Cambridge City has stalled.
- Cllr Count also elaborated on the LHI process for the benefit of the parishioners present at the meeting.
- Cllr Booth reported that he unfortunately didn't attend FDC Full Council on 2nd October 2023 due to illness, but stated that items discussed at the meeting included several motions and the Annual Reports from the committees for Overview and Scrutiny and Corporate Governance.
- Cllr Booth reported that the Head of Planning was leaving FDC and that there continues to be staffing issues in this

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department.

- Cllr Cutler reported that she has tried to reinvigorate an idea that the previous FDC Cllr Bligh had tried to initiate back in 2019. The idea was to supply the Street Pride groups with stencils for marking out 'No Dog Fouling' statements on pavements that eventually washed away naturally; which was approved by Council but unfortunately the scheme never progressed due to COVID-19. Cllr Cutler reported that this no longer has FDC support and Environmental Health Officers intend to seek approval from cabinet to extend the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for dog fouling and dog control later in the year.

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/YR23/0751/F	Formation of an artificial grass pitch (AGP), installation of 4 x20m high floodlights, an acoustic barrier (max height 2.8m), pitch barriers (max height 2m), perimeter fencing (max height 6m) and associated works at Land North of Playing Field Station Road Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(b)	F/YR23/0778/VOC	Removal of condition 01 of planning permission F/YR21/1344/F (Retention of three units of holiday accommodation comprising a single timber log cabin, a two-storey coach house and a 'gypsy' style caravan with two associated shepherd huts, ancillary timber buildings housing three individual hot tubs, associated plant room and part-enclosed sheltered decking area, plus a timber workshop for the Applicants personal use.)relating to limited period of use at Sheraton House High Road Guyhirn Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 4ED The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL, as they considered that the condition relating to limited period of use should remain.
(c)	F/YR23/0796/PIP	Residential development of up to 9 x dwellings involving the formation of 5 x new accesses and extension of path (application for Permission in Principle) at Land West Of 37 Mill Road Murrow Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL based on the following discussion: The Council felt that a development in this location would go against LP3, LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan; in that the development would be outside the main settlement of Murrow and would set a precedent of extending the boundary based on a similar dismissed appeal decision at Sandbank, Wisbech St Mary (F/YR22/0706/O). Councillors also noted concern that no further development should be undertaken on Mill Road which would result in more traffic until the footpath is installed. If Officers are minded to approve the PIP, then the Parish Council recommend that the footpath is installed prior to commencement of development. They also noted concern regarding drainage and flooding.

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 via the FDC Head of Planning that the developer has submitted new S278 plans to Highways, and the Parish Councils concerns relating to drainage have been highlighted to the Highways Officer via the submitted photographs of flooding along Mill Road.

10. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) CCC Highways & Streetlight Contracts - Stakeholder Survey open until 30th November 2023

The Clerk requested for Councillors to give their input into the performance of both contractors to be able to complete the survey. It was determined that the Parish Council doesn't have much engagement with Balfour Beatty – The Streetlight Contractor for CCC, so a response would not be given. However, the Parish Council was able to give input into the performance of Milestone, the Highways contractor. Following discussion, the Chairman summed up that the works were extremely expensive with poor management which meant delays to works and were often of poor quality. The Clerk to respond to the survey.

(b) CCC Local Highways – Road Side Weed Management Survey open until 20th October 2023

The Clerk reported that CCC were requesting consultation responses on the recent policy decision to stop cyclical road side weed spraying and due to recent discussions would have enough detail to respond to the survey before the deadline.

(c) Murrow Community Facilities – Change of Title Deeds

The Clerk reported that following the merger of Murrow Playing Field and Murrow Village Hall into Murrow Community Facilities, the entity can now hold the title deeds in the name of the incorporated charity as a

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public body, and would be transferring the title deeds into the new name and this will require signatures from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in due course.

(d) FDC – Polling Districts, Places & Stations Review Consultation open until 10th November 2023

The Clerk to respond with the Parish Councils recommendation to use WSM Community Centre, Murrow Village Hall, Thorney Toll Village Hall and the Guyhirn Community Room as Polling Stations.

(e) The Chequers Public House – Use/Purchase of land adjacent to the Public House.

The Clerk reported that a request had been received from the Landlady of The Chequers to place a more permanent structure onto the Parish Council land adjacent to the public house. The Parish Council had previously given permission for the Guinness Hut to be placed onto the land but this would be a wooden structure for dog walkers/ramblers to be able to enjoy a drink and stay dry. The Landlady also offered to purchase the land if that was an available option. Following discussion, it was agreed to not sell the land but to grant the placement of the wooden structure onto the land by way of a land license and a nominal annual fee of £1. The Clerk to follow up.

The Clerk reported that another survey had been received from FDC regarding Councillor Allowances and due to the deadline couldn't be added to November's agenda. Following discussion of what information was needed, the Councillors felt that the time it takes to be an effective Parish Councillor has increased due to the demands on them to solve issues that are outside their remit. Similarly, the Chairman also felt that the time needed to fulfil his role was increasing. The overriding comment received was that Parish Councillors felt strongly that equating the work of a Parish Councillor as 1% of a District Councillor and 2% for the Chairman, was an insult to the work that effective Parish Councillors do, and recommended that this statement was removed as a means of quantifying the work of a Parish Councillor. The Clerk to respond to the survey.

11. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

11.1. Street Lighting

The Clerk reported that she was trying to obtain quotes for Unmetered Energy Supply, but it was proving difficult however she would like to keep trying and will bring the matter back at a later meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the current supplier Npower was unable/unwilling to agree a contract price for the UMS of the Parish Council streetlights. The Clerk reported that only one alternative quote had been received from 100Green which offer 100% green electricity from renewable sources. This item was deferred until more quotes could be obtained.

11.2. Highways

(a) LHI Bid 24/25 Arrangements

Following discussion, it was agreed unanimously to apply to extend the traffic calming in Guyhirn towards Selwyn Corner as the Parish Councils application along with financially supporting an application from Community Speedwatch as the Community Group bid to address speed limit changes and signage through Bunkers Hill.

(b) Cobbs Engineering Ltd - 30mph Speed Limit Extension to Station Road, WSM

The Clerk reported that a small extension to the 30mph speed limit near Volmary on Station Road, WSM had been submitted by a land developer looking to achieve planning permission for houses on that stretch of road, this would be a PFHI application from the developer with no costs to the Parish Council. Following further discussion, the Parish Council agreed to unanimously support the application.

(c) For Councillors to discuss Public Rights of Way Footpaths in Murrow

Cllr Booth reported that he had been contacted by a resident who was dissatisfied with the condition of the footpaths that link Back Road to Front Road. The Clerk explained that the footpath nearest Murrow Bank is currently an enforcement case due to the falling fence and overgrowth and will chase this up. The Parish Council had agreed to maintain the outside of the other footpath that runs beside the Old Chapel, with CCC Rights of Way (RoW) being responsible for the 3ft strip through the centre to allow access. The Clerk had instructed the Maintenance Contractor to trim/weed the edges and believed that this has been completed to a satisfactory standard. Cllr Booth stated that there is also an overgrown hedge that needs attention that may have been missed. Cllr Cutler reported that she had attended a meeting with the RoW Officer who

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personally carried out some maintenance on site to temporarily address the issue. Cllr Fryett expressed frustration over the overgrown state of the Greenwich Meridian footpath that links Murrow to Tholomas Drove. The Clerk reported that the two annual cuts had been completed by CCC and that the RoW Officer was not prepared to carry out any additional cuts. Cllr Cutler reported that she had received the same response. Following further discussion, the Clerk was asked to request a quote from the maintenance contractor for cutting this public footpath down to an acceptable level as a one off.

(d) For Councillors to discuss the future guardian of the WSM MVAS/SID

The Chairman proposed that Cllr J Humphrey continues to recharge and relocate the WSM MVAS as he had taken this over following the death of David Wheeler. The Clerk reported that training could be arranged with SWARCO and recommended multiple people are trained with handling the MVAS and downloading the data. Cllr Cutler requested that she also attended any training sessions as the Murrow MVAS was proving difficult to download the data from. The Clerk to follow up with SWARCO.

(e) Peat Soil Affected Roads List – For Councillors to put forward any omissions from the Parish.

The Clerk reported that the locations of Willock Lane-WSM, Rummers Lane-WSM, Silvers Lane-Parson Drove (although not in the parish) and Black Drove-Murrow had been put forward by Cllr Fryett. Long Drove-Murrow that CCC Cllr Count expressed concern over, had also been added. Confirmation had been received from the LHO that they had been included on the list. The Clerk questioned whether any further roads needed to be submitted, with no other locations being proposed.

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

The Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr Scrimshaw that Bio Cow (now Adapt Bio-Gas) lorries and agricultural vehicles were now using Hooks Drove and Long Drove to access the site, assuming that Cants Drove is no longer usable. Cllr Scrimshaw expressed concern that Hooks Drove will soon suffer damage similar to that of Cants Drove. Following further discussion regarding Bio Cow vehicle movements and operations the Chairman volunteered to attend the business with Cllr Fryett to discuss issues with the company directly if needed.

12. FINANCE MATTERS

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

The bank reconciliation of 2nd October 2023 balanced at £135,301.01 which was between the Barclays Current Account of £60,301.01 and £75,000.00 invested with the CCLA PSDF. The Clerk drew attention to the income of £39,115.00 which was the final portion of the precept and £4000.00 which was the outstanding S106 money both received from Fenland District Council. The report was agreed to and signed off by Cllr Gavin Booth.

12.2. To receive the 6 Month Budget Report for 2023/24.

The Clerk reported that the expenditure to date was £35,613.96 leaving a variance of £76,324.04 but expressed caution for keeping expenditure as low as possible due to the LHI on Barton Road, WSM and the speed limit changes PFHI for Tholomas Drove & other areas still needing to be paid at an estimated cost of £50,000. All expected income for the financial year had now been received. All individual budgets were on track to stay within their limits and the Clerk didn't foresee any major financial problems. The only concern to be addressed is the large Highways cost and with only £31,000 allocated in the budget, the Clerk recommended virement of the £8000 from the Community Project budget to make sure as little as possible was taken from unallocated cash reserves. This was due to the price of materials increasing dramatically over the last year which saw the indicative costs double. The virement was agreed to by Councillors.

12.3. 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 £1605.00 since its inception on 17th March 2023 with a current yield of 5.1858 %.

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

The Clerk reported that the investment had made £1436.19 since its inception on 16th May 2023 with a current yield of 5.1434%.

12.4. Bank Mandates

(a) To note new signatory to the Barclays Current Accounts following the election of Vice - Chairman.

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Cllr Gavin Booth volunteered to be a signatory due to the new Vice- Chairman already being on the bank mandate. The Clerk to follow up.

(b) To note new signatory to the CCLA Accounts following the election of Vice - Chairman.

Cllr Gavin Booth also volunteered to be a signatory for the CCLA PSDF Account, with the Chairman volunteering to join Cllr Allen as the signatories for the CCLA COIF. This was agreed by Council and the Clerk to follow up.

12.5. To approve payment of outstanding accounts:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power	
(a)	Clerk September 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 (September)	£145.13	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Nest Pensions – September (Direct Debit)	£93.78	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(e)	Npower Lighting September Energy	£702.43	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 September Work	£358.57	Open Spaces Act 1906 S9-10	Agreed
(h)	Brewers Decorator Centres – Handyman Materials	£21.07	LG Act 1972 S232	Agreed
(i)	Murrow Community Facilities – August Hall Hire	£45.00	LG Act 1972 S134	Agreed
(j)	Starboard Systems T/A Scribe – Annual Renewal	£673.92	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(k)	KBS Depot – 4 Benches for GPFA	£2904.00	Parish Councils Act 1957 S1	Agreed
(l)	Paul Tibbs Ltd – Side Panel Murrow Bus Shelter	£336.00	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1953 S4	Agreed
(m)	Sutcliffe Play – See-Saw handles for GPFA	£86.52	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976 S19	Agreed

12.6. 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)	Fiona Davies Signwriter – Deposit Murrow Sign	£352.50	LG Act 1972 S144	Agreed
(b)	Fiona Davies Signwriter – Deposit WSM Sign	£418.00	LG Act 1972 S144	Agreed
(c)	South Coast Flagpoles – 3 x New Flags	£231.00	Highways Act 1980 S144	Agreed

The Council **resolved** to **authorise** the expenditure for the month of September and **ratified** the payments already made totalling £8012.82. The invoices and schedule of payments were checked and signed off by the Chairman and Cllr Booth.

12.7. Grant Applications - Nil

13. PARISH PROPERTY

(a) For Councillors to discuss and decide on representation for laying Parish Council wreathes on Remembrance Sunday.

Following a brief discussion, the Chairman nominated Cllr Scrimshaw for Murrow, Cllr Allen for Guyhirn and Cllr Humphrey for WSM; as none of these Councillors were present at the meeting the Clerk agreed to email them and inform them of this proposal.

The Chairman also requested help from Councillors to give the Guyhirn and WSM Commonwealth War Graves a tidy up, he advised the Councillors to use water and a soft brush onto the grave only, and also requested a strim to be carried out if required. Cllr Britain and Cllr Fryett agreed to complete the Guyhirn graves and the Chairman volunteered to complete the ones in WSM.

Cllr Fryett raised the question of when the large Poppies will be placed around the Parish, the Chairman advised that this is usually the week leading up to Remembrance but was happy for this to be done at any point from now.

Cllr Fryett also raised the point of making sure the woollen poppies are replaced onto the railing around the Guyhirn War memorial and will liaise with Cllr Allen.

(b) Remembering David Wheeler – For Councillors to discuss and decide on a suitable memorial.

The Chairman proposed that to commemorate Davids's service as a dedicated Parish Councillor, a plaque to be placed onto the bench to the front of WSM Church. The wording of the plaque would be agreed to by his

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family. This was supported unanimously by all Councillors and the Clerk agreed to follow up and liaise with David's family.

13.1. Maintenance

(a) For Councillors to consider Top Soil quotes for Silt Pit Lane Junction – This item was deferred to a later meeting due to the project not being able to be completed until nearer Spring.

13.2. Handyman

(a) For Councillors to consider any potential work orders – **No items of discussion**

13.3. Bus Shelters

The Chairman reported that a glass panel had been broken on the bus shelter opposite The Wheel Inn on High Road, WSM. The Clerk reported that the broken glass was cleared by the Handyman within an hour of it being reported on an emergency call out rate.

The Clerk also reported that she had liaised with Paul Tibbs regarding obtaining measurements to replace with a metal colour matched panel as per the Parish Councils previous agreement. Paul Tibbs recommended approaching TAM engineering to provide the panel and it was agreed that Paul Tibbs will fit the panel once it's obtained. The Clerk to follow up.

Cllr Fryett reported that Shelter Solutions had been in Murrow repairing the roof of the Murrow Bank bus shelter which was brought to the Parish Councils attention during the asset inspection.

13.4. Planters

The Chairman reported that 60 trays of winter pansies were being collected on Wednesday (11th October 2023), which was the same amount as the summer bedding plants. Plants for Guyhirn were being delivered to Cllr Britain for distribution and the Chairman will distribute for WSM where a volunteer from WSM Street Pride has come forward to maintain the planter that was previously looked after by David Wheeler.

14. GUYHIRN PLAYING FIELD MATTERS

(a) CCC Land Licence for Community Room Car Park – Update – The Clerk reported that she was still awaiting information from CCC, therefore no update was available.

(b) Purchase of equipment from historic S106 money – Update – The Clerk reported that the equipment had been ordered but only the benches had been delivered to date. The S106 money had been received from FDC and the shortfall had been paid by Guyhirn Playing Field Association so financially the matter was complete. The Clerk advised that the Picnic table should be delivered soon.

15. GUYHIRN WAR MEMORIAL

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

The Chairman reported that a site meeting had taken place between himself, Richard Gilbert (Church Warden for Guyhirn & Wisbech St Mary Churches), John Thackray (Chair Ely Church Uses Committee), Cllr Allen & Cllr Britain. It was confirmed that the War Memorial is owned by the Parish Council but the land it is situated on belongs to the Church. The Diocese/Church Commissioners are looking to have a third attempt to dispose of the Church of St Mary Magdalene for either development or demolition. It was surmised that the land would be more favourable for development if the War Memorial was not there however the Parish Council remains steadfast that the costs of relocation should not be met by the Parish Council. Putting the issue of costs to one side, a new location was being looked into at the Chapel of Ease. Unfortunately, due to war graves; no area to the front was deemed suitable, however there was an area to the rear but due to access issues this was deemed unfavourable. It was agreed by the group that the Parish Council owned land beside the Chapel of Ease which leads to the Playground; currently siting the flagpole, bench and platinum jubilee tree was both accessible and favourable. Cllr Fryett expressed concern that a new location should be far enough away from the access road, so as not to be hit by any agricultural traffic. This area of land raises concerns regarding a historically approved access route for the farming land to the rear which the Clerk reported is confirmed on the title deed. However, the current access through the middle has only ever been used and the land as marked out on the title deed has never been required. The Chairman expressed concern that the current route that has only ever been used to access the farmland; needs legalising and the title deed updating accordingly leaving the land to the right free to be used without risk. The Clerk reported that she has raised the question with the solicitor as to whether this was a viable option, but no answers have

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been received to date. Cllr Booth recommended that the Clerk writes to the farmer to outline the proposal that the War Memorial is to be placed on the right-hand side and that the current access will remain clear for access to the field, and feels that if the farmer agrees with this in writing that should be enough. Cllr Britain expressed concern that the farmer is merely the tenant, and if the letter was to be progressed any agreement would need to come from the land owner. The Clerk reported that she was unaware of a postal address for the current land owner and would look into this matter. The Chairman reported that all legal issues aside, a public consultation should be held at the Guyhirn Community Room on a weekend over a few sessions to discuss the proposal in detail with the residents of Guyhirn. The Chairman also reported that he has requested that the Parish Council take ownership of the two bells if the church is demolished and they could then be included within the new relocation site of the memorial. All matters were agreed in principle by the Parish Council.

16. VILLAGE VOICES

For Councillors to discuss the closure of the magazine and receive any updates from the working group. Cllr Booth reported that the working group is now complete with a member from each Parish Council, and the first meeting of the working group is yet to be arranged.

17. REVIEW & ADOPTION OF POLICIES

(a) Flag Policy

Cllr Booth recommended that the policy be amended to allow for the other agreed flags to be flown rather than just the Union Flag and the Armed Forces Day flag.

Cllr Booth also expressed concern that the policy does not specifically include past/long serving Councillors. The Chairman recommended that the Policy be adjusted to include these points, and it was agreed by the Council to be adopted with those amendments.

18. THE MIDDLE PIT AND THOLOMAS DROVE WASH PIT FUND CHARITY

(a) Removal of David Wheeler as a trustee. - **Noted**

(b) To appoint a Parish Councillor as a trustee. The Chairman Cllr Mark Knight was appointed by the Council as the new trustee.

19. THORNEY TOLL VILLAGE HALL

For Councillors to receive any updates.

Cllr Weldon reported that the Charity Commission had been in contact to inform her that one of the trustees of the hall has been disqualified and needs removing and the charity account needs updating. The Clerk reported that she had helped with this process due to Cllr Weldon being unable to use Microsoft Teams. As the Clerk was in the meeting between Cllr Weldon and the Charity Commission, she volunteered to be the contact for Thorney Toll Village Hall to update the charity details, as she was already the contact for the Middle Pit & Tholomas Drove Wash Pit Fund this was a relatively simple process. Cllr Weldon reported that during the course of the meeting the future viability of the hall was raised and that this was a matter to be discussed between the current trustees moving forward. Cllr Weldon reported that a letter drop to all residents of Thorney Toll was recommended by the Charity Commission as the best way forward to keep the community involved with any decisions made. Cllr Weldon also reported that it was confirmed by the Charity Commission that as they do not accrue an income of £5000 per annum that it could de-register as a charity. The Charity commission are continuing to work with Thorney Toll Village Hall trustees to sort out any irregularities. Cllr Weldon and the Clerk will update at the next meeting.

20. POLICE MATTERS

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

The Clerk circulated the Crime Statistics from the month of August 2023, the total amount of crime reported in the Parish was 29; with Guyhirn at 17, having the most reported crime.

The Chairman expressed frustration at the number of vehicles purportedly from Bio-Cow or Pretoria Energy that have very young drivers that don't respect highways safety and requested that this was brought to the attention of the Police during her next Police Forum meeting.

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21. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To consider any items for a future meeting agenda.

- Cllr Britain expressed concern regarding a missing rail on the steps up to the A47 from the village. The Clerk reported that this area is a National Highways matter, and is no longer able to email the previous contact due to the individual being on sick leave. Cllr Booth recommended reporting the matter on their online reporting tool. The Chairman agreed to follow up.
- Cllr Blackmore reported that the steps up to the Guyhirn Riverbank are overgrown again. The Clerk expressed frustration that this was also not a Parish Council matter the Environment Agency were responsible for this area and should be contacted directly.
- Cllr Fryett requested an update on the damaged items on Front Road, Murrow. The Clerk reported that Zurich had contacted her today and had advised that it appears to be a straight forward claim, and once the claim had been settled financially, she will place the orders to replace the bench and information board.
- Cllr Britain reported that the gate to the pontoon at Guyhirn on the River Nene has been left unlocked, the Clerk stated again that this needs to be brought to the attention the Environment Agency and is not a Parish Council matter.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13th November 2023 7:00pm Guyhirn Community Room

DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/2024

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 9:30 pm

..... Date:

Chairman
Cllr Mark Knight MBE DL