

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Yardley Hastings Parish Council

Wednesday 18th May 2022, at 7.45pm, the Memorial Hall

Present: Ms D. Smith (*Outgoing Chairman*), and Messrs A. Willis (*Newly elected Vice-Chairman*), M. Cooke, and D. Winter.

Clerk: Mr G. Gill

Public: None Councillors: Fiona Cole

24./22 Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

With Ms D. Smith in the Chair Mr A. Willis proposed the election of Mr J. Quilter (*not present*) as Chairman. The Clerk reported that he had had a conversation with Mr Quilter in advance of the meeting and that Mr Quilter had confirmed his willingness to stand, but was unfortunately not able to be present owing to work commitments abroad. Ms D. Smith seconded the proposal, and in the absence of any other proposal it was unanimously agreed that Mr J. Quilter be elected as Chairman. It was resolved that Mr Quilter be permitted to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Chairman prior to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

All present expressed their thanks and appreciation to Ms Smith for her past year of service as Chairman.

Ms D. Smith proposed, Mr D. Winter seconded and all agreed the election of Mr A. Willis as Vice-Chairman. Mr Willis then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Vice-Chairman. In the absence of Mr J. Quilter Mr Willis then took the Chair

25./22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Messrs A. Rowton (holiday), C. Pickering (holiday), R. Houghton (work commitments) and J. Quilter (work commitments). These were approved.

26./22 Public Participation

None.

27./22 WNC Councillors' Reports (as given to the preceding Annual Parish Meeting)

Councillor Fiona Cole reported that the new West Northamptonshire Council had recently instituted the monthly publication of a "Town and Parish Briefing", which aimed to provide a monthly round-up of news and information. This was in addition to the regular "News Releases" - in the nature of press releases. The WNC would soon be appointing a new Highways contractor to manage the district's highways. As a departure from the arrangement under the current contract the WNC would now be establishing its own management team for this new contract, which would be in place to oversee and work with the new provider from September. The £150 Council Tax Rebate promised by the Government to certain Council Tax payers had already been paid to those residents who paid by Direct Debit, and other residents should shortly be receiving their rebate by other means. The next round of "Community Funding Grants" would be open for applications as from 8th July. It had become apparent that to cope with demand there would by 2025 need to be an increase of 25% in the number of specialist school places being made available. Residents were encouraged to have their say in the consultation.

In response to the discussion which had taken place earlier in the meeting on the subject of fly-tipping Councillor Cole said that since her election the previous May this was an issue which she

had already raised with the Council's officers on a number of occasions. Her representations to them had been exactly along the lines mentioned by Mrs Wilkinson as recorded in the minutes of the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting, namely that the restricted opening hours of the Council's Waste Recycling Centres, and the limitations on the amount of material which could be left at the sites without charge, provided a likely reason for individuals to engage in illegal fly-tipping activities. She was nevertheless keen that offenders should be actively pursued and prosecuted, and to this end she had suggested to the Council's officers that CCTV cameras should be employed to gather evidence for use in prosecutions. The suggestion/question re: the use of CCTV on private land (i.e.: the legality of its use for fly-tipping evidence) raised by the Parish Council in March had been raised with the WNC's officers and a full reply from the WNC was pending. Mr D. Winter responded by drawing the meeting's attention to the published policy of the Bedford Borough Council, who on their "Caught on Camera" webpage were sharing CCTV images from portable CCTV cameras placed around fly-tipping hotspots and asking for residents' help in identifying people seen. Councillor Cole thanked Mr Winter for this information, and said she would bring it to the attention of the WNC's officers.

28./22 Members' Declarations of Interest for items on the Agenda

None.

29./22 Approval of Minutes of last Parish Council meeting held 26th April 2022

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Ms D. Smith, seconded by Mr M. Cooke, and signed by the Chairman.

30./22 Matters arising

(Items 258./21 and 6./22) Ms D. Smith observed that she had not yet replied to the original query which she had received from Mr Boutchier concerning the possible creation of 20mph speed limits in the village. She would now do so by sending him a link to the relevant page on the WNC's website which set out their current policy in this regard. **Action: Ms D. Smith**

It was noted that the number of cars now regularly parked along High Street did have a calming effect. It was also noted that it was some years since the Council had participated in the "Community Speedwatch" programme, and the Clerk was asked to find out whether this programme was still being operated by the Police. **Action: Clerk**

(Item 10./22) Ms D. Smith reported that since the previous meeting she had had a further conversation with the proprietor of the convenience store, who had told her that the WNC had not yet collected his CCTV footage of the act of fly-tipping in progress. The Clerk said he would make enquiries of the WNC to establish why this was the case. **Action: Clerk**

(Item 22./22) The Clerk confirmed that he had reported incident of fly-tipping in the closed layby on the south side of the A428 (Northampton Road). This remained uncleared. Mr D. Winter reported that there had now been a further incident in the same location – a lorry load of wood-chippings. The Clerk said he would report this. **Action: Clerk**

(Item 22./22) The Clerk reported that he had been told by Helen Howard, the Community Liaison Officer for Northamptonshire Highways, that Highways' current policy was that they would only remove graffiti from a highways asset if the graffiti was deemed to be offensive. He had then had a further conversation with the Police's "Safer Roads Team", who had confirmed that the kiosk housing the data collection equipment for the average speed cameras was the property of the WNC. Both parties had indicated that they would not have an issue with the building being

painted a solid neutral colour. Subsequently he had had an opportunity to speak with Mrs Carter and her son, and had informed them of the upshot of these conversations. It was agreed that in principle the Council were agreeable to reimbursing the Carter family for the cost of some appropriate paint, if they themselves wished to take on the job of overpainting.

(Item 22./22) The Clerk reported that he had checked the wording of the Handyman Contract, and that there was no specific requirement on the part of the Handyman as to how often the Council's bins should be emptied.

31./22 Matters arising from the Annual Parish Meeting and requiring Action

None.

32./22 Appointment of Hall Committee and YHS representatives

It was agreed that Ms D. Smith should continue to serve as the Council's representative on the Memorial Hall Management Committee and that Mr A. Rowton should continue to serve as the Council's representative on the Committee of the Yardley Hastings Society.

33./22 Review of Working Parties and Committees

With only four members being present it was agreed to postpone discussion of this item.

34./22 Appointment of Newsletter contributor

Ms D. Smith said that she would be happy to compose the Council's contribution to the summer edition of the Village Newsletter, but that she was keen that another Councillor should take on this responsibility in the longer term.

35./22 Finance

(a) Renewal of the Council's Insurance Policy – renewal date 10th June

The Clerk reported that he had received a renewal invitation from Gallagher (the new name of Came & Co., the brokers used by the Council for a number of years) quoting a proposed premium of £2,118.53. This was a significant increase over the premium of £1,724.73 charged in June 2021, which itself had been more than double the premium charged in June 2020. He had immediately contacted the Council's account handler to discuss the matter, and in reply to the account handler's specific questions he had confirmed (1) that the skateboard quarter pipes, which had been the main reason for the Council's poor claims history, had been demolished and not replaced and (2) that the Council were not responsible for any zip-wire of BMX cycle track. He believed that the account handler would now be having a conversation with the underwriters, and he was hopeful that this conversation would result in a reduced premium being offered.

(b) Report of payments made by Standing Order and Direct Debit since the previous meeting

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|---------------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Brian Osborne 01/05/22 | Handyman 01/04/22 – 30/04/22 (By Standing Order) | | 349.00 |
|---------------------------|---|--|---------------|

(c) Payment by cheque of accounts received

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|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Mr C. Pickering | Reimbursement for cement (Installation of goalposts in the Rec.) | | 44.24 |
| Brown & Barden | Grass cutting in Rec. - May | NET: £180.00 VAT: £36.00 | 216.00* |

*Not to be paid until receipt of invoice

The Chairman proposed, Ms D. Smith seconded, and it was agreed that the above accounts be paid. Two of the signatories being absent, it was agreed that these cheques could be signed

subsequently, notwithstanding the provisions of Section F6 of the Council's Financial Regulations.

Action: Clerk

36./22 Planning Applications

The Clerk confirmed that he had not been advised of any since the previous meeting.

37./22 Purchase of a litter bin to be installed near the shops in Bedford Road East

The Clerk reported that he had applied for a licence, at the same time enquiring as to the WNC's views on a precise location. However he had yet to receive a response.

Action: Clerk

38./22 Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

(a) Planting of trees

The Clerk confirmed that he had now uploaded a news item to the Parish Council's website which included a link to the Queen's Green Canopy website.

Action: Clerk

(b) Report of other plans

Ms D. Smith reported that the working party had produced a flyer advertising the various events which had been planned for the Bank Holiday weekend. This was due to be delivered to every house in the village over the course of the next few days. (*Copy flyer attached*). A circular letter would also be delivered to the properties in Northampton Road which would be affected by the road closure for the Street Party on the Sunday.

39./22 Engagement with Northants CALC Asset Mapping Project (AMP)

The Clerk observed that the purpose of this project was to compile a database of (1) the land and property owned by the WNC and situated within each Parish, and (2) the services currently provided by the WNC specifically to each local community as a whole. The scope of the project also included the recording of those "Assets of Community Value" within each Parish which were already formally registered as such, and any other land or property within the Parish which might be regarded by the community as potentially being an "ACV" (although not yet formally registered or articulated as such). The database was being hosted by "Parish Online", with whom NorthantsCALC had arranged subscription-free access for a limited period. Earlier in the day he had succeed in uploading details of twelve items: three grit bins, one litter bin, a parcel of land on the corner of Highfield Way and Chase Park Road, the three tarmaced footpaths in the centre of the village, verge mowing both within and outside the 30MPH Speed Limit, the weekly bin collections and street cleaning. He had then been able to print off the information recorded for these twelve items on a spreadsheet, which he was now presenting to the meeting. It was agreed that these twelve items represented a complete list of the "Assets" and "Services" in the Parish which were within the scope of the project. The Clerk then observed that there were currently no "Assets of Community Value" within the Parish which had been formally registered as such, but that there were a number of buildings and areas of land within the Parish which might be regarded by the community as potentially being an "ACV". These were the convenience store, the two public houses, the Recreation Ground, the memorial Hall and the building occupied by Yardley Arts. It was agreed that these should all be recorded on the database under the heading of "Unregistered ACVs".

Action: Clerk

Ms D. Smith observed that the act of formally registering any asset as an ACV had certain legal consequences, and that therefore there was a need for wider conversations to be had before any further steps were taken in that direction.

40./22 Recreation Ground

(a) Signage

The Clerk reported that the WNC's Grants Officer had confirmed that he would not insist on the Parish Council obtaining three quotes. The Grants Officer had also advised that the WNC were no longer providing any adhesive stickers to assist in satisfying their requirement that their part-funding of the project should be publicly acknowledged. This meant that the acknowledgement could be incorporated within the signage designed by the Parish Council, featuring the WNC's logo. Ms D. Smith said she would seek to obtain a mock up of a sign incorporating this detail, as well as the wording already agreed, for presentation to the next meeting. **Action: Ms D. Smith**

(b) Molehills in the junior play area

It was noted that so far four moles had been caught, and that a further visit from the company might be necessary.

(c) Miscellaneous

It was noted that the second goalpost had now been installed, but that further work needed to be done to properly secure the netting on both goalposts. It was also noted that Brian Osborne's latest report was clear.

41./22 The Leys Development

(a) Update on progress

It was noted that the new estate road was now substantially complete. Councillors noted the comments of Paul Johnson which he had made at the earlier Annual Parish Meeting to the effect that the main S.278 highway works would not now be started until Monday 6th June, i.e.: the day after the temporary closure of Northampton Road for the Platinum Jubilee Street Party. In the meantime, starting on 26th May, the highway contractors would be installing the new ducts for the various mains services to the site. The main S.278 works would probably take about four weeks to complete, and would involve the creation of a new site entrance and the blocking off of the existing slip road. The contractors had promised to deliver a circular letter to properties in the vicinity, outlining the various stages of the S278 works and their length.

42./22 Correspondence

(a) Invitation from the WNC to respond to a consultation on their proposals for a new Housing Strategy (Closing date: 24th May)

Councillors noted a paper circulated by Ms D. Smith in advance of the meeting in which she recommended that the Council should endorse the document and its priorities. This was agreed, and the Clerk said he would respond to the survey accordingly. **Action: Clerk**

43./22 Highways - Update on outstanding matters

It was noted that the potholes on the edge of the carriageway opposite the garden of 23 High Street had now been filled in.

44./22 Pocket Park and Millennium Triangle

Mr A. Willis reported that he and Mr R. Houghton had planned to reinstate the village sign on top of its pole earlier that day, but had had to postpone the operation because the equipment they needed to use had broken down. **Action: Mr A. Willis, Mr R. Houghton**

Ms D. Smith reported that Mrs Sarah Wilkinson would be writing a short article for the Village newsletter giving an update on the wildflower area of the Millennium Triangle.

45./22 Street Lighting

The Clerk reported that he had recently had a conversation with another company, based in Cosgrove, who were offering their services for the installation and maintenance of streetlighting. He had asked them to forward a copy of their rates, but this had not yet been received. However the company were not offering structural inspections, and he was continuing to research the issue.

Action: Clerk

It was noted that Western Power Distribution had now replaced the pole in Chase Park Road near the junction with Gees Farm Close (*see item 22./22*), and had re-attached the bracket of street light No 29. It was to be hoped that the reinstatement had been done properly and that the lantern was still working.

46./22 Councillors' Reports and Concerns

None.

47./22 Future Meeting Dates

Thursday 9th June