

Minutes of the Yardley Hastings Parish Council

Tuesday 26th April 2022, at 7.30pm, the Memorial Hall

Present: Ms D. Smith (*Chairman*), and Messrs A. Willis, A. Rowton, M. Cooke, J. Quilter, D. Winter, C. Pickering and R. Houghton.

Clerk: Mr G. Gill

Public: None Councillors: None

1./22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Fiona Cole

2./22 Public Participation

None.

3./22 WNC Councillors' Reports

None.

4./22 Members' Declarations of Interest for items on the Agenda

Mr A. Willis declared an interest in item 7./22(f)(v).

5./22 Approval of Minutes of last Parish Council meeting held 31st March 2022

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Mr R. Houghton, seconded by Mr C. Pickering and signed by the Chairman.

6./22 Matters arising

(Item 258./21) The Clerk reported that he had found a page on the WNC's website which set out their current policy regarding the creation of new 20mph speed limits. The results of the government's commissioned research into the effectiveness of 20mph speed limits in reducing road casualties had been published in November 2018 and was somewhat inconclusive. The WNC's official response to this, as stated on their website, was that "in taking a pragmatic view" they "remained cautious in terms of implementing 20mph speed restrictions".

(Item 241./21) It was noted that there had been an incident of fly-tipping in the verge of road to Castle Ashby, immediately adjacent to the cattle grid. This had been substantially cleared, but there were some residual items of domestic rubbish remaining buried deep in the hedgerow. *(See also item 10./22 below).*

7./22 Finance

(a) Approval of the end of year accounts for 2018/19

The Clerk circulated copies of the end of year accounts. Mr M Cooke confirmed that he had checked the Bank Reconciliation. The Clerk observed that the difference between the budgeted surplus of £3,923.85 and the actual end of year deficit of £2,483.35 was to a large extent accounted for by the fact that the capital expenditure on the Recreation Ground Project and the associated grant income and refunds of VAT would ultimately be spread across three financial years. In particular the new "Kick Wall" had been paid for in 2021/22, whereas the associated grant monies of £2,205 would be shown in the accounts for 2022/23. The accounts were approved on the proposal of Ms D. Smith seconded by Mr J. Quilter *(Copy accounts attached)*.

(b) Report of the Internal Auditor on the final accounts for 2021/22

Councillors noted the contents of the report of the Internal Auditor, Ms Glenys Kennedy, circulated in advance of the meeting. All payments had been made correctly, but in item 7./21(g) of the Minutes for 20th April 2021 the VAT paid to Playdale had been incorrectly stated as £2,738.08. The correct figure, as shown in the accounts, was £2,743.08. There were no other issues arising, and she had completed and signed off her report on the Annual Return.

(c) Approval of the Annual Governance and Accounting Statements for the year ended 31/03/2022

It was noted that in advance of the meeting the Clerk had circulated copies of the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements which he had completed in draft. On the proposal of Mr R. Houghton seconded by Mr A. Willis it was agreed that the Annual Governance Statement was approved. Section 1 of the Annual Return was then signed by the Chairman and the Clerk. On the proposal of Mr R. Houghton seconded by Mr A. Willis it was agreed that the Accounting Statements were approved. Section 2 of the Annual Return was then signed by the Chairman, having previously been signed by the Clerk. The Clerk said he would now be sending the Annual Return and its supporting documents to the External Auditor. **Action: Clerk**

(d) To set the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights

The Clerk said that he was proposing to inform the External Auditor that the thirty-day period for the exercise of public rights would commence on Monday 6th June and end on Friday 15th July. As in previous years the External Auditor had given specific instructions as to what needed to be posted on the Parish Notice Boards (as well as on the Council's website) for the whole of this period. In essence this amounted to five sheets of A4. He would be posting the full five sheets on the notice boards in Chase Park Road and High Street, but owing to the lack of space he would only be posting an abbreviated version on the notice board outside the URC in Castle Ashby Road (referring to the full version posted on the other boards). This was agreed. **Action: Clerk**

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

Brian Osborne 01/04/22	Handyman 01/03/22 – 31/03/22 (By Standing Order)		349.00
SSE 21/04/22	Street Lighting – March (By Direct Debit)	NET: £103.53 VAT: £5.17	108.70

(f) Payment by cheque of accounts received

G. Gill	Clerk's remuneration – April		306.00
Brown & Barden	Grass cutting in Rec. - April	NET: £180.00 VAT: £36.00	216.00
Compton Estates	Rent for Recreation Ground: 1/04/22 - 31/03/23		40.00
Mr A. Willis	Reimbursement for Yacht Oil – Village Sign	NET: £28.08 VAT: £5.82	34.90

The Chairman proposed, Mr R. Houghton seconded, and it was agreed (Mr A. Willis abstaining) that the above accounts be paid. **Action: Clerk**

8./22 Planning Applications

(a) WNS/2022/0602/0653/TCA - Pruning back of a number of Ash trees – in the vicinity of the Memorial Hall (“For information only”)

It was agreed that the Council had no objection to the proposal.

(b) WNS/2022/0682/TCA - 4M Laburnum, (Cassia fistula) - Fell. 3m cherry tree, (Prunus Domestica) – Fell - 23 High Street (“For information only”)

It was agreed that the Council had no objection to the proposal.

- (c) WNS/2022/0801/TCA - Large Sycamore – removal of hanging limb within the crown and a crossing limb – 23 Castle Ashby Road (“For information only”)

It was agreed that the Council had no objection to the proposal.

- (d) WNS/2022/0800/TCA - Fell Cupressus macrocarpa – 5 Bedford Road East (“For information only”)

It was agreed that the Council had no objection to the proposal.

9./22 Drafting and distribution of the Council’s Annual Report

Ms D. Smith circulated an initial draft. She would continue to work on it with a view to circulating a final version for approval by Councillors in advance of the weekend of 7th- 8th May, when copies would need to be available for distribution to every house in the village. **Action Ms D. Smith**

10./22 Purchase of a litter bin to be installed near the shops in Bedford Road East

Ms D. Smith reported that she had been contacted by Mrs Sandra Clark, who had asked whether the Council had made any further decision following her address to the Council’s October meeting. (*Item 150./21(a)*) She had met with Mr and Mrs Clark on site the previous evening, and they had found that the area outside the shops was almost completely clear. However this could largely be attributable to the fact the proprietor of the convenience store appeared to be in the habit of sweeping the area on a regular basis. Also Mr and Mrs Clark’s gardener was regularly removing litter from their garden steps immediately adjacent to the convenience store. Mr and Mrs Clark had expressed their strong belief that a litter bin would help the situation. The Clerk advised that the current cost of a circular slatted bin of the type recently installed in the Recreation Ground was £240.00 (exclusive of VAT). The Clerk also repeated his advice given to the Council’s November meeting (*Item 163./21*) to the effect that when the Parish Council had obtained a licence from the SNC for the installation of the litter bin by the bus shelter in Bedford Road West the NCC had simultaneously granted a second licence for the installation of a litter bin on the pavement outside “Aramintas” against the stone wall. However this had never been acted upon. After a short discussion it was unanimously agreed that it would now be appropriate to instal a litter bin on the pavement in the general area outside the convenience store, and the Clerk was instructed to request a new licence from the WNC (the new local highway authority). The Clerk said he would also enquire of the WNC as to their views on a precise location, given that the pavement was quite narrow at this point. **Action: Clerk**

It was noted that a few days previously a quantity of domestic rubbish had been fly-tipped next to the wheely bins against the stone wall, and that this had now mostly been cleared by the WNC. The WNC were investigating CCTV footage of the incident.

11./22 Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

- (a) Planting of trees

It was noted that the fifteen maple saplings planted alongside the permissive footpath leading from the western end of Church Lane were still thriving. Details of the planting were now showing on the Queen’s Green Canopy website, and the Clerk said he would now upload an appropriate news item to the Parish Council’s website which would include a link to the Queen’s Green Canopy website. **Action: Clerk**

- (b) Report of other plans

The Chairman 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*).

12./22 Village Sewerage System

Mr M. Cooke reported that he had had a useful conversation with an executive of Anglian Water, who had confirmed that their recent project of installing additional equipment had now been fully and successfully completed. However there would still be a need for tankers to visit the site on an intermittent basis to take away the small amount of residual material which could not be discharged into the Grendon Brook. There had not been any rainfall in recent weeks, but Anglian Water would be monitoring the condition of the access road as and when there was any substantial rainfall which might give rise to a requirement for further maintenance.

13./22 Engagement with Northants CALC Asset Mapping Project (AMP)

The Clerk regretted that he had not progressed this matter since the previous meeting. He would now make it a priority. **Action: Clerk, Mr D. Winter and Mr C. Pickering**

14./22 Recreation Ground

(a) Signage

Councillors noted a photo of a proposed sign circulated by Ms D. Smith in advance of the meeting. The cost of making this up on laminated aluminium would be £14 for an A4 size sign. However on reflection she believed that an A3 size sign would be more appropriate, and she was proposing to bring a mock up to the next meeting. Hopefully the cost of this larger version would be no more than £30, which would mean that the cost of manufacturing and installing signs at each of the three entrances to the Recreation Ground would be no more than £200. The Clerk confirmed that the WNC's Grants Officer had previously agreed that appropriate signage would come within the scope of the current grant offer. Hopefully in view of the relatively low cost the Grants Officer would not insist on the Parish Council obtaining three quotes. He would also initiate a conversation with the Grants Officer about how exactly the WNC's part-funding of the project should be publicly acknowledged. **Action: Clerk**

(b) Molehills in the junior play area

Mr C. Pickering reported that following the previous meeting he had instructed Eliminate Pest Control Ltd, a company based in Rushden, and that he had met with their representative on site the previous day. It had been obvious that a number of moles were currently active, and the representative had set a number of traps. The representative was proposing to return in a few days' time to check these traps and if necessary set some new ones. Mr Pickering gave the Clerk a copy of the company's Public Liability Insurance Certificate. **Action: Mr C. Pickering**

(c) Miscellaneous

Mr C. Pickering reported that he and other Councillors were proposing to instal the second goalpost the following day. Mr D. Winter reported that he had had a conversation with a local resident who had indicated his willingness to clear away the undergrowth currently obstructing the old BMX cycle track, situated behind the new kick wall. The person concerned was agreeable to having an on-site meeting with a view to taking the matter forward, and the Clerk said he would try to arrange this. **Action: Clerk**

It was noted that Brian Osborne's latest report was clear.

15./22 The Leys Development

(a) Update on progress

It was noted that Francis Jackson Homes had started work on site. In relation to the necessary highway works the Clerk reported that he had received an email earlier in the day from Paul

Johnson advising that their groundworkers had a start date booked with Northants Highways of Monday 23rd May. Paul Johnson had also confirmed that he had advised the groundworkers of the road closure obtained by the Parish Council for the Jubilee weekend street party.

16./22 Correspondence

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

Ms D. Smith said she had had a first look at this. She believed that there were some important issues on which the Parish Council ought to have its say, and she would bring a draft response to the next meeting.

Action: Ms D. Smith

17./22 Emergency Plan – Report from the working party

Ms D. Smith reported that the visit from the independent civil engineer was still awaited. (see *items 128./20 and 154./20*). The continuing delay was disappointing, and she was minded to mention the issue to Councillor Fiona Cole. The Clerk reported that the reminder contained in the recent edition of the Village Newsletter had prompted some further responses to the enquiry form (see *item 232./21*).

Action: Ms D. Smith

18./22 Highways - Update on outstanding matters

It was noted that the damaged railings in Little Lane had still not been replaced, and that the pile of arisings from the fallen tree in Chase Park Road, on the northern side of the road, still remained in situ. It was also noted that the grass verge opposite the garden of 23 High Street had become significantly eroded, to the extent of being a potential danger to cyclists. The Clerk said he would take photos and report the issue to Fix My Street.

Action: Clerk

19./22 Police and Neighbourhood Watch

Mr R. Houghton reported that there had not been any reported crime in the village since the previous meeting.

20./22 Pocket Park and Millennium Triangle

Mr A. Willis reported that the village sign had been oiled and was ready to be reinstated on top of its pole, once it was confirmed that the supporting cross member at the top of the pole was still sufficiently sound.

Action: Mr A. Willis

Hope was expressed that the Community Payback Team might soon be able to resume their regular visits to the village. Ms D. Smith said she would make enquiries of the probation service.

Action: Ms D. Smith

21./22 Street Lighting

The Clerk reported that he had succeeded in downloading a 194-page document from the website of the "Institution of Lighting Professionals" which covered the methodology of structural inspections in some detail. From an initial cursory perusal of this document it appeared that the recommended frequency of structural inspections was variable, one of the factors being the age of the equipment in question. He would continue to research the issue.

Action: Clerk

It was noted that light No 25, adjacent to Waterfall Farm, 2 Chase Park Road, was not coming on. The Clerk observed that Forde & McHugh's latest advertised rates were as follows: "To travel to site and repair 1no. streetlight - £160.00 each - Additional repairs will be charged at £90.00 each

if completed on the same visit". It was agreed not to give any instructions for repairs at the present time, given the time of year.

22./22 Councillors' Reports and Concerns

Mr D. Winter reported that he had had expressions of interest from a couple of local residents with regards to the current councillor vacancies.

Mr R. Houghton said that despite the WNC's promise of a "redelivery" (*see item 241./21*) New Hay Farm had never received a copy of the WNC's leaflet giving details of the new arrangements for the collection of the green bins. He was concerned that other residents had also missed out, and was fearful that this was a repetition of the village's historic experience with the repeated non-delivery of the SNC Review. The Clerk said that when he had originally advised the WNC that "non-delivery" was widespread in the village he had indeed reminded them of this historic experience. However if Mr Houghton could produce evidence that a number of his neighbours were still in the same position he would certainly report the issue to the WNC again.

Mr Houghton reported that there was a fresh incident of fly-tipping in the closed layby on the south side of the A428 (Northampton Road). The Clerk said he would report it. **Action: Clerk**

Mr Houghton reported that Western Power Distribution were shortly planning to replace one of their poles in Chase Park Road, near the junction with Highfield Way. This would inevitably cause some inconvenience to local residents, in terms of interruption to both traffic flow and electricity supply. They had circulated leaflets to all the properties in the neighbourhood, but it would be good if an appropriate news item could be uploaded to the Council's website. **Action: Clerk**

Ms D. Smith said that she had been asked by the Carter family at Avenue Villa if something could be done about the graffiti on the side of the kiosk housing the data collection equipment for the average speed cameras. The Clerk said he would make enquiries of the WNC. **Action: Clerk**

Ms D. Smith asked if Brian Osborne could be reminded of his contractual obligation to clear the various gullies around the village, in particular those outside Paddock House in the High Street, and those in Chase Park Road opposite the end of Highfield Way. **Action: Clerk**

It was noted that the litter bin on the Millennium triangle was often overflowing. It was unclear how often it was being emptied, and the Clerk said he would check the wording of the relevant clause in the Handyman Contract. **Action: Clerk**

23./22 Future Meeting Dates

Wednesday 18th May. The Annual Parish Meeting to be held at 7.00pm, with the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council being held immediately thereafter, but not before 7.45pm.