

WESTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

On behalf of westhorpeparishclerk@gmail.com

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Tuesday 8 August 2023 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs David Barker (Chairman), Steve Caley, Ian Cotgrove, Diane Gladders, Robin Lambert, Richard Brown

IN ATTENDANCE: County and District Cllr Andy Mellen, one member of the public and Mark Eggleton (clerk),

1. APOLOGIES and approval of absences. Cllr Steve Christian was not in attendance.
2. DECLARATIONS of interest and dispensation. Cllr Brown declared an interest in agenda item 8.1 regarding planning applications.
3. MINUTES of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16 May 2023 previously circulated and taken as read – unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.
4. MATTERS Arising from Council Meeting held on 16 May 2023.
 - 4.1 Update on the tree surgery contractor's progress. The work has not been completed. The Chairman recently sent a further email to UK Power Networks chasing an update, but no response has been received to date.
 - 4.2 Update on the availability of grants to finance replacement batteries for the SID. The Locality Awards can be used to finance replacement batteries and Cllr Mellen has agreed to support the application. Cllr Brown to complete the application for the grant.
 - 4.3 Review of the costs associated with installing a new road sign giving directions to the Village Hall and defibrillator. Investigations indicate that the costs will be substantial. There is no budget for a new sign, but this can be reviewed again should any of the lottery funding assigned to the church bells appeal become available.
5. SPEED Indicator Device (SID) update – Cllr Brown has been corresponding with the provider to understand the low speed anomalies (readings of 3mph). The provider has advised that we are not the only users to encounter this issue. They are continuing with their investigations.
6. COUNTY Councillor report – Cllr Mellen presented his report. Please find a copy attached.
7. DISTRICT Councillor report - Cllr Mellen presented his report. Please find a copy attached. It was unanimously agreed that the council would apply for the Pride in Your Place funding.
8. PLANNING UPDATE
 - 8.1 DC/23/00549 Shrubbery Farm, Walsham Road, Westhorpe, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4SZ The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application. The application is currently awaiting a decision.
 - 8.2 DC/22/2190 HYB Shepherds Grove Bury Road Stanton Suffolk
The Parish Council submitted their observations on 18 February 2023. The application is currently awaiting a decision from West Suffolk District Council.

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9. NATIONAL GRID PYLONS. The proposed route of the pylons was discussed, and it was unanimously agreed that the council would submit their objections to the National Grid. The Clerk will draft the Council's objections for the Chairman to review, before submitting them to the National Grid. The objections include food security, adverse effects on drainage and loss of flora and fauna. Also, that the proposals fall outside of the parliamentary process and that alternatives routes (such as an offshore option) have not been independently costed.
10. PROPOSED TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS. The shared taxi service to Bury St Edmunds raised for discussion by the Bacton Parish Clerk was considered and the Council does not believe there is a demand for this service in Westhorpe.

The main requirement for public transport is to reintroduce the bus service to enable any resident to get to and from Stowmarket for work.

A regular bus service exists between Walsham Le Willows and Bury St Edmunds.

School transport was also discussed. There may be a need to transport children from the village to Hartismere High School in Eye. A number of children attend Gislingham Primary School which feeds into Hartismere. There are likely to be approximately 8 children from Westhorpe attending Hartismere in the next few years. The Clerk will raise this with the Passenger Transport division of the County Council. A draft of the correspondence is to be reviewed by the Chairman before it is sent.

11. CRAIG LIGHTOLLER'S VISIT. Craig, who portrayed Charles Brandon in historical reenactments contacted the Council with a request to visit Westhorpe. The Chairman invited him to attend a village social event scheduled for 18 August, but Craig no longer portrays Charles Brandon and, therefore, no longer wishes to attend. The social event will proceed as planned on 18 August.
12. PARISH CLERK'S REVIEW. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his service and proposed the Clerk's salary is increased to £11.32 per hour which is in line with NALC guidelines. This was agreed by the Council and will come into effect from 1 October 2023.

13. FINANCE UPDATE

13.1 The bank reconciliation as at 21 July 2023 was presented by the Clerk.

13.2 The following payments have been made since the 16 May 2023 meeting.

- a) 16.5.23 Cheque number 100455 - £16.98 to Sue Hull to reimburse her for costs incurred.
- c) 3.7.23 Cheque number 100456 - £407.16 to Mark Eggleton (clerk's salary).

14. QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN AND AOB.

14.1 The Chairman advised that the dog waste bin was full to overflowing. The Clerk is to raise this issue with the District Council

14.2 A member of the public had noticed an increase in HGVs going through the village and asked the Council if they felt the road was suitable for HGVs. The Chairman recognised the issue but advised there was no legal resolution and pointed out that HGVs were required to support farm activities and to deliver oil to households within the village.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 7.30pm

Mark Eggleton
Clerk to Westhorpe Parish Council