

WATFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 8th November 2022 – 7pm in Watford Village Hall

1. OPENING PROCEDURES

Present – A Cansfield, T Cansfield, P Collins, P Incley (Chairman), W Jenkins, J Powell, Clerk - Sue Porter, West Northants Councillor Charles Morton and 3 members of the public, and 1 member of the public on Zoom

1.1 Acceptance of Apologies – V Knapp

1.2 Approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 11th October 2022** – It was approved by P Collins, seconded by T Cansfield and all voted in favour that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and will be signed and dated by the Chairman.

1.3 Declarations of Interests – Personal or Prejudicial – Nil

2. WEST UNITARY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Charles Morton – The Boundary Review

consultation has now ended. Proposals are for a reduction in ward councillors to 77/78, meaning a drop to two councillors for the Long Buckby ward, in which Watford will remain. A further update will be given in July 2023.

3. MATTERS ARISING – Following the Chairman and Leadership training undertaken by P Incley and P Collins, it was agreed that the item of Matters Arising will be removed from the agenda from December, as this serves no purpose. No decisions or expenditure can be made, and any item to be discussed will now be listed under Business.

4. PUBLIC TIME – Alicia Bruce (Community First Responder) – A request for a £250 donation was received. The fully trained volunteers support the East Midlands Ambulance Service to provide basic life support. The cost for a full kit is £2,000, which includes a defibrillator, oxygen and monitoring kit. £500 has been received from Buckby Feast and other PC's have been approached for donations to assist, along with a fundraising page set up.

5. BUSINESS

5.1 Cemetery - Planting of the Jubilee Trees & Rose Garden – Ken Brand will be forwarding proposals for the rose garden. The four trees will be planted by a working party on Saturday 12th November at 10am in the Cemetery.

5.2 Councillor E-Mail Addresses- A Cansfield will obtain more information from Parish Online, who can offer a website and e-mail service, the package is estimated to cost around £500.00. This will be discussed further in December.

5.3 Cost of Living Crisis Support – The Warm Havens information has been forwarded to the Village Hall Committee. They can only register if the facilities being provided are detailed. There will be an article in the next edition of the Watfordian to gauge the opinion of the parishioners on what is required.

5.4 Play Park Area – There has not been any communication from Andrew Eden regarding the land donation as yet. Defer to December.

5.5 Wildflower Area – Grass Triangle – This area has now been planted by V Knapp & Ros Smith. Many thanks were given to Richard Powell for strimming the area and V Knapp for spraying in preparation for the seeding.

5.6 WNC – Local Government Boundary Review – As discussed under the WNC Report earlier in the meeting.

5.7 HGV's – 7.5t weight limit restriction – P Collins has been in communication with Nick Henstock (WNC - Assistant Director for Highways and Transport). This will be discussed further in December once a response is received.

5.8 Village Gateways – Survey/Plan of Action – There are three village signs, which could have post and rail fences. Costs to build these will be produced, and this can be planned into the budget for 2023/24.

5.9 Buckby Library & Hub – Buckby Library & Hub face two significant challenges in the forthcoming year. The biggest investment has been a part-time library manager at an annual cost of c£10k, who coordinates and develops the extensive team of volunteers from Long Buckby and neighbouring villages, and a growing programme of activities and events for local communities.

In addition, they are actively seeking funding to cover our energy costs so that they can continue to provide a warm and welcoming public place. One of the planned projects is to provide a safe and waterproof area to park buggies and mobility scooters for our visitors, young and old.

They are also currently planning an educational/cultural programme with Northamptonshire Adult Learning across the spectrum of our ‘customer’ base, the young working people and the retired.

Watford PC donated £250 to the Buckby Library and Hub last month.

5.10 Remembrance Service – 13th November 2022 – The service will be held in the Church at 3pm. P Incley will lay a wreath on behalf of the Parish.

5.11 Police & Crime Commissioner’s Grant Funding – There is funding available from between £500 and £5,000 for road safety projects. The Clerk will ask Highways how much the chicane scheme would cost, or as an alternative, rumble strips as you enter the village. Another option would be a flashing (smiling) “30” sign.

5.12 Village Communication - Two options were considered to improve communication with the parishioners. A PC WhatsApp group, for information use only was suggested by P Incley. W Jenkins recommended a Mail-Chimp service for e-mail distribution. All persons would need to sign up for the service, and this would be fully GDPR compliant. W Jenkins to create a trial.

5.13 Budget Planning 2023/24 – Ideas to be discussed when preparing the budget in December will include the village gateways, plaques for the trees and the beacon, website and traffic calming schemes. The parishioners will be asked for their opinions, especially concerning any increases to the council tax.

6. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

6.1 Village Hall - The hall remains very busy with external bookings: 19 Bookings in October, 19 for November and 17 Bookings currently for December.

The Quiz Night on October 29th was a very successful event with 50 people enjoying the evening. In line with the Environmental Policy, all the lighting in the building has now been replaced with LED fixtures and bulbs. The Village Hall will be closed from November 14th for 4 days as the main hall and reception area flooring will be replaced. The next meeting of Trustees is scheduled for 28th November.

6.2 Churchyard & Cemetery – Nothing to report.

6.3 Parish Paths Warden – V Knapp reported that there was a tree down over the footpath by the canal in Kilsby Road, however this has been cleared. The rail is still in place in Howard Gilbert’s field making the stile awkward. P Incley will speak with the landowner.

6.4 Street Lighting – There are currently three street lights out. One (Fog Cottages) is a dead service and has been reported to Western Power. The failure rate of the LED’s will be questioned.

6.5 Highways – There is a problem with flooding outside the Nene Ind Est, this has been reported in to Highways, who have done very little. Dan Lister has been sent the information and photos and has asked for a solution to the problem, over and above gully and drain clearing. There is also a problem with flooding by the cricket gate on Station Road.

6.6 Police Liaison – Nothing to report.

6.7 Defibrillator – The new pads are now in place, and the PC are awaiting a no parking sign to be placed in front of it by the Village Hall Committee.

7. FINANCE

7.1 Approve Accounts to be paid

It was proposed by J Powell that the following accounts be paid, seconded by P Collins and all voted in favour.

Chq No 1400 S Porter	Clerk's Salary – October 2022	£ 315.36	LGA 1972 s112
	Clerk's Expenses – October 2022	£ 30.00	LGA 1972 s112
Chq No 1401 HMRC	PAYE 2022/23 Q2	£ 156.58	LGA 1972 s112
Chq No 1402 Forde & McHugh	Street Light Repairs 11.04.22	£ 195.36	PCA1957 s3
Chq No 1403 N Power	Street Lighting July-Sept 22	£ 128.48	PCA1957 s3
Chq No 1404 Leics Gardens	Grass Mowing x 2 – Sept 22	£ 500.00	Open Spaces Act 1906

PAYMENTS RECEIVED

Nat West	Interest (Sept 22)	£ 1.90
E-On	Street Lighting Refund	£ 25.56
WNC	½ Year Precept	£ 6,750.00

Bank Balances

(as at 30/09/2022) - £ 14,785.12

8. PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATION GRANTED

The Parish Council noted the following planning application granted:

WND/2022/0497 - Two storey side/rear extension with Juliette balcony - **Ivy Cottage 34, Station Road, Watford**

Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 13th December 2022 - 7pm

Meeting Closed: 8:10pm