

## **WATFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th March 2023 – 7pm in Watford Village Hall**

#### **1. OPENING PROCEDURES**

Present – A Cansfield, T Cansfield, P Collins, P Incley (Chairman), W Jenkins, V Knapp, Clerk - Sue Porter and 5 members of the public

**1.1** Acceptance of Apologies – J Powell

**1.2** Approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on **Monday 10th January 2023** – The minutes were approved by T Cansfield as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by P Collins and all voted in favour. The minutes will be signed and dated by the Chairman.

**1.3** Declarations of Interests – Personal or Prejudicial – Nil

**2. WEST UNITARY COUNCILLOR REPORT** – No report provided.

**3. GUEST** - Claire Linnett-Pratt – Ability Community Transport – This not for profit organisation was formed in 2018 when the lack of buses, especially in the rural areas, became apparent. Now in 2023, there are 62 parishes being covered by 6 buses in West Northamptonshire and North Oxfordshire. There is currently a service which runs to Daventry on a Monday and Friday, and serves Long Buckby, Welton and Norton. There is no fixed timetable or location, but the space needs to be reserved by 2pm on the day before travel. Valid concessionary bus pass holders travel for free, and there are varying levels of annual membership available, with the Gold service at £45.00 per year, offering a collect from home service and shopping assistance. Day trips are also organised to shopping centres, garden centres, museums etc. Community group travel can also be arranged. Posters will be added to the noticeboard with information also provided to the parish via social media and the newsletter.

**4. PUBLIC TIME** – Nil

#### **5. BUSINESS**

**5.1** Councillor E-Mail Addresses/Website – The e-mail addresses are now all created, and the full MS office suite has been activated. Group areas can be set up for council projects. The website is up and running and there will now be a transition from the old website and a redirection link created.

**5.2** Play Park Area – V Knapp has made contact with Wicksteed for some costings and designs. The space required needs measuring and then contact made with Andrew Eden. A consultation with the village will also be undertaken. There is funding available for these kinds of projects and Alan Burns (Leader of the Parish Clerk Group) has agreed that this project could fit the criteria of promoting health and wellbeing, so once the details are available these will be forwarded over to him by the Clerk.

**5.3** Village Gateways Project – T & A Cansfield recently met with Matthew Clarke (WNC Highways) and had discussions over the gateway project. It was agreed that at the Kilsby Lane, West Haddon Road and Station Road, due to visibility and space issues, that a gateway could only be installed on one side of the road. There is no need for one on the Long Buckby road. The dragon's teeth and '30' roundels on the road will be repainted. Highways will quote for the gateways, as their contractors would need to be used for installation. Should planters be a requirement, then a Section 50 licence would need to be applied for as a one off application. It was suggested that the West Haddon Road sign be moved to the Long Buckby Road, as a new one will be installed on the West Haddon Road gateway. Await the costings to be provided from Highways.

**5.4** Vehicle Activated Sign – Police & Crime Commissioner's Grant Funding – There are grants available for up to £5,000 for Vehicle Activated Signs, along with the possibility of sharing a mobile unit with a neighbouring parish.

- 5.5** Community Speedwatch 2023 – The kit will be provided to the parish from 22nd July to 19th August. Volunteers will be recruited.
- 5.6** Litter Bin Review – V Knapp reported that the Kilsby Road bin is overflowing at times, much more so than the larger bin sited at the Green. The Clerk will contact Norse and ask if these two bins were swapped then the Kilsby Road bin be the one that is emptied on the contract.
- 5.7** Cemetery – Review of Charges – Defer to April.
- 5.8** Cemetery - Rose Garden proposals – A working party needs to be arranged to tidy the Cemetery. The roses will be planted soon. Planning for the proposed Coronation Arch needs to be getting underway.
- 5.9** WNC – No Mow May – The PC have agreed not to participate. The wildflower triangle at the top of the village is already planted.
- 5.10** Hedgehog Highways Project – No interest.
- 5.11** Street Lighting Maintenance Contractor – An alternative company, Electricity Network Contractors, have contacted parishes and provided costs, which are comparable to the current contractors being used. It was agreed when the next street light failure is reported; this company are contacted for a trial run.
- 5.12** Aurum's Lounge – There has been problems surrounding the regular car meet at the location. There are issues with speeding, parking, road congestion and early morning noise. This is having an impact on village life, and is totally the wrong place for the meeting point; the entrance is far too narrow, there is parking on the bridge, along with litter and safety issues. A letter will be sent from the Chairman to the site, with the Police, Highways and Chris Heaton Harris (MP) copied in.
- 5.13** WNC - Draft Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Policy (Consultation) – Noted.
- 5.14** Good Neighbours Scheme – Funding is available for any new schemes. Noted.
- 5.15** WNC – Boundary Review – The recommendations are that Watford is moved from the Long Buckby Ward to the Braunston & Crick Ward. Ward Councillors would be reduced from three to two, with 4,277 electors per councillor. It is suggested that a response is put together stating that there are strong community links with Long Buckby, such as schools, doctors, shopping, churches and sports clubs, and that Watford wish to remain in the Long Buckby ward. This response will be approved at the April meeting. Residents will also be urged to respond to the consultation, which runs until the 15th May.
- 5.16** King's Coronation Plans – There are plans for the pub to be open on Saturday 6th May, with the beacon lighting in the evening.
- 5.17** Future of the Village Hall – 2 evenings have been held to recruit volunteers, which were poorly attended. Another meeting is planned for those that have expressed an interest with keeping the Village Hall running. P Incley will be setting up a WhatsApp group. The next Trustees Meeting is planned for 27th March. Four trustees need to be appointed, with no more than 50% being parish councillors.
- 5.18** Motorway Service Barriers – The Southbound barriers are broken, the Clerk will write and ask for the repairs to be undertaken.

## **6. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

- 6.1** Village Hall – G Dent reported that there have been 19 bookings in February, 21 in March, 18 in April and 16 in May. The Murder Mystery Night was a great success. The AGM is planned for the 1st week in May. The mowing of the Village Green was discussed, it was agreed that with the changes in the Village Hall, that this needs to go out to tender. As the PC are not the landowners, advice will be sought initially from NCALC.
- 6.2** Churchyard & Cemetery – No report.
- 6.3** Parish Paths Warden – A Village Litter Pick needs to be arranged. There are problems with litter from drivers of the HGV's arriving at the Ind.Est. P Collins and A Cansfield will pay a visit to the companies to highlight the situation

**6.4 Street Lighting** – The recently reported light failure in Main Street, has been attended to and is now working.

**6.5 Highways** – P Collins is concerned over the lack of response from Nick Henstock (Assistant Director of Highways) with regards to the HGV's through the village. The flooding problem after heavy rainfall at Nene Ind. Est has been investigated by Kier and a blockage has been discovered, specialist equipment is required, and this has been deemed as a priority, but no action has been taken as yet.

**6.6 Police Liaison** – The Clerk provided the annual crime statistics. As discussed earlier in the meeting, the problems with the Car Meetings will be identified to the PCSO's.

**6.7 Defibrillator** – The CPR training has recently taken place in Village Hall.

## 6. FINANCE

It was proposed by P Collins, seconded by W Jenkins, and all voted in favour to pay the following accounts:

### 6.1 Approve Accounts to be paid:

|                                   |  |          |               |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------|---------------|
| <b>Chq No 1413</b> S Porter       | Clerk's Salary – January 2023  | £ 318.20 | LGA 1972 s112 |
|                                   | Clerk's Expenses – January 2023  | £ 30.00  | LGA 1972 s112 |
| <b>Chq No 1414</b> S Porter       | Clerk's Salary – February 2023   | £ 318.20 | LGA 1972 s112 |
|                                   | Clerk's Expenses – February 2023   | £ 67.20  | LGA 1972 s112 |
|                                   | <small>(Included: Monthly - £43.20 - MS Office Basic Subscription)</small> |          |               |
| <b>Chq No 1415</b> N Power        | Street Lighting Oct-Dec2022  | £ 105.19 | PCA1957 s3    |
| <b>Chq No 1416</b> Parish Online  | Website Service  | £ 336.00 | LGA1972 s111  |
| <b>Chq No 1417</b> Forde & McHugh | Street Light Shield – No 17  | £ 225.60 | PCA1957 s3    |

### PAYMENTS RECEIVED

|          |                        |         |
|----------|------------------------|---------|
| Nat West | Interest (Dec22/Jan23) | £ 15.52 |
|----------|------------------------|---------|

### Bank Balances

(as at 31/01/2023) - £ 9,855.30

## 7. PLANNING

### PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED

The Parish Council noted the following planning permission granted:

**WND/2022/0717** - Change of use of barn from agricultural use to Class B2/B8 - **Two Hides Farm, Long Buckby Road, Watford**

**Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 18th April 2023 - 7pm**  
(Note: Date change due to Easter)

**Meeting Closed: 8:50pm**