Parish Council of Waresley-cum-Tetworth

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday 3 February 2022, 8pm at Waresley Village Hall

Present: Councillors Richard Jerman (Chair), Eleanor Jack (vice-chair),Jonathan Lawton, & Malcolm Gordon.

Minutes taken by Rod Kerr (Clerk)

In attendance: No others were present

Apologies for absence: Councillor John Archer,County Councillor Stephen Ferguson, District Councillor Richard West.

Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests. None

To approve minutes of parish council meeting of 25 November 2021: The minutes had been circulated to the councillors and were approved& signed as a true & correct record by ChairmanRichard Jerman.

Matters arising from those minutes not on the agenda: A letter regarding the hedge near the Village Hall has been received from Mr Jones, the applicant for land behind the hall – the Councillors can see nothing to suggest the hedge is breaking the law. The Clerk will advise Mr Jones of this and that his letter has been passed to the Village Hall Committee.

Strategic cycle link: Mrs Jack is to attend a meeting between Gamlingay PC, Potton TC and North East Beds MP Richard Fuller on the proposed link.

A response was sent to Abbotsley Parish Council regarding the proposed dog waste bin by Councillor Jerman explaining that as we did not have bins in the village of Waresley, it would not be appropriate at this time to fund one on the boundary with Abbotsley.

Reports from County & District Councillors: Both County Councillor Stephen Ferguson & District Councillor Richard West were unable to attend and sent reports to the meeting instead (Appendices A & B). Councillor Jerman will ask Councillor Ferguson if any progress has been made regarding the footpath issues in the village.

Consultations and procedures

a) **HDC Landscape & Townscape SPD:**Councillor Jack has responded to this (see Appendix C) - she pointed out a number of errors and discrepancies in the document.

b) **Greater Cambridge Local Plan:**Again, Councillor Jack responded on behalf of the council, highlighting the need for the strategic cycle link

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(see Appendix D). Councillor Lawton has also contacted Mayor Nik Johnson about the cycle way between Gamlingay, Waresley & the Gransdens and extending the Ting bus scheme to this area.

There have been no further developments on the A428 & East West Railway.

Wildlife Trust – Waresley Wood Footpath issues: There has been no change in the situation since the last meeting.. We have been told that no progress can be made on the condition of FP1until we have a new ROW officer. Cllr Ferguson was to look into this.

The parking area at Gamlingay Wood is still closed off. Councillors Jerman & Jack will discuss the matter with the landowner.

Traffic in the village.

a) **Interactive Sign& Speed Camera Sign:** The clerk contacted Eltisley Parish Council about the cost of their mobile speed camera – it was in excess of £3000 5 years ago – it was agreed that this is in excess of the current budget. The speed camera sign is currently pending with Councillors Gordon & Archer – there will be a further update at the next meeting.

b) **Purchase of Mirror & Post from Junction of B1040 & Manor Farm Road:** Councillor Archer provided an update prior to the meeting stating that the location of the mirror has now been agreed and approved with the landowners and tree warden. A rectangular stainless steel mirror on a single post would be best. It is hoped to get the work done in Spring or early Summer – Councillor Jerman will confirm with Councillor Archer. Councillor Jack said the work should be done in this financial year.

c) **Potholes:** Councillor Gordon reported that the potholes in Vicarage Road have been filled to a certain extent. Councillor Jerman reminded the meeting that potholes can be reported online to the Council website.

d) **Condition of Manor Farm Road:** The verge opposite The Studio is getting worn down and there is some mud on the road. Water & traffic is washing a lot of mud from the verges onto the road at times. It was agreed that Councillor Jerman will speak to the local residents and try to get to the bottom of the problems.

Streetlight Issues in the Village – consider installing LED lights: Streetlight 11 is out of action and 12 comes on intermittently. The clerk will report this to K&M Lighting and also find out the potential cost of replacing the lights with LED lights and what the savings to the running costs would be. Councillor Gordon will look to see if there are any grants available for converting to LED.

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Litter Pick: Councillor Jack will liaise with Bill Garner about picking up the filled bags of rubbish from the roadside. It was agreed to allocate areas to volunteers and ask them to do the pick over a weekend rather than a specified day & time. We have 12 sets of hi-viz jackets and grabbers which should be enough. The weekend will be arranged in April or May.

Jubilee lamp repairs – update: Memorial Makeovers have advised they will be able to start work in February but will need a deposit in advance. The clerk will make arrangements with them to get the project underway.

Finance: The following payments were approved:-

a) **N-Power Electricity – monthly charge £60.54** The clerk will check the current level of charge and if it has increased since N-power took over.
b) **Approve Churchyard Maintenance – Simon Slater £330** Councillor Jack will contact Mr Slater to discuss the schedule of work over the coming year.
c) **Clerks salary& Tax £180.00 and £45.00**
d) **Audit Update –** the outstanding audits are progressing and should be signed off shortly.

AOB & Confirm date of Next Meeting: The councillors were reminded that elections to the council will be held in May this year. Councillor Lawton confirmed his intention to stand down after 7 years as a councillor.

The date of the next meeting was set for Thursday 31 March 2022 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting was declared closed at 20:50.

RG 31/3/22

Appendix A – Report from County Councillor Stephen Ferguson

Council Tax

This month I reluctantly bring news of a probable rise in Cambridgeshire County Council's portion of Council Tax. At the Budget Meeting next Tuesday, the Joint Administration will propose an increase of 4.99% (which is the maximum allowable increase).

The proposed increase would mean band B and C households (which make up over 50% of the county) paying £1.19 more a week, an increase of £62.08 for the year. Although similar proposed increases from Huntingdonshire District Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner will mean that the total increase in Council Tax will be more than this.

The reason for this is a sustained decrease in Government funding for councils, which means that we have a choice to either cut services, or increase tax (while also making savings through efficiency). The Joint Administration also inherited a £22 million budget deficit from the previous administration.

As Northamptonshire County Council and Peterborough City Council has recently demonstrated - councils can get themselves into financial difficulties which means that they can no longer deliver essential services.

This is not a decision that we have taken lightly. In the midst of an energy crisis and a period of 5% inflation, we know that many people are struggling financially. However, some of the money will be spent on helping the most vulnerable in our community. For example, the County Council intends to continue the holiday free school meal voucher scheme and the household support fund, despite the fact that Government support for these schemes has stopped.

The proposed budget also includes a £14 million Just Transition fund over the next five years, which will aim to fund projects that tackle inequality, improve lives and care for the environment. In the first year, the fund is proposed to fund schemes that will increase flood prevention, help tackle climate change, widen opportunities for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

As your County Councillor, I will continue to fight to make sure that you receive value for money for our portion of your Council Tax. I think that most of you would prefer to pay a little extra for a decent quality of service, rather than the same amount for a deteriorating service.

Local Highways Officer

Our new Local Highways Officer Maciej Adamczyk has been very active since he joined us in December, and has arranged meetings with a number of parish councils in our patch to review their long-standing issues. If you haven't already been in contact with Maciej then I suggest you drop him an email and invite him for a walk around your village. It's early days but he has been very proactive so far and I know that a number of parishes have been impressed by his proactivity.

Cllr Stephen Ferguson

Appendix B – Report from District Councillor Richard West

AT HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

HUNTINGDONSHIRE TREE STRATEGY REVIEW 2020 2030 ANNUAL UPDATE
Thursday 3 rd February 2022 at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (customers and partnership) meeting will be held to review the tree strategy the parish councils play important part in the maintenance of trees in their village, this review is about the district council role and responsibilities.

MODEL COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT
The local Government Association (LGA) published in December 2020 Model Code of Conduct updated in July 2021, with the next scheduled elections for the district council May 2022 it was felt appropriate the implementation of the Model Code in line with the intake of members.

The purpose of the Model Code and the Guidance has been designed to protect the democratic role encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust and confidence in the role of councillor in local government.

PLANNING SERVICE
I am aware residents have concerns over the length of time taken to reach decision on their planning application am hopeful there will be improvement in the level of service.
It is easy write due to covid health pandemic, staff turnover and a significant increase in officer workloads.
I believe the problem been building over number of years reduction in planning officers across the country, which has coincided with reduction in graduates attending and completing courses ran by Universities together with high number of staff leaving councils for better paid jobs and benefits in the public sector.
It is the role of elected members and senior management to find solutions to deliver planning service which meets expectations.

NEWS SNIPPETS
Huntingdonshire District Council has been shortlisted for one of Keep Britain Tidy's annual network awards

Huntingdonshire District Council adopted the aspiration of a net carbon zero Huntingdonshire by
2040

UPDATES
A428 and DCO submission Have - no further information.

EAST WEST RAIL Have joined the local representatives group.

INFORMATION
Huntingdonshire District Council visit the website for information on services available, you can subscribe to district council newsletter and join the mailing list.
RICHARD WEST
Appendix C - HDC Landscape & Townscape SPD - Councillor Eleanor Jack

Please find below my parish council's comments on the above document. I have attempted to submit the comments online, but as it is such a very large document, it was not always possible to find the most appropriate place to make comments – or indeed anywhere at all in some cases. I am therefore summarising them below and I hope you will take note of them.

We consider that the document has highly laudable aims and some excellent features, but we do have the following concerns.

Landscape categories

I am concerned that our parish does not really fit into any of the categories used to define landscape character areas. Our parish of Waresley-cum-Tetworth is assigned to South East Claylands but in my view that does not really describe our landscape. Waresley and Tetworth lie along the Greensand Ridge, an escarpment which runs north from Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire and which terminates at Waresley. This gives the parish a distinctive character which needs to be recognised.

Large country estates with extensive parkland grew up over time along this escarpment and the estates at Waresley and Tetworth have had a profound influence on the development of the landscape and of our village. Parts of this eighteenth century parkland survive and need to be protected from insensitive development. Likewise the many small plantations of trees surrounding these estates need to be preserved, as well as the larger ancient woodlands and SSSIs.

The District Council used to have an "Area of Best Landscape" category which covered these examples. Has that been discontinued, and if not, why does it not figure on the interactive map?

Maps

There are some anomalies on the maps, including the Interactive map, which I find worrying. Some of these may be simple mistakes but they should be corrected.

Some areas which are really farmland are coloured deep purple (i.e. non-agricultural).

The areas affected are

1. The area South of Waresley Wood – this is definitely farmland but has been misrepresented as non-agricultural.
2. A small area between Gamlingay Wood and the B1040

There is a large inverted triangle of white pointing down from Abbotsley to Waresley, which erroneously shows this area as "urban" when it is open countryside.

BCN Wildlife Trust sites are not shown either unless they are ancient woodland. Thus the interactive map does not show Sugley Wood, which is a Wildlife Trust site in Waresley, acquired in about 2000, which extends Gamlingay Wood to the East.

Conclusion

If this SPD is to become an effective planning guide for the future, it needs to describe our landscape accurately and highlight all the features which need to be protected.

We realise that in a survey of this kind, some generalisations have to be made. However, once planning documents are approved, they tend to be set in stone, so it is important to address any discrepancies at this stage.

Eleanor Jack

Vice-chair

Waresley-cum-Tetworth parish Council

Appendix D - Greater Cambridge Local Plan – Councillor Eleanor Jack

There is a great need for a strategic cycle link from Gamlingay through Waresley to Great Gransden and from there to Cambourne. This could be part of a greater project to link Bedford to Cambridge by cycle. The Bedford to Sandy station section is in place, as is funding for Sandy to Potton and Potton to Gamlingay is under discussion. The Cambourne to Cambridge cycleway is also a priority.

As traffic increases along the B1040, cycling along it has become increasingly dangerous. In earlier years cycling between our local villages was routine, but now it is not an option for normal cyclists. The proposed link would be of huge benefit to local residents and would in the wider context supply leisure facilities for the much larger population between Cambridge and Bedford.

This scheme is strongly supported by Waresley-cum-Tetworth Parish Council.

Eleanor Jack

Vice-chair

Waresley-cum-Tetworth parish Council