

WESTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

On behalf of westhorpeparishclerk@gmail.com

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Tuesday 28 November 2023 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

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

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

1. APOLOGIES and approval of absences. Cllr Caley sent his apologies.
2. DECLARATIONS of interest and dispensation. Cllr Brown declared an interest in agenda item 8.1 regarding planning applications. The Chairman declared an interest in agenda item 10 as some of the flooding took place on his land.
3. MINUTES of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 8 August 2023 previously circulated and taken as read – unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.
4. MATTERS Arising from Council Meeting held on 8 August 2023.
 - 4.1 Update on the tree surgery contractor's progress. The Chairman has chased UK Power Networks again, but no response has been received to date.
 - 4.2 Update on Locality Awards Grant Application for replacement SID batteries. Cllr Brown contacted the supplier to obtain quotes for replacement batteries and a solar powered solution. The replacement batteries are £263 including VAT and the solar solution is £804 including VAT. The supplier expressed their surprise that the batteries had become ineffective so quickly, and made some suggestions on how their life could be prolonged but this has not worked. The council unanimously agreed to proceed with the solar option. Cllr Brown will complete the Locality Awards Grant application form.
5. SPEED Indicator Device (SID) update – Cllr Brown explained that the average speed at the eastern end of the villages was 21 mph, with 37% exceeding the speed limit and 85% were tracked at speeds of 34mph or less. At the other end of the village 85% were tracked at 30mph or slower.

A member of the public suggested that a 20mph speed limit was applied as they felt the road was dangerous at certain times.

The council believe that this matter should be tackled by the village in the first instance, and agreed that a leaflet would be drafted and hand delivered to all residents.

The member of the public that raised the issue stated that they would be happy to help with the leaflet drop.

The clerk will draft the proposed wording of the leaflet for the Chairman to review.
6. COUNTY Councillor report – Cllr Mellen presented his report. Please find a copy attached.
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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.

8.3 DC/23/05193 and DC/23/05077 Bacton Middle School

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).

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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