Parish Council of Waresley-cum-Tetworth

Draft Minutes of Meeting Thursday 26 November 2020, 8pm, via Zoom

Present: Councillors Eleanor Jack, Jonathan Lawton, John Archer, Richard Jerman & Malcolm Gordon.

In attendance: County Councillor Julie Wisson, District Councillor Richard West. Richard Price, Doug & Margaret Scott, Alan McCormick&Neil Bye.

Minutes: Rod Kerr (Clerk)

Apologies for absence: Ann Dugdale

Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests. None

To approve minutes of parish council meeting of 28 September 2020: The minutes were read & signed as a true & correct record by chairman Eleanor Jack.

Matters arising from those minutes not on the agenda: The planning application for Woodfield Farm has been withdrawn. The timer on the Jubilee Lamp has been altered and has been set to be on all day. Councillor Archer reset it. The Gilding Club have withdrawn their request for revised flying hours. Highways have advised refusal of the plans for a dwelling behind the Village Hall.

Report from County Councillor Julie Wisson: The County Councillors are currently looking at the implications of the spending review. The household recycling centres are open, but booking is still required – some residents are not turning up however. The mobile libraries are open for select and collect.

Report from District Councillor Richard West: Councillor West confirmed that the District Council are also going through the small print of the local spending review and local settlement.

Councillor Jack thanked them both for their continued efforts.

Consultations and Procedures:

a) **Planning for the future. Consultation to reform the Planning System-update:**Councillor Jack wrote aletter on behalf of the council expressing their views – it has been acknowledged and it was agreed to forward it on to our MP.

b) **East-West railway Consultation – update:** EWR are continuing with their survey of the area and have produced an interactive map of the proposed route area. The latest version is slightly different to the one published in January 2020 and shows the proposed swathe a bit nearer to Waresley. It also omits Sugley Wood. It was agreed that the Chairman would draft a letter to point out the discrepancies and to suggest the route is more aligned to the new A428 – this will be circulated to the other councillors for approval before being sent.

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c) **A428 Upgrade - update:**Councillor Jack attended an online session regarding the A428 – not much to report but it was good that they are keeping the local community updated.

d) **London Luton Airport & NATS Consultation:**Councillor Archer has had a detailed look the options presented –we have until 5 February 2021 to respond but our MP has asked for our first thoughts. Councillor Archer reported that there is logic in the options put forward although neither are particularly in our interests in Waresley. Option 2 is probably the safest, but Option 1 would be the best of the two for the village. The current shared stack (between Luton & Stansted) is not the safest of options and most airports have more than one dedicated stack. There were concerns voiced that we were not being offered a proper choice and it was wondered if the proposed route could be diverted along the A1 corridor where it would cause less noise in areas of habitation. Councillor Lawton thought it was not needed, especially with the future uncertainty of air travel and that it would adversely affect the quality of life in the surrounding area. It was agreed that Councillor Archer would write a brief letter to out MP outlining our concerns over the lack of choice and the affect of the aircraft noise on the local community and environment. He was thanked for his efforts so far on this matter.

Planning: 20/01612/FUL – Proposed new Polytunnel at Waresley Park Garden centre: These plans had been discussed earlier by the councillors who had decided to approve them – there were no grounds for refusal.

Highways – HGV Traffic Through the Village: AdyMcGlennon had raised the issue of the number of HGV's going through the village. There had been three accidents recently – two near the junction with Manor Farm Road and one outside the pub that had narrowly missed the Jubilee Lamp. There were suggestions that the road could be narrowed, and a crossing put in place – this may act as a deterrent to HGV's using this route, but it was thought this would cause more problems and could be dangerous. It was also wondered if it were possible to have sat-navsreprogrammed to avoid the area, but it was not known if this was a possibility. After discussion, the most realistic option to reduce speed and make the road less attractive as a short cut would be to apply for a 20mph speed limit. An application could be made for the next round of funding from the Joint Highways Initiative - we have missed this year's deadline, but it could be considered for next year. We could start to gather evidence now to help with our application and Councillor Jerman agreed to keep a spreadsheet of all traffic incidents in the village. It was added that the recent increase in lorries was probably connected to the demolition of the Green End industrial estate in Gamlingay – this will only be temporary. It was also hoped that the route would be less of an attractive shortcut when the new A428 was completed.

Waresley & Gransden Woods – Closure by Wildlife Trust: The Wildlife Trust has not replied to our emails & letters regarding the closure of the wood. It has been

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pointed out that although Browne's Piece is still open and the adjacent car park, the gate to the public footpath along the western edge of the wood is still locked. Also, the footpath initial area is very muddy and almost impassable.

The WAGWAG campaign group has been raising the matter with the Trust as well and Margaret Scott reported that Ingrid Sims has had a response and a meeting has been arranged in the Woods between 3 members of the group & 3 members of the Trust to discuss possible solutions to the issue. The problem of the state of the footpaths is the responsibility of the County Council – Councillor Wisson will write to Zaria Bettles of the Rights of Way department to make her aware and ask what the procedure was to get them repaired. It was agreed that Councillor Jack will write to the Wildlife Trust again outlining our concerns and supporting the WAGWAG campaign.

Jubilee Light Repairs: The clerk has contacted the stonemason and he has agreed to come & inspect the base of the lamp again and make recommendations about restoring the lettering and to look why the stone is changing colour. He said the algae is due to the stone not having been cleaned for some time and is easily removed.

Plans for Open Spaces – consideration of purchasing planters for the entrances to the village:A company has approached as asking if they could supply planters in the village. It was thought they could be put at the entrances to the village and be somewhere to put the Greensand Ridge signs. Councillor Gordon suggested we approach the Garden Centre to see if they could supply them – it would be nice to support our local businesses. It was agreed that Councillor Archer will contact Highways to see if we need permission to put them in place and if they would charge us for the privilege while Councillor Jack will speak the Garden Centre.

Precept 2021/22 – discuss amount to be requested: The clerk had prepared a spreadsheet listing the proposed income & expenditure for the coming year and how much would be needed to cover essential expenses. As the council has had comparatively few major expenses recently, the balances are looking healthy. Following a discussion,acknowledging that it had been a difficult year for parishioners,it was agreed to request a nil increase to the 20/21 precept leaving it at £5300.

Finance:

Cheque Signatories – confirm those we have: The signatories are currently Councillors Jack, Archer & Jerman. The clerk will find out if Councillor Lawton can be added if he is acting as RFO.

Update on Internal Audit - 2019/20: The AGAR Certificate of Exemption for 19/20 confirming that the Council is exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 has been registered and acknowledged by the External Auditor Pkf Littlejohn. Now the missing bank statements have been received, the clerk can complete the paperwork for submission to the internal auditor to sign off the accounts.

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Payments Approved:R. Kerr Clerking Services for September to December 2020 (net of tax) £180.00. PAYE to HMRC for the same period £45.00It was agreed to make a donation of £1000 to Waresley Village Hall. Proposed by Councillor Archer & seconded by Councillor Gordon and agreed.

AOB: Next year, the Parish Council celebrates its 50th anniversary – a celebration will be arranged for the Summer.

Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 28 January 2021 at 8pm in Waresley Village Hall if permitted or via Zoom if not. Councillor Jerman will make the booking.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.39pm.

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