

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF CULWORTH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

<b>Present:</b>	Andrew Wilby (AW)	Chairman
	Stuart Rolt (SR)	Vice Chairman
	David Mumford (DM)	Councillor
	Catherine Ruffley (CR)	Councillor
	Martin Rowling (MR)	Councillor
	Jose Rowling (JR)	Councillor
	Gary Denby (GD)	Parish Clerk

**Public:** Cllr Alison Eastwood (AE) West Northants Council (WNC)  
(8 Total)

Welcome by Andrew Wilby to Councillors and members of the public.

1. Apologies received: Cllr Nancy Guinness (has offered her resignation)
2. Councillor declarations of interest & dispensations in the following agenda items:  
SR with regards planning item 11.4.
3. Receive minutes of the meeting held on **8<sup>th</sup> February 2024** as an accurate record of the Parish Council official acts and decisions. Proposed by SR, seconded by JR and agreed by all Councillors present.
4. **Public Concerns** (prior notice to the Chair or the Parish Clerk is recommended)

AE reported upon the WNC Budget for 2024-25 being balanced, with several council-owned buildings to be sold. The replacement HS/2 route has now opened between 'Greatworth T & Sugrave Road'.

5. **Matters Arising** from previous Parish Council minutes

- 5.1 Ref 6.1: Removal of the goal posts from the former football field – completed by DM
- 5.2 Ref 6.2: Chasing the order for Woodlands Trust trees (postpone to Oct 2024). Task taken-on by **JR**.
- 5.3 Ref 6.3: Update on the next Village Newsletter, finding a new Editor: ongoing **AW**.
- 5.4 Ref 7: Report back on village litter pick on Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> March, highly successful with many thanks to the village volunteers.
- 5.5 Ref 11: Ordering of King Charles III portrait – tortuous, but hopefully accomplished GD.

**6. Report of a dog attack upon a person on Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

A Police Report had been made of an unprovoked attack by a pair of a Staffordshire Bull Terriers on a small terrier dog belonging to residents on The Green. The gentleman resident was by his property with his dog on a lead. There were significant injuries to the small dog requiring veterinary treatment. The owner suffered injury to his hands and ongoing trauma by attempting to release his dog from the Bull Terriers jaws, necessitating a visit to A&E.

The attacking dogs were free-roaming and without a collar or harness. It took two other members of the public to subdue the attacking dog and to release the victim animal, at considerable risk to themselves.

Concerns were expressed for the safety of young children living to each side of the property, also for passing children going to and from the local primary school. It was believed that the Police may have placed an unspecified voluntary order upon the owners of the unrestrained dogs. Any further instances of the Bull Terriers roaming in public off the lead needs to be reported to the Police. Inquiries will be made regarding the specifics of any order to alleviate this potential danger; also the potential of the alleged breeding of these animals in a rented property **AE**.

## **7. Update on the Culworth Hill Field Trust CHFT (cricket ground)**

Discussions of the potential Phase 2 development of a village hall facility are ongoing. The weather needs to improve before the Phase 1 tarmac top cover can be applied, with finances finalised.

## **8. Update on Adult Gym and Children's Play Areas improvements**

8.1 Ref 9.1: Final £9,118 part of the Play Park HS/2 grant received on 27 Feb 2024. The Clerk estimates available Parish Council cash assets of £41,000 on 31 March 2024, with about £10,000 of VAT reclaims outstanding.

8.2 Ref 9.2: Development of a Play Park joint Risk Assessment: ongoing **GD+**

8.3 Ref 9.3: Consider quotation for child safety fencing from Paul Lewis (Moreton Pinkney)

A verbal quotation and a more accurate estimate have been received for a 60 metre stretch of a pale child safety fence 1.2m high, including two wooden gates of 1.2m and 3.6m width (as per his Moreton Pinkney installation). The cost is £2,400 + VAT. The aim is for its installation before the 2024 cricket season starts (mid April). The council's 2024-25 budget provides £3,000 for safety fencing, a safety inspection and any repairs.

This safety expenditure was proposed by SR, seconded by DM; agreed by all Councillors present. Paul Lewis may wish to quote for an additional 12m stretch of 1.2m high fencing, between the rear of the cricket pavilion and the entrance gate post (there being a boundary wall drop-off to the side of this, presenting a significant risk **GD**).

8.4 Ref 9.4: Update with regards temporary public safety signage – ongoing **GD**

## **9 Updates on the Parish Council Burial Ground (MR GD)**

JR continues to support and guide the new Clerk in these endeavours. It appears that Humphries Funerals replacement company Funeral Partners Limited has under-paid by £50 with its cheque for the February 2024 interment of Frances Jean Marshall. The cheque is to be returned and a request made for an on-line payment of £399 **GD**.

## **10. Correspondence received by Councillors**

10.1 8 Feb: Email regards the online payment of the Hill Field lease agreement

10.2 8 Feb: N-CALC Training on Microsoft 365

10.3 12 Feb: N-CALC mini eUpdate 09/02 – WNC request for Gov.Uk web site rebrand

- 10.4 12 Feb: WNC Planning explanation for their delays
- 10.5 19 Feb: WNC consultation on plans to improve air quality
- 10.6 19 Feb: WNC grants scheme to support debt, money & immigration advice
- 10.7 19 Feb: N-CALC mini eUpdate 16/02 – Portrait of King (by 28 Mar); new model docs
- 10.8 19 Feb: WNC cabinet’s budget proposals 2024-25
- 10.9 19 Feb: 1 day closure of Banbury Lane on 22 February
- 10.10 19 Feb: N\_CALC invite to Safer Communities event on 26 March near Towcester
- 10.11 19 Feb: Project Servability – new grant programmes
  
- 10.12 22 Feb: WNC update on traffic enforcement in NorthamptonshirParish Counce
- 10.13 22 Feb: The Rural Bulletin – fairer rural funding
- 10.14 26 Feb: N-CALC mini eUpdate 23/02 – Unitary Council Budgets; King portrait codes
- 10.15 26 Feb: WNC launches £260K grant scheme for local infrastructure organisations
  
- 10.16 7 Mar: Unity Bank account receives final part of HS/2 grant for Play Park

**11. Planning (items available at [wnc.planning-register.co.uk](http://wnc.planning-register.co.uk) + Advanced Planning + Parish)**

- 11.1 2024/0930/TCA: works to 1x Horse Chestnut tree at The Stable Cottage, Culworth Road OX17 2AP. No Councillor comments.
- 11.2 2024/0861/PNHPD: Whether prior approval required regards amenity impact for a proposed single storey rear extension at 7 Barley Hill OX17 2AR. Councillors had no objections to this proposal **GD**.
- 11.3 2024/1304/FULL: Conversion of outbuildings to form a single dwelling and associated garage and store at Culworth Fields, Weston Road OX17 2HN. Councillors had no objections to this proposal **GD**.
- 11.4 2024/0813/PA: Application for Prior Approval for an agricultural barn for the purpose of grazing livestock, storing machinery, grain and hay at Peas Furlong Cottage, Banbury Road OX17 2HL. Parish Councillors agreed that this proposal would be dangerous for the frequent egress of slow moving agricultural vehicles onto a very busy and fast (60 mph limit) country road. Danger is further increased by the proposed access being within a hidden dip, where there is thought to be a history of accidents to the access nearly opposite that being proposed **GD**. It was agreed that this should be called before the planning committee, rather than the use of delegated powers **AE**.
- 11.5 2024/0315/TCA: tree work at Mountfield, High Street OX17 2BR to include removal of Leylandi, removal of Monkey Puzzle and removal of Ash tree. Pending.

**12. Audit and Accounts**

- 12.1 Ref 15.2: Clerk’s registration with Pensions Regulator & PAYE  
  
Advice from Danny Moody at N-CALC suggests that since the Clerk’s salary is below £10,000 pa there is no need to register with the Pensions Regulator. PAYE registration for an end of year p60 remains outstanding **GD**.
- 12.2 Ref 15.3: Update on VAT recovery for the Cricket field and Play Field expenditures

Remains outstanding, potentially £16,500 for 2023-24 due to Play Park expenditures, plus a less defined amount for the second half of 2022-23 (there is a three year time limit) **GD**.

- 12.3 Ref 15.7: 24 Feb - Will Pryse of Complete Weed Control authorised to proceed in May  
 12.4 15.8: 15 Feb – One year contract confirmed with Yu Energy for street light power
- 12.5 Ref 15.5: 24 Feb - AJR Electrical advised to proceed with Barley Hill lamp replacement. It was replaced on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for £783.60 inc VAT, to be added to the payments.
- 12.6 Ref 15.10: Updates to Parish Council Asset Register (+play equipment, bin & bench) outstanding **GD**.
- 12.7 Ref 15.11: March interest rates available with Nationwide Building Society – proceed?

The interest rate available for a zero access 1 year bond with Nationwide have reduced from 5% to 4.25%. The rate currently being supplied on our Unity Trust online saver accounts is 2.75%. The difference of 1.5% on £20,000 for a year is at most £300, for which a whole new cycle of identity proof by several Councillors will be required. Councillors therefore agreed to leave their monies on deposit with Unity Trust, for which there are no access restrictions.

- 12.8 Consider increased dog bin charges 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 onwards: £3.80 + VAT per bin weekly

Councillors considered the reliability and charging in arrears provided by Marcus Young Environmental Services over many years. This was contrasted with a recent upstart suggesting and emptying rate of £2 per bin, assuming they can get many sites across the county – too good to be true? Councillors decided to remain with our current provider for 2024 **GD**.

- 12.9 Consider and approve the Parish Council payments listed below, proposed by SR, seconded by CR and agreed by all Councillors present:-

Description / Power	Amount	VAT	Total
<b>N Trott</b> rent under the 50 year lease for Hill Field 29/04/13, due by 1 <sup>st</sup> April annually, now by direct payment (email 8 Feb 2024)	£30.00	-	£30.00
<b>Wave Water</b> for Hill Field on behalf of the Cricket Club to Feb 2024	£13.94	-	£13.94
<b>Gary Denby</b> Parish Clerk gross remuneration and expenses (5 weeks) including home office expenses 8 Feb – 13 Mar	£285.20 £32.50	-	£317.70
<b>AJR Electrical Services</b> for removal and installation of a new LED lamp head and bracket on Barley Hill.	£653.00	£130.60	£783.60

### 13. Councillors' Comments

- 13.1 DM checked the village defibrillator today and all is fine. Clerk to advise The Circuit **GD**.
- 13.2 Councillors agreed that Parish Council meetings should in future start at 7pm, including the APM in April. Invitees for reporting to the latter should include the school Head, Chair of the cricket club, Chair of the village hall, Chair of CHFT **GD**.
- 13.3 The Clerk advised council that both Moreton Pinkney and Preston Capes receive a small annual Highways grant towards their mowing of the verges within the village confines. Culworth mow their own greens and verges and have no reliance upon this grant. Thus it is likely that WNC Highways will do their usual occasional mow of the verges, which

they consider to be their responsibility, at odd times and without notice, in order to keep the splays clear. This may irritate one resident who appreciates the wild flowers in the verge outside his property.

- 13.4 Whilst on the subject of mowing, in January the Clerk advised Roger Smith that in 2024 he need no longer mow the football field and its surrounds. Councillors now realise that with the installation of the Play Park and its safety fence, this area now needs to be mown by the Parish Council. Hence the Clerk will approach Roger Smith to see if he is prepared to do this, instead of the football area (it could take longer due to the strimming requirements around individual pieces of equipment and use of a smaller mower; also include the Gym equipment) **GD**.
- 13.5 JR advised that the Clerk needs to order two Green Waste bin contracts with WNC at £58 each, for the bins at the Burial Ground (recorded for Berry Hill Close OX17 2AT) and the Cricket Field Pavilion at OX17 2AX using [westnorthants.gov.uk/bin-collection-services/garden-waste](http://westnorthants.gov.uk/bin-collection-services/garden-waste) **GD**.
14. Date of next meeting: **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April AFTER** the **Annual Parish Meeting** at **7pm** in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

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**Chairman**

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**Date**