

Minutes of a meeting of **WARBLETON PARISH COUNCIL** held on Thursday 13th July at 7pm at the Bodle Street Green Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors A Long (Chairman), Wells, Ansell, Sterling and Simpson

Also present: Jackie Cottrell – Parish Clerk
PCSO Cathy Gilling
WDC Greg Collins
3 members of the public

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Bowdler – family commitments
Cllr Charlie Saunders – family commitments
Cllr Beverley Saunders – family commitments

00025 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

MINUTES

To **resolve** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 18th May 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

00026 RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18th May

Matters arising from the minutes not covered on the agenda

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Jonathan Austin confirmed to the council that he would be standing down from his long-standing volunteering role looking after the Peter Croft war memorial. He stated it had been a privilege but it was now time to retire. He had passed details to the Clerk of another possible volunteer who would be willing to take over. He also stated that Bedes primary school might be interested in providing the funding for any associated costs. He informed the council that some of Peter Crofts aircraft had been recovered and it was hopeful they would be displayed at a museum in Hawkinge. The Chairman thanked Mr Austin for his diligent service over the last 22 years.

The Clerk to add asset register check to the next agenda to ensure the new Clerk would know the locations of all the council's assets.

REPORTS

5.1. To receive reports from District and County Councillors

Noted. WDC Councillor Greg Collins introduced himself to the council. He was a member of the Green Party which had formed an alliance with the Liberal Democrats at WDC. He informed Members that the new councillors were settling in well but acknowledged there was a lot to learn. He updated councillors by stating that Uckfield Leisure Centre had been saved, the refuse strike action had been resolved and the Local Plan consultation was under way.

The Chairman requested he would like an update on the Three Cups Inn. He stated the listed building was in a very poor state and he would like some progress on its re-opening. He personally knew two potential buyers.

The Chairman clarified to WDC Greg Collins that the council would be developing their Emergency Plan and the water shortage problems had added to the urgency of this matter. The question of why there were not any back-up generators to cover emergencies was posed. WDC Greg Collins stated he was very aware of the situation and was working hard to make South East Water accountable. He thanked the Chairman for personally supplying water to the parish in their time of need.

5.2. To receive reports from PCSO Catherine Gilling

Noted. PCSO Cathy Gilling summarised her report. An iPad had been stolen from the Horse & Groom pub but then later recovered and there had been some parking issues at the top of Middle Road.

The Chairman stated the Clerk would be sending further pictures received from local residents regarding the anti-social parking at the junction of Middle Road. It appeared that one person owned 3 of the vehicles. The vehicles were also at times parked in the wrong direction which added to the safety issues. He clarified that HGV vehicles could not remain on the correct side of the road which posed an extreme safety risk. WDC Councillor Greg Collins noted the increase in HGV traffic in Rushlake Green. He added he would be prioritising the issue with the police himself.

The Chairman reiterated to the PCSO that he would expect progress with this matter.

Cllr Collins left the room at 19.20.

5.3. To receive reports from Parish Councillors

None

5.4. To receive reports from the Parish Clerk

Noted. The Chairman stated his disappointment that the Highways contact centre had been outsourced.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

6.1. To receive the acts and proceedings of the following committee meetings:

- (a) APA – 9th March 2023
- (b) SLR meeting – 28th March 2023
- (c) Planning & Development – 13th June 2023
- (d) Planning & Development – 4th July 2023

The Clerk confirmed the minutes from the Planning & Development Committee meeting on the 4th July would be circulated shortly.

TO RECEIVE WRITTEN APPLICATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF PARISH COUNCILLOR AND TO CO-OPT CANDIDATES TO FILL THE EXISTING VACANCIES – Resolution required 7.3.

7.1. To receive application forms from prospective councillors

The Clerk reported that two application forms had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting.

7.2. Co-option interviews

Each candidate introduced themselves and answered questions posed to them by the council. Members felt assured that both candidates had the requirements necessary to fulfil the role of a councillor.

7.3. To resolve the successful candidates

A vote was taken and both candidates were successful.

00027 RESOLVED Mrs Katy Whymark and Mr Richard Whymark as the new councillors for Warbleton Parish Council

7.4. Successful candidates to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Katy Whymark and Richard Whymark signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

TO REVIEW THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL – Resolution required 8.1.

8.1. To agree a committee structure for the Council

The Chairman clarified that this item had been previously deferred and that the current Standing Orders were set up for individual committees. A discussion took place. It was noted that some Members felt that by having individual committees there had been, on occasions, a duplication of effort and some decisions had been overturned by Full Council. The difficulty of assessing the aspirations of a council with many new members since the elections was noted. The Clerk confirmed the auditor had stated that fewer committees would work with a small council. It was **AGREED** that meeting times would be considered at the next Full Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to keep a separate planning committee who would meet every 3 weeks. The council would trial a Full Council meeting every month apart from August and December. CIL, Finance and Environment matters would be considered by the Full Council. The committee structure would be reviewed in the future once a new clerk had settled into the role

STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATION UPDATE

As a result of the new committee structure being **RESOLVED** it was **AGREED** that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations would need to be amended. The amendments would be reviewed at the next Full Council meeting.

FINANCE – Resolution required 10.2. & 10.4.

10.1. To note bills that have been paid under the delegated authority to the Clerk (see report below)

Cheque No/BACS No	Payee	£	VAT	£ Total	Purpose
20	Jackie Cottrell				Clerk salary June 2023
21	HMRC	165.77		165.77	Payroll 6.6.23–5.7.2023
22	James Todd & Co	22.00	4.40	26.40	May payroll fee
23	Jackie Cottrell	9.99		9.99	Printing inv 10652551

					04 18.4.23- 17.5.23
24	Wealden District Council	68.75	13.75	82.50	Dog bin emptying charges April – June 23
25	Rushlake Green Big Lunch	200.00		200.00	Deposit returned – event 4.6.23

Noted

WPC/13.7.2023 - 00024

10.2. To authorize the bills for payment (see report below)

Cheque No/BAC S No	Payee	£	VAT	£ Total	Purpose
26	James Todd & Co	22.00	4.40	26.40	June payroll fee
27	Jackie Cottrell				Clerk salary July
28	Nest	62.14		62.14	July pension
29	HMRC	195.50		195.50	Payroll 6.7.23- 5.8.23
30	K. Robertson	84.00		84.00	Training regarding new cashbook and reserves template
31	K. Robertson	207.60		207.60	Annual internal audit
32	Broxap	1574.00	314.80	1888.80	Bodle Street Green Village Hall benches
33	Marmax	818.00	163.60	981.60	Picnic benches Rushlake Green Village Green

34	Jackie Cottrell	9.99		9.99	Printing 18.5.2023 – 17.6.2023
35	Bodle Street Green Village Hall	450.00		450.00	50% of agreed grant
36	Rushlake Green Village Hall	450.00		450.00	50% of agreed grant
37	Rude Mechanical	200.00		200.00	Deposit returned
38	Orchard Landscapes	1800.00	+VAT		50% of annual contract
39	South East Landbased Training LLP	154.00	30.80	184.80	Tree survey and inspection training 1 day course
40	Jonanthan Austin / Stuart Foord	104.52	4.61	109.13	Retrospective approval for the materials to repair the Peter Croft Memorial fencing

WPC/13.7.2023 - 00025

00028 It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the payments listed above

10.3. To note the Finance Reports, bank reconciliation, budget monitor and reserve movements for May and June 2023

The following observations for the 1st quarter of the financial year were noted:

- Staff costs could be higher than budgeted if a locum clerk was required although £600 overtime had been allocated to the clerk and not taken
- The pension figure had been underbudgeted by approximately £300
- The NJC pay award had not yet been agreed
- The election expenses had not been received from WDC
- The printing expenses would be moved to the stationary budget heading
- The Big Lunch deposit repayment would debit the relevant EMR
- The CIL balance would decrease after the payment of the picnic benches on Rushlake Green and Bodle Street Green to approximately £8,000
- Ongoing possible CIL projects included payment of the noticeboard refurbishment, finger post repairs, the repairs to the Peter Croft Memorial, a new five-bar gate near the Dunn Village Hall and a new flag

10.4 To nominate a councillor to independently check the monthly finance reports and payroll information

The Chairman stated it was good practice that a councillor who was not the Chairman would check the monthly finance reports and payroll information.

- 00029** It was **RESOLVED** Cllr Richard Whymark would independently check the monthly finance reports and payroll information

10.5. To note the VAT return for 1.4.2022 – 31.3.2023 for £4,854.23 has been received

The VAT claim totalled £4854.23. Members noted it was £85.20 less than listed on the previous year's cashbook (£4,939.43). This was due to an ESALC invoice where it had not been possible to claim VAT and an invoice from the Workshop Aberfeldy where VAT could be claimed.

10.6. To note the AGAR documentation has been submitted to the external auditor

Noted.

FINGER POSTS REPAIR QUOTATIONS – Resolutions required 11.2 & 11.3

11.1. To consider the three quotations for the two finger post repairs

The Clerk clarified three quotes had been received but one contractor had since announced his retirement. As a result, only two quotes would be considered.

11.2. To agree a contractor to repair the finger posts

Both contractors had supplied detailed quotes for the work to repair the finger posts at Church Lane and Rookery Lane. A discussion took place and a quotation was agreed.

- 00030** It was **RESOLVED** to accept the finger post quotation from Douglas Andrews which totalled £935.00 plus VAT for both posts

11.3. To agree how to fund the finger posts repair work

The council held a discussion to consider whether CIL funds or Infrastructure Earmarked Reserves would be used to fund the repair work.

- 00031** It was **RESOVLED** to use £935.00 of CIL funds to pay for the finger post repairs.

11.4. To note the Clerk will apply for match funding from ESCC

Noted.

THE PETER CROFT WAR MEMORIAL – Resolutions required 12.2., 12.3, 12.4.

12.1. To note the resignation of the member of public who has maintained the Peter Croft War Memorial and fencing

Noted.

12.2. To retrospectively agree the fencing repair quote

- 00032** It was **RESOLVED** to retrospectively agree the Peter Croft War Memorial fencing repair quote for £109.55. The labour for the work would be free of charge to the council

12.3. To agree how to fund the fencing repairs

A short discussion ensued regarding whether to fund the repairs using CIL funds or the Infrastructure Ear Marked Reserve.

- 00033** It was **RESOLVED** to fund the repair work for £109.55 using the Infrastructure Earmarked Reserve

12.4. To agree how to maintain the memorial and fencing from 2024 onwards

The Clerk to write to the owner of the field, once contact details had been received, adjoining the memorial site regarding the fencing that had been attached to the parish council's fencing. The Clerk to contact a potential new volunteer to take over the maintenance of the memorial. It was noted Bedes School had shown interest in supporting the site.

- 00034** It was **RESOLVED** the Clerk would contact the new potential volunteer and update the council

SPEED ROUNDALS IN RUSHLAKE GREEN – Resolution required 13.1.

13.1. To agree the number and locations of the new speed roundels for Rushlake Green Village Green

It was **AGREED** to defer this item until the site meeting with Ian Johnson in August. The Planning Committee would then confirm the locations at a future meeting using a map.

RUSHLAKE GREEN VILLAGE GREEN NOTICE BOARD UPDATE

The Chairman instructed the Clerk to write to the contractor confirming the council would not be paying for the repair work which had been completed. It was **AGREED** a new noticeboard would now be required in a similar size and style. The Clerk to contact local craftsman.

It was **AGREED** to keep the plaques attached to the existing notice board. The slabs around the notice board would also need levelling.

EMERGENCY PLAN – Resolution required 15.1.

15.1. To agree a working party can be formed to begin work on the Emergency Plan

The Chairman re-iterated the importance of having an Emergency Plan. It would be a database of information available to the public to help the community in times of need. It was **AGREED** the best way to expediate the process would be to form a working group.

- 00035** It was **RESOLVED** to form a working party for the parish council Emergency Plan

15.2. To agree the working group members

It was **AGREED** that councillors Simpson, Wells, Bowdler, Sterling and Ansell would be the working group members.

PARISH COUNCIL TREE MAINTENANCE – Resolution required 16.2. & 16.3.

16.1. To note the tree wardens report on the health of the parish council trees

The following trees were owned by the parish council:

- The jubilee tree located between the Grantees and Tombeckworth – plaque missing
- A Medlar tree located outside Tombeckworth
- A Walnut tree adjacent to the Dunn Village Hall
- A Cherry tree outside Osborne House

Cllr Sterling notified the council of the recommended work required:

- To cut 8-10 of the lower bowels off the Jubilee tree to lift the crown.
- To cut approximately 5 dead branches off the Cherry tree outside Osborne House

16.2. To agree the work required

It was **AGREED** The Clerk to obtain quotations for the above work.

16.3. To agree how to fund the tree work

It was **AGREED** to defer this item until quotations had been received.

BIKE RACK

17.2. To consider and review possible bike rack locations

It was **AGREED** to defer this item until a site meeting on The Green had been organised.

17.3. To agree to purchase a bike rack

Deferred as above.

**URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING
and/or INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

The Clerk to contact councillors requesting preferred meeting days and times.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 21st September 2023, Dunn Village Hall at 7pm

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (resolution 20.1)

20.1 To consider whether to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

00036 RESOLVED to remove press and public from the meeting at 20.27

STAFF MATTERS

21.1. To note the Clerks resignation

Noted

21.2 To agree the process for recruiting a new clerk

The recruitment process was agreed.

The meeting closed at 20.35