

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held from 7.00pm on 26 February 2024 in the village hall.

(A signed notice of the meeting and agenda had been displayed on the two village notice boards from 19 February and an email summons of attendance had been issued to all Councillors on the same day. A copy of the notice and agenda had been entered on the Parish Council website from 19 February.)

**PRESENT: Councillors:** Doug Brown (DB) (Chairman), John Clouston (JC) and Emlyn Lilly (EL)  
**Parish Clerk:** Maurice Cole (MC)  
**Public:** David Wright

**APOLOGIES RECEIVED FOR ABSENCE:** 2024/22: Ian Durham (ID)

**COUNCILLORS' NON-STATUTORY DISCLOSURES AND DISCLOSURE OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN RELATION TO THE AGENDA NOT COVERED BY DISPENSATION:** 2024/23: None.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** 2024/24: The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2024 (draft distributed earlier) were confirmed as correct and the Chairman was authorised to sign approval.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA:** 2024/25:

2024/25a: DOG WASTE BINS (2024/19): The Clerk had advised Councillors that a quotation received from a recommended contractor in 2021 indicated an installation cost of £400 for two waste bins and £333pa for the weekly collection service. Both figures were before recoverable VAT. No further action was proposed.

2024/25b: TOWNSEND LANE (2024/20): DB had written to the West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) regarding resurfacing of Townsend Lane and a response was awaited.

#### **FINANCE**

2024/26: CASH BOOK: The cashbook was produced to the Chairman showing a current balance of £7,964.24 including the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund £3,655.82 (2019/12).

The bank statements to 31 January were produced to the Chairman showing a combined balance of £8,336.24 being in direct agreement with the cash book.

2024/27: BANK PAYMENTS: The following authorised payment had been paid since the last meeting: Cuttlefish Multimedia Limited, website and email support, £372.00.

2024/28: FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW: A draft Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Control Review for the year ended 31 March 2024 had been distributed prior to the meeting. Councillors reviewed the draft and resolved that the effectiveness of internal control and internal audit were both considered satisfactory. The Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Control Review were adopted as drafted.

2024/29: CHARGE CARD FACILITY: DB had researched the possibility of a corporate Multiplay charge card facility with the Unity Trust Bank but the related cost was not considered justifiable in relation to the very few payments which could not be effected by online bank transfer or by cheque.

**UTILITIES ETC:** 2024/30: GRASS MOWING: Consideration was given to a suggestion received from the WNC that the parish council should take over responsibility for grass mowing of the public areas in the parish funded by a grant from the WNC. In the light of the related administrative and financial responsibilities, the Parish Council decided to decline the offer.

**PLANNING APPLICATION:** 2024/31: 2024/0603/FULL: Removal of existing shed and replacement with a new shed, Thorpe Mandeville Manor, Banbury Lane, Thorpe Mandeville: The Parish Council had no objection to the application.

**HS2 UPDATE: 2024/32:**

2024/32a: HS2 LIASON GROUP MEETING: The Clerk had attended the online meeting on 16 February. Great concern had been expressed by many parties regarding the long delay in re-opening Sulgrave Road and opening the 'Greatworth T' temporary road (2023/156 & 2024/1a). HS2 hoped the roads would open by the end of February.

The Banbury Road long-term temporary closure from the Magpie junction to Bulls Lane was projected to start in 2025, with no closures in 2024.

There would probably be a few short-term closures of Banbury Lane through Lower Thorpe in 2024 to facilitate the close proximity of construction work.

2024/32b: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: HS2 had booked the village hall for an informal drop-in community engagement event in the late afternoon on 12 March.

**BIODIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS: 2024/33:** Further to the last meeting JC had contacted the landlords of the Three Conies and they had no objection to the proposed hedgerow planting. JC had arranged for a delivery of donated saplings which were shortly due to arrive.

**SPEEDING VEHICLES AND 'COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH': 2024/34:** Further to the last meeting (2024/15) the police had installed vehicle speed and volume monitoring devices at both ends of the village for one week commencing 2 February. The Parish Council was disappointed at the conclusion advised by the police that "the data at this time does not support the creation of a mobile enforcement location." The Clerk had promoted the Community SpeedWatch scheme on the website and two noticeboards from 29 January. No volunteers had come forward to date to form the required team.

**CORRESPONDENCE OF CONSEQUENCE: 2024/35: THE WNC'S 2024 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW:** The Parish Council had been asked to review the village settlement position to assist the WNC's production of a new Local Plan. The PC's response would cover: 1) reassessment of the villages' position in the settlement hierarchy, 2) a review of existing services compared with those advised in 2014 and 3) any new parish development aspirations. DB was authorised to draft a response to be submitted to councillors for adoption at the next scheduled Parish Council meeting.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 2024/36:** David Wright advised that he was continuing to promote the Neighbourhood Watch scheme with new residents.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS OR THE CLERK: 2024/37: BULLS LANE AND ROAD CLOSURE SIGNAGE:** Hennie Bradshaw had advised that she had complained to the WNC regarding inadequate road signage on the recent one-day closure of Bulls Lane for repair work undertaken by Anglian Water. This had resulted in traffic being unsatisfactorily diverted onto Bulls Lane again.

DB had taken this opportunity to contact the WNC stressing the need for a recognised strategy on all road closures in the parish. There was a need to stop traffic being diverted onto Bulls Lane and to stop HGVs being diverted onto Banbury Lane through the village and into Culworth. A meeting with appropriate personnel appeared likely. When Banbury Road was closed there should be 'road closed' and 'village access only' signs at its junction with the B4525 in addition to signage by the Three Conies, and traffic should be diverted onto Sulgrave Road at the Magpie junction. When Banbury Lane was closed through Lower Thorpe there should be strong deterrent /diversion signage at the entrance to the village and at both the foot and top of Bulls Lane in addition to signage by the manor house.

**NEXT SCHEDULED PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: 2024/38:** The next ordinary meeting was provisionally scheduled for Monday 25 March 2024 at 7.00pm, in the village hall.

**MEETING CLOSED: 8.45pm**