

WATERBEACH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **Waterbeach Parish Council** held on 2nd August 2011 at 7.30 p.m. at the New Pavilion, Cambridge Road, Waterbeach.

PRESENT

Councillor N Kay, Chair

Councillors B J Bull, W Bullivant, J Cornwell, K Grant, J Rabbett, C Smith, Mrs J Williamson, M Williamson and A Wright.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A Ball M Howlett, P Johnson, A Lloyd and D Smart

OPEN FORUM

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Council was addressed on a number of issues during the Open Forum.

In response to a resident's comments with regard to grounds maintenance, the Chairman indicated that correspondence received would be answered if an address for reply was provided.

Two other members of the public commented on a recent article in the local press concerning the Parish Council and the impression that this created of the way that the Council conducted its business.

89/11 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs J Williamson and seconded by Councillor M Williamson that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2011 were a correct record, two members of the Council asked for a named vote under the Council's standing orders.

The following Members voted in favour of the motion:-

Councillors Bull, Bullivant, Kay, Rabbett, Smith, Mrs J Williamson, M Williamson and A Wright.

The following Members voted against the motion:-

Councillors Cornwell and Grant.

There were no abstentions.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

90/11 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Rabbett declared personal interests in respect of Minute Nos. 92/11(a)(v) (Planning Applications) as she was Chairman of the Community Association and employed by Waterbeach Primary School. She also declared a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 109/11 (Accounts) and a personal interest in Minute Nos. 99/11 (Grounds Maintenance of District Council Land) and 111/11 (Employment Matters) as her husband was an employee of the Council. She also declared a personal interest in Minute No. 105/11 (Future of Waterbeach Barracks).

Councillor Wright declared a personal interest in Minute No 105/11 (Future of Waterbeach Barracks).

Councillor M Williamson declared a personal interest in respect of Minute Nos. 105/11 (Future of Waterbeach Barracks) and a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 97/11 (Footpath No 2 Adjoining Cambridgeshire CC IT Centre) as Chairman of a charity that owned the roadway. He also declared a personal interest in respect of Minute Nos. 104/11 (Service Level Agreement for Library Access Point) as a member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor Mrs J Williamson declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Minute No. 105/11 (Future of Waterbeach Barracks) as the chairman of a Farmland Museum that occupied land adjoining the barracks and a personal interest in respect of Minute No. 104/11 (Service Level Agreement for Library Access Point) as a member of the Governing Body of the local Primary School where the LAP was situated.

Councillor Bull declared a personal interest in respect of Minute No. 105/11 (Future of Waterbeach Barracks) as a supplier of goods to the current barracks.

91/11 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Highways Committee held on 10th May 2011 be received.

92/11 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(a) Applications

Members considered the following applications for planning permission, arising from which it was

RESOLVED

that the following observations be submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council:-

- (i) **S/0329/11 Chear Fen Farm, Willow Grange, Ely Road, Chittering – Change to access and extension of hours of operation of use of land as clay pigeon shooting ground, change of use of agricultural building to clubhouse, toilet block, storage containers, scaffolding towers, bunds, fencing and pathways.**

that, in the absence of sufficient information and a noise assessment study, no comments be made in respect of the application other than to recommend that, if permission were to be granted, this should be for a temporary period to enable the impact of the development to be assessed. (The Council noted that the site was not in the Parish of Waterbeach but within close proximity of the parish boundary.)

- (ii) **S/1371/11 Berry House, 33 High Street – Extend and re-build single storey, rear lean-to utility room and installation of 2 windows to north elevation of living room.**

That the District Council be recommended to approve the application, subject to no adverse comments from neighbours and to all materials being stored on site.

- (iii) **S/1372/11 Berry House, 33 High Street – Extend and re-build single storey, rear lean-to utility room and installation of 2 windows to north elevation of living room.**

That the District Council be recommended to approve the application, subject to no adverse comments from neighbours and to all materials being stored on site.

- (iv) **S/1429/11 The Lodge, 50A Waterbeach Park – Erection of 4 dwellings on existing mobile home park.**

That the District Council be recommended to refuse the application on highways grounds as it will not be possible for vehicles parking at the front of the proposed dwellings to exit in forward gear.

- (v) **C/11/40/093 Waterbeach Primary School – Works to ash tree**

That the District Council be advised that the Parish Council have no objection to the application.

(b) Decisions

Members noted that the following applications for planning permission had been granted by the District Council:-

- (i) S/0483/11 11 High Street – Notice board
- (ii) S/0524/11 27 Burgess Road – Replacement garage
- (iii) S/1017/11 Blayson Olefines Ltd., Pembroke Avenue – Replacement building for wax heater
- (iv) S/1033/11 3 St Andrew’s Hill – Raising of roof height and conversion of outbuilding for domestic use ancillary to main dwelling.

(c) Withdrawal

It was noted that an application for the erection of a dwelling at the rear of 52/54 Way Lane had been withdrawn (S/1235/11).

93/11 TILLAGE HALL

Further to Minute No. 66/11, the Chairman reported that the Licence to Occupy the Tillage Hall had been signed by Waterbeach Action for Youth and that the organisation were in the process of transferring equipment etc. from the Old Pavilion so that the Tillage Hall could be occupied by the youth club on resumption after the summer holiday break.

Councillor M Williamson advised that he understood that the charitable trust had managed to obtain the assistance of a solicitor free of charge and was waiting for the submission of a draft lease from the Council’s solicitors. In the absence from the meeting of Councillor Ball, the present position with regard to the purchase of equipment was not known.

Having decided that a suggestion that the Tillage Hall be split into two hereditaments for rating purposes was unnecessary, the Acting Clerk was asked to notify the District Council that the premises would be occupied shortly.

94/11 COUNCIL OFFICE

Members were informed that the Council had been required to vacate the portacabin rented as an office with effect from 22nd July with less than 24 hours notice having been given. A number of Members and staff had removed documentation and files which were currently being stored elsewhere. The landlord had claimed that the majority of the furniture and fittings belonged to him which, in the absence of a detailed asset register, could not be challenged. As a result the Chairman reported that the office equipment only had been removed and all of the furniture left. As a result of the positioning of a trailer next to the portacabin door, it was also pointed out that it would have been difficult to manoeuvre any furniture through the doorway.

Members were informed that an invoice had been received for the rent of the portacabin from 1st April 2011 to the date of its vacation and that investigations would be made into the nature of the tenancy agreement before the invoice was submitted for approval.

The Chairman explained that a replacement office was required as a matter of urgency as it was becoming increasingly difficult to administer the Council's business in the current circumstances.

95/11 OLD PAVILION

Further to Minute No. 68/11, the Chairman reported that, having visited the Old Pavilion with the Acting Clerk and Assistant Clerk earlier in the week, it had been their view that the building might be suitable for use as an office and a potential venue for future meetings of the Council.

Under the circumstances it was agreed that an extraordinary meeting of the Council be held at the Old Pavilion on 9th August 2011 at 7.00 p.m., to be followed at 8.00 p.m. by a scheduled meeting of the Highways Committee at the New Pavilion. In the interim, the Acting Clerk indicated that he would ask the District Council whether planning permission would be required for the use of the building as an office as opposed to a youth club.

96/11 NEW PAVILION

(Councillors Mrs J and M Williamson declared personal interests in the question of the cable ducting as they had employed the service company that had supplied the quotation.)

The Acting Clerk reported that, although the rear door of the New Pavilion could be opened from the inside, the main entrance was not fitted with a panic bar for escape in an emergency. Under the circumstances, he had asked Fire Safety Services for a quotation for the installation of a panic bar which they had supplied in the sum of £540.80 plus VAT. Members considered that alternatives such as a 'break glass' option for a key was unsuitable given the number of users of the premises.

Members' attention also was drawn to a report from the company that serviced the pumps at the New Pavilion who had indicated that it was their view that the cable duct leading from the premises had collapsed which had meant that only one of the two pumps was currently functioning. An alternative routing for a new cable duct to avoid disturbing the block paving at the disabled parking area had been suggested by the company at a cost of £1,175 plus VAT.

Members referred to the works that had been carried out to construct the Tillage Hall which it was suggested might have affected the cable ducting. It was felt that this matter should be taken up with the main contractors to ask if they accepted any responsibility for the duct collapse and were prepared to contribute either in full or in part towards the costs that the Council were facing.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the quotation by Fire Safety Services be accepted and arrangements made for a panic bar to be fitted to the New Pavilion;

- (b) that the main contractors for the construction of the Tillage Hall be approached with regard to the damage to the cable ducting; and
- (c) that the Acting Clerk be authorised to proceed with the installation of the new duct in view of the urgency of ensuring that both pumps were working.

97/11 FOOTPATH NO. 2 ADJOINING CAMBRIDGESHIRE CC IT CENTRE

(Having declared a prejudicial interest in the following matter under Minute No. 90/11, Councillor M Williamson spoke by way of explanation as the Chairman of a charity that owned the roadway and he then left the room for the remainder of the discussion and voting on the item.)

The Acting Clerk reported that the P3 Footpath Liaison Officer had contacted the County Council with regard to the surfacing of part of a roadway that formed public footpath no. 2 adjoining the Cambridgeshire County Council IT Centre in Cambridge Road. Other parts of roadway had been surfaced previously but 45 metres remained unmade. It had been suggested that the charity and the Parish Council would contribute towards the cost of the work.

Members were of the opinion that the unsurfaced element of the roadway was in an acceptable condition, even in wet weather, and reference was made to the fact that this also served as an access to a private dwelling, the value of which would be enhanced by the surfacing of the roadway.

While Members supported the request for the surfacing of the roadway, they felt that it would be inappropriate for the Parish Council to contribute as this was not a sufficiently high priority.

RESOLVED

that no contribution be made by the Parish Council towards any surfacing of public footpath no. 2 off Cambridge Road.

98/11 ACCESS ROAD TO GROUNDSMAN'S STORE

The Chairman referred to the position with regard to the access road to the Groundsman's Store off the roadway to the Recreation Ground car park. The access road also served stables that were operated privately, the occupier of which had installed a gate to prevent unauthorised access. The gate had restricted vehicular access by the Groundsman and made no provision for the disabled to use the access road which led to the Carr Dyke historical feature. The Chairman also advised that questions had arisen about responsibility for the maintenance of the access road.

In the absence of any clear guidance from the County Council as the owners of the roadway, it was suggested that the occupier of the stables be approached with a view to the repositioning of the gate beyond the access to the Groundsman's Store and a division

of maintenance responsibility with the Parish Council managing that part of the roadway up to the repositioned gate and the stables occupier the stretch beyond that point.

99/11 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OF DISTRICT COUNCIL LAND

Members were informed that correspondence had been received from South Cambridgeshire District Council enquiring whether the Parish Council would be interested in maintaining the open spaces in the District Council's possession in the Parish prior to deciding whether to award a new maintenance contract with effect from April 2013. If sufficient parish councils were interested, the District Council would disaggregate their grounds maintenance budget which would be passed to the councils in question. If insufficient parish councils were interested, the District Council had indicated that this would not be a viable proposition.

It was suggested by Councillor Bullivant that the tenants of some Council housing already paid maintenance fees for various services, including grass cutting and a question was raised as to how this might be affected by the proposal to devolve maintenance of open spaces to parish councils.

Having viewed maps of the open spaces maintained by the District Council in the Parish, Members

RESOLVED

that an expression of interest be submitted to the District Council, but without commitment in the absence of information as to the extent of the disaggregated budget for the work.

100/11 QUEEN ELIZABETH II FIELDS CHALLENGE

The Acting Clerk drew attention to an invitation to take part in the Queen Elizabeth II Field Challenge which was designed to commemorate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee by permanently protecting outdoor spaces for future generations. The Challenge was being organised by Fields in Trust (formerly the National Playing Fields Association) which would arrange for a Deed of Dedication to be signed in respect of the open spaces submitted thereby protecting their status in perpetuity. Open spaces that had been dedicated would have access to grant opportunities from The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Fund created by the SITA Trust with resources of £1 million.

Members were reminded that if land in the Parish Council's possession was submitted, this could effectively restrict the Council's decision making opportunities in respect of the future use of the land. While there were no plans currently to alter the status of any open spaces owned by the Parish Council, the dedication of the land would effectively mean that future decisions would be subject to Fields in Trust approval.

Members were of the opinion that no further action should be taken with regard to the Council's land but it was suggested that this might be appropriate for land owned and used for open spaces purposes by Morris Homes and Defence Estates in the Parish.

101/11 CAMBRIDGESHIRE STREET LIGHTING PFI PROJECT

The Acting Clerk reported on information provided by the County Council on the changes proposed to street lighting as a result of a new Private Finance Initiative contract and how local communities could propose changes to the proposed specifications, provided that they funded the costs themselves.

Members were informed that the options open to parish councils were to –

- retain lights that the County Council deemed surplus to requirements, subject to meeting the energy and maintenance costs;
- retain lighting at maximum illumination when they were dimmed overnight by the County Council, subject to meeting the additional energy costs;
- provide alternative columns and lanterns as opposed to the standard units, subject to meeting the difference in cost and to the design being acceptable; and
- provide attachments to columns for hanging baskets, Christmas lighting etc, subject to the additional cost being met.

102/11 HCV STRATEGY

The Clerk reported on the approval by the County Council of a new strategy to deal with the routing of Heavy Commercial Vehicles which would be subject to trials over the autumn prior to final approval early in 2012.

The strategy was intended to involve local communities in trying to resolve the problems caused by HCVs as opposed to the imposition of formal weight limits. This would involve communities assessing the extent of any problems that existed, funding any measures introduced and helping to monitor and resolve locally any infringements of restrictions on traffic movements.

103/11 REVIEW OF POLLING ARRANGEMENTS

An invitation to comment on a periodic review currently being undertaken by South Cambridgeshire District Council of the polling districts and places in the District was considered. The District Council were required to review the arrangements every four years in respect of the polling districts and polling places. While polling stations did not form part of the review, the District Council had indicated that they would welcome any comments from parish councils on those currently being used.

Having been informed that the District Council were not proposing any changes to the present arrangements in Waterbeach and Chittering, Members

RESOLVED

that no comments be made on the review.

104/11 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT FOR LIBRARY ACCESS POINT

The Acting Clerk reported on the receipt of a new three year service level agreement between the County Council and the Parish Council for the operation of the Library Access Point in Waterbeach. Attention was drawn to an ongoing dispute with the County Council over the reimbursement of rent paid for the occupation of premises at the Primary School in accordance with previous SLAs and to the need to include equipment recently purchased by WILL to the schedule accompanying the agreement.

Councillor Grant referred to the present arrangements in terms of the opportunities available to WILL to collect books periodically from Dryden House in Huntingdon and to the delivery of books by the Library service to Waterbeach that had been ordered by borrowers. The Acting Clerk explained that the SLA only allowed for the supply of 50 large print books or the monetary equivalent each year and the delivery of ordered books to the nearest County Council Library.

Under the circumstances, it was

RESOLVED

that the Acting Clerk be requested to liaise with the County Council over the content of the SLA and the potential implications for the present arrangements.

105/11 FUTURE OF WATERBEACH BARRACKS

((Having declared a prejudicial interest in the following matter under Minute No. 90/11, Councillor Mrs J Williamson left the room for the duration of the following item.)

Arising from recent news reports over the proposed closure of Waterbeach Barracks and its potential use for future housing development, it was

RESOLVED

that detailed consideration of the implications be referred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee, with all Members invited to attend.

106/11 STATION GOODS YARD

The Chairman and Councillor M Williamson reported on their investigations into the current unauthorised use of the former station goods yard as a car park which it was felt was detrimental to highway safety as a result of the proximity of the entrance to the level crossing in Station Road.

Members were informed that use of the land as a car park meant that the tenants were in breach of their lease from Network Rail and South Cambridgeshire District Council had confirmed that planning permission had not been granted for this purpose. While the matter had been raised with the appropriate authorities, Members felt that it would be helpful if this was followed up by correspondence by the Parish Council.

Attention also was drawn to complaints received from passengers that the trader selling coffee at the station had been asked by the tenants of the former goods yard to leave the site. Enquiries had confirmed that the site in question did not fall within the area leased by tenants and Councillor Williamson agreed to convey the information to the trader on the day following the meeting.

RESOLVED

that Network Rail be advised of the Parish Council's concern over the use of the former goods yard for car parking without the benefit of planning permission and asked to ensure that the use ceases unless or until planning permission is granted.

107/11 HEALTH AND SAFETY

A number of issues were raised by Members concerning weed and moss clearance and hedge trimming at various locations which Councillor Bull indicated were in hand.

The Chairman also mentioned that she had been contacted by members of the public about trees that were becoming overgrown following uncertainty as to who was responsible for their maintenance.

108/11 REPORTS

The Council considered/noted reports from the following –

(i) County Councillor

A report had been circulated by Councillor M Williamson in his capacity as member for the local electoral division of the County Council in which he drew attention to the recent announcement over the future of Waterbeach Barracks and the outcome of a review of speed limits on the A10.

With regard to the latter, the Acting Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the County Council on the results of their survey of traffic flows, mean speeds and injury accidents broken down into 11 stretches of the A10 between Cambridge and Ely. It was proposed that the speed limit be reduced to 50 mph throughout the whole length of road with the exception of the existing junction with the A1123 where the limit was already 40 mph. While mean speeds were less than 50 mph because of the volume of traffic, accident rates were generally below the national level except at the junction with Carr Dyke Road.

Members were of the opinion that a reduction in the speed limit was difficult to justify in that this would cause frustration for motorists and was unnecessary outside peak times. While this might result in a marginal improvement in safety at junctions, Members did not think that this was a substitute for junction improvements.

(ii) District Councillors

A number of issues had been raised in the District Councillors' report, including the use of the former station goods yard for car parking, the rateable value of the Old Pavilion, enforcement action at Lock Farm, the future of Waterbeach Barracks and the receipt of section 106 agreement income.

A request was made that enforcement action at Lock Farm should be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

(iii) Library Officer

Attention was drawn to the commencement of the summer reading challenge at the Library, the expenditure of money raised at the yard sales to supplement materials for the reading challenge and the proposed purchase of additional junior books over the summer from the remainder of a charity donation held by the Parish Council.

(iv) C&PALC

Councillor Williamson drew attention to the growing prevalence of requests for information by members of the public in a number of parishes and the need for robust complaints codes to be adopted by local councils to deal with such matters.

(v) Local Initiatives

Councillor Mrs J Williamson reported on recent activities in respect of the Waterbeach Cultural Collective, Waterbeach Initiative for Sustainable Energy and Neighbourhood Watch.

109/11 ACCOUNTS

(Notwithstanding having declared a prejudicial interest in the payment of the salary to her husband in Minute No. 90/11 above, Councillor Mrs Rabbett remained in the meeting as there was no debate on the subject.)

The Acting Clerk reported on his enquiries into invoices submitted by Pro Green and Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd.

RESOLVED

that the following accounts be approved:-

		£
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils	Annual subscription	674.85
J Lonsdale	Honorarium – Membership of Disciplinary Panel	100.00

J Buchanan	Honorarium – Membership of Disciplinary Panel	100.00
Mrs B Hayes	Honorarium – Membership of Disciplinary Panel	100.00
Mrs A Lovesey	Honorarium – Membership of Grievance Panel	100.00
R Stone	Honorarium – Clerk at Grievance Panel	100.00
Institute of Groundsmanship	Associate membership subscription	104.00
Pro Green	Maintenance (subject to clarification)	450.00
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd.	Vehicle repairs (subject to clarification)	822.94
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd	Service of Stiga (subject to clarification)	810.62
A.ON	Additional premium – Officials’ indemnity and libel & slander cover	62.28
Fire Safety Services	Fire safety equipment – Tillage Hall	654.90
BT	Quarterly account for BT services	122.25
BT	Re-direction of number charge	56.34
M Carr	Mileage	11.60
C Rabbett	Reimbursement – purchase of fuel	39.43

(Note: The payments relating to the salaries of employees, etc. appear in the confidential section of the Council’s minute book.)

110/11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed relating to employment matters.

111/11 EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

The minutes of this item appear in the confidential section of the Council’s minute book. There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 10.45 p.m.