

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CULWORTH PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on Tuesday 6th June 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present:	Andrew Wilby (AW)	Councillor
	Stuart Rolt (SR)	Councillor
	David Mumford (DM)	Councillor
	Michelle Koster (MK)	Councillor
	Nancy Guinness (NG)	Councillor
	Martin Rowling (MR)	Councillor
	John Mullins-Blyth (JM)	Councillor
	Gary Denby (GD)	Parish Clerk (newly appointed)
Public:	Alison Eastwood (AE)	WNC Unitary Councillor
	Karen Mullins-Blyth	
(11 total)	John Emmett	

Welcome to members and the public from AW.

1. **Election of Chairman** from current Councillors, overseen by AE

AW was proposed by SR, seconded by MR. There were no further nominations. Cllr Andrew Wilby was duly elected as Parish Chairman for 2023-24 by all Councillors present and signed his acceptance of office.

2. **Appointment of a Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)**

Gary Denby is the present Clerk for nearby Moreton Pinkney and Preston Capes, for eight and five years respectively; also a Parish Councillor representing small businesses in Woodford Halse. He was introduced into local council operations work by the former Parish Clerk of many years Jose Rowling (retired March 2023). Commitments to these preclude his availability for Culworth Parish Council meetings on their current pattern.

Proposed by JM, seconded by DM and agreed by all Councillors present. Employment terms will be on a par to his other, similar-sized Parish Councils (for simplicity):- 3.5 hours weekly (4hrs paid, includes statutory holidays) at £14.26 per hour, below HMRC's Lower Earnings Level threshold for NI and PAYE.

3. Apologies received: None.
4. Declarations of interest in the following items: None.
5. Receive minutes and approve accuracy of the Parish Council Meeting held on **18th April 2023**. AW advised that these have been distributed to Councillors by email and have been published on the Parish Council web site. Proposed as an accurate record by JM, seconded by SR and agreed by all Councillors present. To be printed, signed, dated and initialled **AW**.
6. Receive reports from **Annual Parish Meeting** held on **18th April 2023**. Proposed by MK, seconded by DM and agreed by all Councillors present. To be uploaded to the Parish Council web site **GD**.
7. **Matters arising** from previous Parish Council minutes – None.

8. **Public Concerns** (prior notice the the Chair or the Parish Clerk is recommended)

- 8.1 John Emmett noted his concern that the verge fronting his property at The Old Police House on Banbury Lane has been cut by the Highways verges contractor. In times past, he would have received notification of such an event, but not for a few years. John would like to encourage the 'wilding' of his verge and asks the Parish Council to assist.
- 8.2 AE reported on a 4.5 mile mains water pipe being replaced between Culworth and Eydon, which is likely to cause intermittent traffic disruption for the best part of a year, commencing 17th July 2023.

9. **Review the council's delegation arrangements**

9.1 **Election of a Vice Chairman**

This is an unofficial appointment. However, all outgoing Clerk correspondence is copied to both the Chair and Vice Chair, in order that the latter is fully informed of all developments and can easily stand-in at a meeting, should the need arise.

Cllr Stuart Rolt was proposed to be Vice Chair by JM and was supported by all Councillors present.

9.2 **Review of council sub-committees:**

Finance (Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk) & Account Signatories (AW, SR, DM);

This appears to have delegated powers to approve budgeted payments by the Parish Council, permitting its bi-monthly meetings. All expenditures of public monies must be properly published on a Parish Council agenda (sometimes retrospectively, as in the case of Direct debits), enabling their query by members of the public. This Committees Terms Of Reference may need reviewing **GD**.

Proposed by JM and agreed by all Councillors present.

Burial Ground & Berry Hill Close (Clerk and Cllr Mumford)

An oversight role with mowing and occasional administrative requirements.

Proposed by SR and agreed by all Councillors present.

Planning (presently Cllr Koster and Cllr Mullins-Blyth)

This requires a technical appreciation of the grounds upon which the Parish Council can make objections or suggestions (usually limited to size, scale, materials, access...). A regular monitoring of the Unitary Council's (new) planning register is required at wnc.planning-register.co.uk **Advanced + Planning + Culworth Parish**

Proposed by SR and agreed by all Councillors present.

9.3 **Lead Councillors with regards to:**

Culworth Hill Field Trust (presently Cllr Wilby);

In April 2013 the Parish Council entered into a long term lease agreement with the late Shirley Trott, for the use of the land south of Queen Street in Culworth, for a term up to and including 31st March 2063 for a rent of £20 pa with specified £5 increments. There are obligations on the Parish Council with regards the properties thereon and insurance. This is key to the HS/2 grants towards the Cricket club and Community Recreation area.

HS/2 Representative (presently Cllr Rolt);
Keeping on top of works in progress; alerting villagers to likely traffic disruption.

Culworth Village Hall liaison (presently Cllr Mullins-Blyth);

School Liaison (presently Cllr Guinness);

Community Defibrillator monthly checking (Cllr David Mumford agreed);
This may require a formal (re-)registration with The Circuit www.thecircuit.uk
(999 calls use this system to advise whether an operational defibrillator is available locally; otherwise it remains 'hidden') **GD**.

Hill Field Liaison (presently Cllr Mumford)
Liaison with the Culworth Cricket Club and the new Community Recreation group, with authority to arrange mowing of the outfield and the likes (Cartwright Landscapes at present). There is a litter bin by the gate, requiring regular emptying. The Parish Council maintains a Public Liability insurance for this area – it needs reinstating, if it has lapsed **GD**.

- renewals agreed by all Councillors present.

9.4 **Appointed village contacts for:-**

Footpaths & Bridleways (presently Mark & Sarah Izzett);

Help to monitor the condition and accessibility of local footpaths and bridleways, reporting any issues to the appropriate landowners or WNC (a past facility, in abeyance?). This map from Parish Online:-



Tree Warden (**Nancy Guinness** was proposed);
To assist in the monitoring of trees within the Parish;
with local advisement and the support of the WNC tree specialist Michael Venton.

Village Newsletter culworth.newsletter@gmail.com (Cllr Koster was proposed);

Village Website www.culworthparishcouncil.gov.uk: Presently supported by Mrs Joanne Wilby; the Clerk is to take a more active role since it needs re-vamping to make audit and accounts documents more readily accessible **GD**.

Village Street Lighting – all defects are reported to the Parish Clerk, who arranges their repair or upgrade to LED technology through Andy Reynolds (Electrician) in Eydon. There are about 20 public street light in total, with an associated contract for their unmetered supply of electricity (a Monthly Direct Debit by Yu Energy).

Police Liaison / Neighbourhood Watch: Your new Clerk has this role with his other Parish Councils, filtering-out the items that may have local interest or concern.

Berry Hill Close – an archaeological village site – Cllr David Mumford.
- renewals and new appointments agreed by all Councillors present.

10. Update on the **Hill Field improvements** with associated grants usage to date

AW reported that the cricket field perimeter awaits an agreement on the installation of a tarmac surface. The current spoil pile should shortly be redistributed. It is hoped the the current £10,000 approx under-spend may be properly allocated towards the overspend of the Community Play area, by agreement with the donors?

11. Update on the **Community Park project** with associated grants usage to date

- 11.1 AW reported that most of this year's planned improvements have now been completed:- to the cricket square (re-orientated so bowling is now north-south) ; the cricket pavilion and its loo facility; the installation of adult outdoor gym equipment by the Queens Street wall; the installation of children's play equipment besides the pavilion and its entrance from Banbury Lane.



There are issues with regards dog fouling on the field¹ generally, with risks to the public and young children during an adult cricket match, with potential risk to cricketers with equipment and any potential fencing installed on the field boundary. This is the reason for a detailed Risk Assessment and its potential mitigation measures. This will be an agenda item for the July meeting **GD**.

11.2 Use of the Community Infrastructure Levy - £5,300 approx?

Since there are no other current demands upon this, specific aspects of the the Community Park are clear candidates for these monies.

12. Review of the **King's Coronation** commemorations

The party in the cricket field was sadly rained-off on the Saturday. However, the Sunday Street Party with much better weather attracted over 100 villagers and was much appreciated. There was an expenditure / fund-raising of approximately £600, with a £16 excess being placed into the Parish Council coffers from **DM**.

13 Correspondence received by the Council – none documented.

1 <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/toxocariasis> [Accessed 3 July 2023]:-

- **do not** let children play in places where there might be lots of animal poo
- **do not** let animals poo in places where children play, such as sandboxes or playgrounds

14 WNC Councillor's report – see Public Time above.

15. Planning (items at wnc.planning-register.co.uk Advanced + Planning + Culworth Parish)

There are only two pending items on the Culworth Parish list:-

- 15.1 WNC/2023/0199/FUL: Proposed Erection Of A Garage/Home-Office To Replace An Existing Barn And Installation Of Solar Panels at The Barn Paddocks Farm High Street Culworth OX17 2BE by 13 March 2023. Councillors agreed they have No Objections. **GD**. Decision pending.
- 15.2 WNC/2023/0157/LBC: Listed building consent to convert existing garage building to provide first floor ancillary accommodation, and the associated building works at Fulford House The Green Culworth OX17 2BB by 8 March 2023. Councillors agreed they have No Objections **GD**. Decision pending.

16. Audit and Accounts

- 16.1 Approval of the Parish Council Accounts to 31 March 2023, signed by Chair and Clerk

These were prepared by our former Clerk and submitted to the auditor at the end of March 2023, as an aid to hand-over upon her retirement. They should have been properly agreed by the Parish Council beforehand. Carried forward to July meeting **GD**.

- 16.2 Consider Internal Audit report from Julia Tufnail (N-CALC) dated 19 May 2023:

*General or Financial Risk Assessment; Council's asset mapping;
Approving Financial regulations; Registering with Pensions Regulator*

Carried forward to the July meeting **GD**.

The Clerk has supplied a Financial and Management Risk Assessment based on other councils. There remain queries as the current position of the Parish Council insurance. The Clerk needs to complete a letter declining the offer of a pension plan, then register. the same with the Pensions Regulator **GD**.

- 16.3 Agree Parish Council meeting dates to the next Annual Meeting in May 2024
The regular 2nd Tuesday dates conflicts with the Clerk's other duties. APPENDIX A contains the latest proposal for Councillors to consider. Carried Forward.

- 16.4 Review of the Parish Council Governance documents available on the web site:-
culworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/community/culworth-parish-council-18681/policies-etc/

*Standing Orders; Codes of Conduct; Equality Statement;
Complaints Procedure; Burial Policy;*

Are they all current and in place? Carried forward to the July meeting **GD**.

- 16.5 Adoption of Financial Regulations (2019), model supplied by N-CALC
The Clerk has provided a Culworth Parish Council Financial Regulations 2019 document, for distribution with the next agenda **GD**.

- 16.6 Review of Parish Council Risk Assessment and its Asset Register
The Parish Council may need to update its Assets Register (asset mapping is irrelevant).

- 16.7 Renewal of Parish Council **insurance** by Hiscox through Gallagher Insurance Brokers from 1st June 2023. To be arranged immediately **GD**.

- 16.8 Review of the Parish Council subscriptions to other bodies (N-CALC, SLCC, ACRE)
These renewals were agreed by Councillors present **GD**.

- 16.9 Consideration of a Council policy for dealing with the press / social media – TBA **GD**.
16.10 Consideration of a Council policy for employment and training – TBA **GD**.
16.11 Consider the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 – To be reviewed **GD**.

16.12 **Completion** of Certificate of Exemption (Council expenditure below £25,000)
Achieved by retiring Clerk ahead of time (see 16.2).

16.13 **Completion** of Sections 1 & 2 of the Annual Return
Achieved by retiring Clerk ahead of time (see 16.2).

16.14 Consider Parish Council options for gaining interest on reserves monies being held.
There now appears to be some interest being accrued on the Unity Trust accounts
– to be reviewed **GD**.

16.15 Consider and approve the Parish Council payments listed below:-
Not available in the circumstances. A catch-up when Clerk has full access to the accounts
and statements **GD**; presently within the remit of the Finance sub committee (see 9.2
above).

Three new payments were approved by Councillors, proposed by SR and seconded by JM
including the final payment and expenses for the interim Clerk Rebecca Boasman.

13. **Councillors' Comments**

13.1 MR has concerns over prolific vegetation covering some of the road signage.

13.2 There was an issue raised with regards the children's school crossing and a report-back
to the head teacher **???**.

14. Date of next meeting: **Thursday 13th July 2023** at 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

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Chairman

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Date

APPENDIX A: Proposed Culworth Parish Council meeting dates for 2023-24

**Culworth Parish Council (PC)
Meeting Dates for 2023 - 24**

**Generally on the 2nd Thursday of the odd months
at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, *unless otherwise stated*.**

Tue 6th June	Annual General Meeting (belated due to Clerk changeover)
13th July	(5 weeks)
	NO AUGUST MEETING
14th September	(9 weeks)
	NO OCTOBER MEETING
9th November	Draft Budget discussions (8 weeks)
	NO DECEMBER MEETING
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 2024 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	
11th January	Budgeting and set Precept (9 weeks)
	NO FEBRUARY MEETING
14th March	(9 weeks) Spring awaits!
11th April	(1 st April: Easter bank Holiday) Annual Parish Meeting then the PC Review Accounts, prepare for Audit (4 weeks) - a dual meeting date
9th May	Annual General Meeting of the PC (4 weeks)

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend