

Cosgrove Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Cosgrove Parish Council held on **Wednesday 7 June 2023** at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr D Smith (Chairman), Cllr C Bird, Cllr A Bracey, Cllr S Comerford,
~~Cllr M Draddy~~, Cllr C Peacock, Cllr J Proctor, Cllr P Roberts
 Ward Cllr I McCord
 Five members of the Public

Mrs J Evans (Clerk to the Council)

	Action
CPC/23/6/1 To receive and approve apologies for absence from Cllr Mark Draddy, Cllr Ken Pritchard. Cllr Proctor to arrive late.	
CPC/23/6/2 Declarations of interest – none.	
CPC/23/6/3 Approved Minutes of 3 May 2023	
CPC/23/6/4 Cllr Comerford unanimously elected as Vice Chair	
CPC/23/6/5 No matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere in the agenda or in Clerk's report	
<p>CPC/23/6/6 Public Session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about the Cosgrove Hall site being vulnerable to potential vandalism after reports of a group of youths on bicycles trying to gain access via the churchyard. • Query about how to monitor the number of touring caravan pitches remaining on Cosgrove Park site as several applications to convert touring to static pitches. Pitches on MK side of site are limited, ones on West Northants side are not. • Concerns about overhanging trees. Recommended report on FixMyStreet. • Further concerns voiced over the unsightly land clearance and dredging of the land below the lock. Now referred to as Broadwater Lake Fishing. Previous enquiries made by residents revealed no illegality from perspective of West Northants Council (WNC) or Canal and River Trust (CRT). Forestry Commission are looking into the work carried out on a mature oak and a resident is in touch with the Clerk. • WNS/2022/1741/EIA – proposed warehouse development along Old Cosgrove Road and Stratford Road. Highways Agency has capitulated. Environment Agency maintaining objections to flood mitigation proposals as not fit for purpose. Large upload of documents on 5 June 2023 requiring comment by neighbours. Deadline extended to 15 August 2023. (This deadline has subsequently been brought forward to 15 July 2023). <p>Cllr Ian McCord (IM) reminded the meeting voluntary groups were eligible to apply for grants of up to £15,000 from WNC before 28 June 2023. There was an Ukrainian Art exhibition until 18 June in Northampton. He had attended a meeting with the WNC Planning department just prior to the uploading of 105 new documents to the Planning Portal and they were reluctant to extend the deadline. IM suggested comparing the application to the Supplementary Planning Document to see if it complies. For example, the application is modelling a junction without traffic lights (or roundabout as required by WNC Local Plan Pt 2 for AL5). A third lane for queuing to be created. Unclear how feasible this holding lane would be given the length of HGV and the new</p>	<p>Cllr Roberts to email owner</p> <p>Planning sub-committee to review</p> <p>Clerk to report back when information from Forestry Commission forwarded by resident.</p>

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<p>legislation permitting HGV's to be up to a further 2 m in length. WNC Planning seem to be focussed on cycle routes and footpaths so still scope for objections to point out other issues.</p>	
<p>CPC/23/6/7 Parish Clerk's report was circulated prior to the meeting and is appended to these minutes as background information. The Clerk highlighted the following items of public interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A speed data survey will be undertaken over a period of 7 to 10 days along Stratford Road. This is as a result of the Parish Council raising the issue of speeding on behalf of Mr Bourner (see minute CPC/23/4/5 in April meeting) • Issue of removal of unsafe pole at the junction of Main Street and Bridge Road is ongoing with a proposal to site an Open Reach pole against the wall of Sambrook Cottage. An alternative location against the gate post of 1 Main Street had been suggested. PC resolved to email support for the latter option and ask Open Reach to negotiate directly with the homeowners at Sambrook Cottage and to inform PC of the final decision. • The spraying of Coffin Walk for weeds has been carried out by a resident who no longer felt able to continue. Another resident had asked if the verge on the far side of The Green next to the footpath gate could be mown. Also concerns about the grass obscuring the village sign. PC resolved to ask the company responsible for maintenance of verges and hedges for a quote to add on these two tasks and for details of the mowing and clipping schedule. • A request for a sign showing the pedestrian route to the Church from the Horse Tunnel had been received. • Clerk had attended a meeting to discuss the proposed warehouse development with Dame Andrea Leadsom MP (DAL) on 2 June 2023 and had been able to make several points on behalf of the PC. Chief among these was getting across how angry the people of Cosgrove feel about the proposed development. They want to maintain the identity of Cosgrove as a rural village on the edge of Milton Keynes. DAL listened closely to the points made and agreed to visit the village to see for herself the site of the proposed development. She will also arrange a meeting with the developers, Frontier Estates. 	<p>Clerk to email Open Reach</p> <p>Clerk to email Blackwells</p> <p>Clerk to find out what permissions needed</p>
<p>CPC/23/6/8 Finance</p> <p>a. The internal audit had been circulated to councillors ahead of the meeting by outgoing Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) and was approved by the meeting. Statutory display of the accounts is now required, and the audit is to be forwarded to the external auditors. Outgoing RFO left the meeting.</p> <p>b. New RFO confirmed she had been able to reconcile the accounts she is keeping with the bank statements as at 18.05.2023. The Treasurer's (current) account balance was £16,200.92 and the Business Reserve account was £59,490.90. The Clerk will meet with the Finance working group to overhaul the financial reports to make them more transparent. Work will also be carried out on the earmarked reserves. The working group will also look into producing a revised budget to consider additional expenses.</p> <p>c. The payment of accounts schedule had been circulated ahead of the meeting to allow time for Councillors to study the payments and raise questions if necessary. The PC resolved to limit the amount of overtime</p>	<p>New RFO to display accounts and complete audit</p> <p>RFO to meet initially with Cllr Peacock and Finance Working Group</p>

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<p>worked by the Clerk to 12 hours per month. It was felt this was needed to allow the Clerk time to settle into the role. This would be reviewed regularly with the hope that in time hours worked could be adjusted from month to month to take up any over/under time worked. Payment schedule appended to these Minutes.</p> <p>Cllr McCord left the meeting. Members of the public left the meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk to list review of overtime in September</p>
<p>CPC/23/6/9 Councillor updates:</p> <p>Cllr Bird reported the trees in the New Burial Ground planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy had been decimated by cattle in the adjacent field. Advice to be sought from the farmer – Richard Maycock - about possibility of alterations to the fencing as trees along the border were a requirement of the planning permission.</p> <p>Cllr Comerford had negotiated with the organisers of the Canal Festival to secure field parking with signage to relieve the problems caused for villagers by inconsiderate visitor parking.</p> <p>Cllr Comerford had not been able to get sponsorship from Homebase for the wooden planters at the crossroads, but they had given planting advice for drought tolerant plants. PC resolved to allocate a budget of £150 to Cllr Comerford for planting.</p> <p>Cllr Proctor offered to liaise with Cllr Draddy over the outstanding action to connect the water butts by the bus stop.</p> <p>Cllr Bracy highlighted the poor state of the carriageway along by the Navigation Public House.</p>	<p>CB to approach Mr Maycock</p> <p>SC to restock planters</p> <p>JP to liaise with MD</p>
<p>CPC23/6/10 Traffic</p> <p>a. Cllr Peacock had been able to download 111 days of data from the Speed Indicator Devices (SID) on Yardley Road (YR) and Bridge Road. The SID on Stratford Road (SR) was working on an outdated blue tooth module and downloading data was proving impossible. Hard wiring to an older laptop to be investigated by Cllr Peacock assisted by Cllr Proctor (for health and safety reasons – working at height).</p> <p>The SID on Yardley Road was too close to the edge of the village to be effective. Cllr Peacock to investigate relocating it to maximise the effect. Display colours had been changed (up to 27 green, 27 to 29 amber, 30 to 31 red, over 32 flashes red) to see if this affects speeds.</p> <p>b. PC resolved to request mobile speed trap on Stratford Road (see CPC/23/6/7 above).</p> <p>c. PC resolved to support community speed watch training request by Mr Wayne Smith.</p>	<p>CP to try hardwiring of SID SR</p> <p>CP to investigate relocation SID YR</p> <p>Clerk to advise Mr WSmith</p>
<p>CPC23/6/11 Playground</p> <p>Cllr Peacock had received the quote from Wicksteed Park to replace the matting in the playground (£7,230 net) and remove the metal climbing frame and make good (£2,100 net). A second quote was awaited. Repair of the wooden toddler climbing frame was needed and MK based playground company Kompan UK had given advice on this. A budget of £50,00 would be needed to update the playground. At the time of the last overhaul a grant had been received. Cllr Peacock and Clerk to investigate grant funding. PC resolved to survey the village about what they would like to see in the playground.</p>	<p>CP and Clerk to investigate grant funding.</p> <p>CP and Clerk to look at survey methods</p>
<p>CPC23/6/12 Date of next meeting will be on 5 July at 19.30 in the Village Hall.</p>	
<p>CPC23/6/13 Closure of Meeting at 21.13 hours.</p>	

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APPENDIX 1 – Clerk's Report

Clerk's report for 7 June 2023 It has been a busy month. The AAPM generated quite a bit of extra work but I hope you felt it was worthwhile. I have still not sent out the survey questionnaire because I have not had time to do so. Quite a bit more work has been caused by coming across things that I could have expected to have been included in the handover..... I will mention some of the matters below in the meeting – those that might be of interest to the public. I have highlighted where you need to get back to me with your views.

The mandate for the bank account has still not been sorted out. I resubmitted it electronically with DE's signature on it on 30 May. Under the signing rules, DE has to countersign everything. In the financial regulations it states "the clerk" but Lloyds has it down to a name. I propose to change it to any two signatories. We can alter it back to the clerk countersigning everything at a later date. At the moment my priority is to take over the day-to-day running of the bank account – receiving the bank statement, setting up online banking, getting a debit card, ordering cheque books and making transfers from the business reserve account into the treasurer's account.

I have approached the safer roads policing team to ask if they would consider putting in a mobile speed trap along Stratford Road (Mr Barrie Bourner raised this a few months ago). A speed data survey will be undertaken over a period of around 7 days. Sometime in the next 6 to 10 weeks, the police will update us about what action, if any, they plan to take. I'll forward you the email.

The pole saga continues. I have been in weekly contact with Open Reach. We are now at the following stage:

1. The pole at the junction of Main Street and Bridge Road, which currently has Open Reach infrastructure on it, has to be removed as it is unsafe.
2. A new pole has to be put up because there is not enough room on the new Western Power pole.
3. Any Open Reach infrastructure has to be around 1.5/2.0 m away from the Western Power pole.
4. Open Reach suggested siting a new pole further along to the right of the Western Power Pole (against the middle of the wall of Sambrook Cottage). Unsurprisingly the owner is not happy about this and has made a case for the wiring to go underground.
5. I have suggested Open Reach should investigate putting the pole on the opposite side of the road either adjacent to the gate post of 1 Main Street or close the chevron sign. If it went in the latter position, there could be implications for very long vehicles going round that corner.
6. I've asked for the pole replacement to be put on hold while negotiations are ongoing as there is the possibility the technical team could come and just put the pole in wherever they find it easiest. Open Reach will call me again on 20.06.2023. I recommend a letter supporting the pole goes on the opposite side of Main Street is sent to Open Reach.

In response to my request for a sponsor to replace the bench next to the bridge that CRT can not afford to repair, I received two offers! I've accepted the first one and am in discussions with the second benefactor to identify another location for a bench or possibly a contribution towards a new piece of equipment in the playground.

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The resident who has been spraying Coffin Walk against weeds twice a year, no longer feels able to carry on. I suggest we ask Blackwells for a quote to add on this task and I can bring the results to the next meeting.

I've received a request for a signpost "To the Church" to show pedestrians coming through the horse tunnel which way to go. Is there any appetite to provide this? We could broaden it to show playground and pub as well. If you wish, I will get quotes and check the rules about signs.

I have reported separately on the meeting I attended with Dame Andrea Leadsom. I owe her some information about the number of movements projected by the developers and a summary of the material planning objections that need to be addressed. David wrote to her but there has been no reply to date. As you know many new documents have been uploaded by the applicants of the proposed Old Cosgrove Road warehouse development. The consultation date has been extended to 15 August. This will give our planning subcommittee time to meet and report back to the full council.

We are in arrears with NPower for the unmetered electricity supply to street lamps. I need to do some investigation as there is an invoice for £415.40 but the statement suggests £201.21 is outstanding. I have now obtained access to the online site so this should help with sorting out what has happened. The auditor has suggested looking into another supplier as we are out of contract for this account, so I can do that at the same time.

I'd like to record my thanks to the Parish Council for your continuing support, help and guidance.

Jenny Evans
07 June 2023

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APPENDIX 2: Payment of Invoices and Accounts

Date of Invoice	Amount	Payee	Description	Cheque Number	BACS reference	minute reference
07.06.2023	£ 234.00	Cumbria Clock Co Ltd	annual service church clock	002187		
07.06.2023	£ 84.00	DNH Contracts	May collections	002188		
07.06.2023	£ 6,468.00	M&S Water services	allotment water supply	002188		
07.06.2023	£ 609.90	Northants CALC	Annual subs, Audit, DPO	002190		
07.06.2023	£ 1,303.92	NJ Blackwell Garden Services	May mowing	002191		CPC/23/5/12
07.06.2023	£ 1,669.23	J Evans	salary, overtime, expenses SLCC, ILCA	002192		
07.06.2023	£ 267.78	HMRC	PAYE tax and NI employee contribution	002193		
07.06.2023	£ 123.59	Old Stratford PC	start up stationery for clerk	002194		

Proposed
Seconded
Carried unanimously CPC/23/6/8/c
07.06.2023