

## RAVENSTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON

Wednesday, 23 November 2022 at 7.30 pm

At Ravensthorpe Village Hall, High Street, Ravensthorpe, Northants

#### 1 OPENING PROCEDURES

1.1 **Present:** Cllr R Marsh (Chairman), Cllr M Worthington, Cllr E Connor, Cllr J Matts, Cllr J Jones, Cllr D Hayes, Mrs C Holifield (Clerk), Unitary Cllr Bignell and three members of the public

#### 1.2 **Apologies:**

None

#### 1.3 **Appointment of Vice Chairman**

The Chairman proposed that Cllr Hayes be appointed Vice Chairman and this was seconded by Cllr Worthington. Cllr Hayes stated she was willing to accept the position.

#### 1.4 **Co-option of New Councillors**

Timothy Hogben and Michaela Bushell were welcomed to the Council by the Chairman and invited to complete the necessary paperwork and be co-opted to the Council to fill the current casual vacancies with the full agreement of all existing Councillors.

#### 1.5 **Consideration of any changes in roles for Councillors**

To be taken forward to the January meeting when Councillors had been able to give more time to think about the roles they would like to carry out.

#### 1.6 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Matts declared a personal interest in item 5.3 of the agenda

#### 2 MINUTES

2.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 26 October 2022 were approved by the meeting and the Chairman signed the minutes accordingly.

38/2022

*[Handwritten signature]*  
18/11/23

### **3 PUBLIC TIME**

The third member of public present, David Herbert was welcomed by the Chairman who said he wished to take the opportunity to thank him on behalf of the Council for his dedication and efforts as a Councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council.

Mr Herbert stated that (as per his email previously circulated to Councillors) that he wished the Council to consider what could be done to reduce or prevent the amount of unsolicited mail including charity bags coming through the letterbox. He stated that a good deal of the mail received was not even recyclable and this was not acceptable.

It was agreed that item 5.5 would be brought forward for discussion after Public Time.

Unitary Cllr Bignell stated that he had nothing new to report this month except to confirm that WNC were on track with their budget due to the tight controls that were in place.

### **4 MATTERS ARISING**

#### **4.1 Update on overgrown vegetation on Causeway (Coton Road)**

The Clerk stated that she had contacted Anglian Water and requested that the work to clear the vegetation should be given priority. As nothing had yet been done, Clerk to chase again.

#### **4.2 Update on request to Highways for permanent 20 mph speed limit**

The Chairman stated that the Council has received a comprehensive response from the Highways representative following the request made by the Clerk to reconsider the Council's request for a 20 mph throughout the village. However, the Chairman stated that the Council needed to respond further as the arguments given for not allowing a reduction in the speed limit were not convincing and it was agreed he would draft a further email to be sent.

### **5. BUSINESS**

#### **5.1 Consideration of request from Long Buckby Library Hub for donation for 2022-23**

The Clerk stated that the Council had agreed to give a £300 donation each year for a period of 3 years and then review. This would be the third year and it was resolved to donate the amount of £300 as the Hub was providing such a good service and was also opening as a 'Warm Space' this winter.

39/2022

*DRH*  
18/1/23

**5.2 Approval of £1 per hour pay rise for Clerk in accordance with the National Agreement for Local Government Employees and the Clerk's employment contract.**

Further to information disseminated by NCALC in respect of the new pay agreement, it was resolved that the Clerk's salary should be adjusted in line with the agreement and backdated to 1 April 2022. Clerk's salary at pay scale 23 now an hourly rate of £15.67.

**5.3 Update on Highways issues including possibility of requesting grain contractors to voluntarily reduce speed limit of vehicles travelling through the village**

The Chairman stated that enquiries with the Parish Council in Norfolk where signs had been erected during harvest time requesting lorries to travel at 15 mph or less had revealed that the signs had been erected by the Grain contractor and not by the Parish Council. After discussion, it was resolved that the Clerk would contact Charles Jackson to see whether the company would be willing to instruct their drivers to slow down and/or provide banners.

**5.4 Approval of Parish Council meeting dates for 2023**

The following dates were approved:

18 January; 15 February; 15 March; 19 April (including Annual Parish Meeting); 24 May; 21 June; 19 July; 20 September; 18 October; 22 November.

All meetings on a Wednesday at 7.30 pm with the exception of the April meeting which would have a start time of 7.00 pm

*The following item was brought forward and discussed after Public Time*

**5.5 Consideration of request from parishioner to stop the delivery of unsolicited trade magazines, etc**

The Chairman stated that as well as the request from the parishioner as detailed in Public Time, the Council had also received an email from the Editor of the 'Village Emporium' magazine asking for direction as to whether the magazine could still be delivered to households in the village following a complaint from a resident. Discussion revealed that many people appreciated the delivery of the trade magazines and charity bags and it was agreed that it was not the Council's responsibility to take a decision about the deliver of such items unless a significant number of complaints were received.

40/2022

*J. Jackson*  
18/11/23

**5.6 Consideration of purchase of new laptop or approval to send existing laptop for repair/upgrade**

The Clerk stated that she had had significant problems with the laptop over the past few weeks. It now appeared that it had a damaged USB port which was causing some of the issues. Whilst the problems had now possibly been resolved, the Council resolved that as a new laptop was in the region of £300-£400, the Clerk was authorised to replace it should the problems reoccur as it prevented her from carrying out her work.

**6 PLANNING**

**6.1 Planning Applications**

**WND/2022/0959 – 2 Church Hill, Ravensthorpe**  
Work to trees subject of tree preservation order DA86

*The Council had no observations*

**6.2 Planning Decisions**

None

**6.3 Planning Other (not in our Parish)**

The Chairman stated that he had checked to see whether he could make any observations in respect of the planning appeal for Allgreen Farm, West Haddon Road but found that the deadline for comments had expired.

**7 FINANCE**

**7.1 Payments**

The following invoices/items were approved by the Council for payment by the method stated:

Payee	Invoice Number	Amount (£) including VAT where applicable	Payment type
Mrs C Holifield – Clerk's Salary November including backdated pay to April 2022	n/a	595.31	Online
Mrs C Holifield – Clerk's Office Expenses	n/a	20.00	Online
Cyan Furniture – Brass plaque for bench	15530	60.00	Card Payment
SSE Swalec – Street Light Electricity (Oct 22)	Various	179.40	Direct Debit
Ravensthorpe Village Hall – room hire	2285	98.10	Online
Long Buckby Library Hub – donation	n/a	300.00	Online

41/2022

*[Handwritten signature]*  
18/1/23

## 7.2 Income Received (to 31 October 2022)

No income received.

## 7.3 Balance at Bank

The Chairman signed the bank reconciliation statement for the period ended 31 October 2022. Balance at bank was £31,673.95 of which £5,275.45 related to the balance of the Easement monies and £5,379.31 to a CIL payment.

## 7.4 Setting of Budget for 2023-24

Cllr Jones presented the draft budget (having circulated it to the Council prior to the meeting). Following discussion, it was resolved that it would not be appropriate to raise the Precept for 2023-24 taking into consideration of the current cost of living crisis so the budget was set accordingly with a view to requesting a Precept of £16,000. Budget is attached to these minutes as a separate schedule.

## 7.5 Consideration and Approval of Precept Amount for 2023-24

It was resolved to set the Precept amount at £16,000 which was the same as for 2022-23 to avoid any unnecessary increase to parishioners' Council Tax payments. The Council has a reasonable level of reserves including the CIL monies which it was agreed could be used for infrastructure improvements in particular the continued gradual upgrade of the street lights to LED.

## 8 CORRESPONDENCE

- Email from Parishioner and from Editor of 'Village Emporium' in respect of continued distribution of free trade magazines in village (see item 5.5)

## 9 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

9.1 **Pocket Park** – No report available

9.2 **Allotments** – Cllr Connor reported that all was in order.

9.3 **Highways** – Cllr Matts stated that visibility at the junction of High Street/Chequers Lane was being affected by the overgrown vegetation. Clerk to report to Fix My Street to see if Highways would take responsibility for issue before Council took any further action.

9.4 **Tree Report** - The Chairman stated he had nothing new to report.

9.5 **Street Lights** – Clerk reported that she was still awaiting the invoice for new lantern to street light 36. It was agreed that Clerk should get quotations from E-on for replacing more of the obsolete lanterns for discussion at the January meeting. Clerk stated that Council's current street light electricity contract did not expire until June 2024.

42/2022

*Dr Matts*  
18/11/23

- 9.6 **Footpath report** – Nothing new to report
- 9.7 **Speed Awareness Device** – The Chairman stated that he had adjusted the device so that it alerted drivers to their speed if over 20 mph.
- 9.8 **Village Hall/Playing Field Liaison** – Cllr Worthington reported that everything was going well with the Village Hall and plans were underway to organise an outdoor Carol singing event. With regard to the Playing Field, the bonfire/firework display had caused significant problems with parking in the village due to the unexpectedly high attendance this year. Matter to be taken up with the Playing Field committee to see what improvements could be made next year. There had also been a complaint about the Pavilion alarm going off disturbing neighbours.

**ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA TO BE HELD ON:  
Wednesday, 18 January 2023 at 7.30 pm**

- Plans for Jubilee Funds (Community Orchard)
- Update on Highways issues
- Street Light upgrades
- Review of Councillors' roles

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm

43/2022

*D. Worthington*  
18/1/23