

# Cosgrove Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Cosgrove Parish Council held on **Wednesday 1 November 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

Mrs J Evans (Clerk to the Council)

	Action
CPC/23/11/1 There were no absences	
CPC/23/11/2 There were no declarations of interest	
CPC/23/11/3 A correction to CPC/23/10/6 - amending Secret Soldier to Silent Soldier – was made and the Minutes were then approved unanimously.	
CPC/23/11/4 Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere in the Agenda were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the siting of the Silent Soldier ahead of Remembrance Sunday. It was <b>resolved</b> to place the Soldier in the vicinity of the flagpole and for it to be removed after 12 November 2023 and stored with Cllr Roberts</li> <li>whether protective fencing at the new burial ground (£130 for 60 m) would resolve the issue of cattle cropping the saplings. It was agreed to retable for further discussion.</li> </ul>	Clerk to table for December mtg
CPC/23/11/5 Ms Jude Busari, Headteacher, Cosgrove Primary School, made a presentation to the Parish Council. This was to support her request for a donation towards the cost of replacing the school trim trail which failed its health and safety check. Ms Busari said the cost of removing the existing trim trail could be around £3,000 and to replace with similar equipment could cost in the region of £16,000. As a very small school (currently 40 children on roll of whom 23 come from the village), the budget is also very small. The capital funding budget covers IT equipment as well as sports equipment. The recent autumn fair raised £2,000 but much of this will be used to subsidise school trips to keep them accessible for all children. A fund raising quiz was scheduled for Friday 24 November. Ms Busari requested the PC consider funding the replacement of 3 or 4 pieces of equipment at a cost of £2,000 to £3,000. Provision was made for discussion of the proposal later in the meeting.	
CPC/23/11/6 Public speaking was centred on highway issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsiderate on street parking was identified as a continual issue making it difficult to pass by safely</li> <li>Overgrown hedge outside a property on Stratford Road pushing vehicles over the white line</li> <li>Overhanging trees outside the village hall were a hazard to larger vehicles</li> </ul>	Clerk to seek advice of WN Highways  Clerk to report on FixMyStreet if needed
CPC/23/11/6 Public speaking continued: <p>Cllr McCord reminded parents of school age children to make an application for places. No updates on WNS/2022/1741/EIA (warehouse development application) but unlikely to go before the Strategic Planning Committee until the Environment Agency objection has been resolved.</p> <p>Changes to postal voting came into effect on 31 October 2023. The changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can apply online to vote by post</li> <li>You now have to prove your identity as part of the application process. Both online and paper applications require ID verification.</li> </ul>	



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- You can hold a postal vote for a maximum period of three years. You need to reapply at the end of that time.

Planning application costs are set to increase by 25% for ordinary projects and by 35% for major applications.

Cllr McCord left the meeting at 20.10

CPC/23/11/7 The Clerk's report had been circulated ahead of the meeting and is attached to these Minutes at Appendix A. The Clerk reported a reply to the Freedom of Information Request made to West Northants Council had been received but was not helpful. The request was to find out the background to the decision to collect traffic data for WNS/2022/1741/EIA around 7 miles away from the proposed development. It was **resolved** to share the reply with the Furtho Development Opposition Group to assist the framing of their request. The Clerk noted the next meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting will be on 21 November 2023.

CPC/23/11/8 a). The PC received the update on the current finances in comparison to the budget. It was noted claiming of VAT had reduced the projected overspend to £935.17. Once the adjustment to the allotments cost centre had been actioned (transferring the agreed sum from earmarked reserves CPC/29/9/8a), the budget would no longer be in deficit.

b). The payment schedule, circulated ahead of the meeting, was approved. The payments to be made by BACS transfer, debit card or direct debit.

Date of Invoice	Amount	Payee	Description
Authorised between meetings; brought to meeting for full approval			
04.10.2023	576.10	Npower	1 July to 30 September unmetered supply
25.09.2023	1800.00	Water Resource Associates	second hydrology report
For payment by BACS transfer 5.23			
10.10.2023	£200.00	J Evans	Silent Soldier refund
02.11.2023	£291.20	J Evans	October salary
02.11.2023	£291.20	HMRC	October PAYE
31.10.2023	£84.00	DNH Contracts	October dog waste collection
31.10.2023	£900.12	NJ Blackwell	October mowing
Direct debit and debit card payments			
02.10.2023	£35.00	Information Commissioner's Office	Annual registration fee - Data Protection
16.10.2023	6.05	FastHost	email monthly charge
13.10.2023	£11.99	HugoFox	website hosting - November
23.10.2023	£114.81	Alban Hill Nurseries	plants
23.10.2023	£41.95	Cherry Lane Garden Centres	plants

PC requested a mowing schedule to be provided by NJ Blackwell

*Clerk to request mowing schedule*

CPC23/11/9 The proposal for a donation to the annual Christmas Lights Switch on event was discussed. The PC **resolved** to donate £200 for the purchase of additional lights to



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<p>be strung at height around the village recreation area. Lights to be the property of the Christmas Lights Event. A further donation of £50 was <b>resolved</b> to go towards the defraying the cost of running the lights for the Christmas period.</p>	
<p>CPC23/11/10 Planning: PC <b>resolved</b> to make no comment on the application to extend the previously agreed kitchen extension at Longwood, 3 The Green.</p>	
<p>CPC23/11/11 Councillor updates: Cllr Roberts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A rotten plank on the bridge on the footpath to Castlethorpe reported to FixMyStreet</li> </ul>	
<p>Cllr Peacock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The annual subscription for Office 365 altered to direct debit with paperwork to be issued to support the payment</li> <li>Speed Indicator Device data for October will be shared during November. It was <b>resolved</b> to receive reports of SID data quarterly.</li> <li>The SID on Yardley Road will be turned through 180 degrees to alert those coming into the village of their speed</li> <li>Wet pour repair to the slide area has not been completed as the quote was over the limit authorised by an earlier meeting. It was <b>resolved</b> to meet the cost at £1,600.</li> </ul>	<p>Cllr Peacock to supply Office 365 paperwork in due course</p>
<p>Cllr Bracey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hole in the road surface by the bridge on the Castlethorpe causeway – report on FixMyStreet</li> <li>The owner of the paddock opposite Old Cosgrove Road has agreed to cut back the overhanging vegetation adjacent to the road and the footpath</li> <li>It has been noted hardcore has been placed in the paddock. It is understood two (metal) containers clad with another material will be positioned in the paddock once the wooden structure has been taken down. Purpose of the containers is unknown.</li> </ul>	
<p>Cllr Comerford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The village planters have now been restocked. The overspend of £6.76 was for tulips for the spring. PC <b>resolved</b> to meet the additional cost.</li> <li>One water butt is full but the other still needs to be connected and a lid supplied.</li> <li>PCSO has no availability to come with the BeatBus to Cosgrove but residents would be welcome at other surgeries.</li> <li>PCSO has been running adhoc surgeries at the shop at Cosgrove Park.</li> <li>PCSO has been liaising with Cosgrove Park and the WNC Safety Team to plan an Emergency Services Day at the Park next year and he would welcome PC support for this event. It was pointed out relations between the Cosgrove Park and the village were not warm. It was not clear if any such event would be open to the village to attend.</li> </ul>	<p>Second rain butt to be connected by Cllr Draddy</p>
<p>Cllr Proctor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two contractors had visited the allotment where a replacement fence is needed. A third was due to visit. No quotes had yet been received.</li> <li>An artist's impression of a reconfigured children's play park had been circulated ahead of the meeting but after the deadline for the Agenda. The proposed reconfiguration would free up roughly 30% more of the grassed area for use by the village. The existing fencing could be reused and the planned repair to the slide area would not be affected as the slide would not be moved. Councillors reviewed the drawings and agreed in principle that they were interested in hearing more about the proposal at the next meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk to table. Proposed reconfiguration to be circulated in advance of December meeting (before 29 November 2023)</p>

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CPC23/11/11 Councillor updates continued:	
<p>Cllr Bird</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Woodland Trust are accepting applications for free trees. Creating an avenue of trees in the new burial ground that would mark out the rows was discussed briefly with concerns expressed about the extent of tree roots reducing the space for burials. It was <b>resolved</b> to apply for a pack of trees with a decision over where to plant them to be taken if the bid is successful.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Draddy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rowan tree growing through the branches of a larger tree on the village recreation area had yet not been felled. There was discussion about coppicing the tree with opinions divided about this being a sensible course of action. Advice to be sought of a qualified tree surgeon</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The village website can still not be found by Google. The website providers – HugoFox – were trying to assist. Most other web browsers were able to find the website and HugoFox believed it was just a question of time.</li> </ul>	Clerk to seek advice on the rowan tree
CPC23/11/12 <b>Resolved</b> to close the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be conducted. The remaining members of the public left.	
<p>CPC23/11/13 The PC reviewed the presentation given under CPC23/11/5. It was <b>resolved</b> to support the purchase of replacement equipment for the school trim trail because the school is an integral part of the village. Current and future pupils of the village school would benefit from having access to a well stocked playground. Presenting growing children with completely new obstacles that can't be found in a classroom, teaching them lessons about sharing, compassion, and taking risks were felt to be important. It was also acknowledged Local Authority funding will not run to rebuilding the trim trail. It was <b>resolved</b> to set aside £2,000 from earmarked reserves for purchase of trim trail equipment by the school.</p>	Clerk to inform school by letter
CPC23/11/14 Timings allocated to the Agenda items were felt to be useful, making better use of time and promoting more focussed meetings	
CPC23/11/15 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6 December 2023 (*Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 Part II para 8.1)	
Meeting closed at 21.15	



## Appendix A

### Clerk's Report – November 2023

West Northants Highways have remarked the lines at the Castlethorpe junction but have not improved the signage. I have written to Helen Howard to let her know we are disappointed as we feel the absolute minimum has been done. I will continue to monitor incidents at the junction.

FixMyStreet have said they will remark the centre lines on the bridge by 05 March 2024. I reported the overhanging vegetation opposite Old Cosgrove Road as it had been mentioned at three previous meetings – they came back and said there are no safety concerns with regard to the highway or to visibility. I spoke to the Area Operations Manager for the Canal and River Trust (CRT) about the overhanging tree near the bridge that is obscuring the streetlamp – he has arranged for volunteers to cut it back at the end of the year.

We will take over the emptying of the dog waste bins below the lock and on the towpath near the bridge from 1 November. DNH Contracts have been informed. There will be an additional £5 plus VAT per week (we have already been emptying the one near the towpath). DNH have supplied me with monthly information about usage of the bins and I think it may be possible to reduce collections on Coffin Walk and at the Church to once every three weeks (currently fortnightly) during the winter months.

The Old Mail have asked me to thank you for your continuing support.

I contacted the police about cyber security & fraud safety talks and presentations. They are free and are normally 45 minutes long with 15 minutes extra for questions but can be shortened to 30 minutes if that works better. If you would like to go ahead and arrange a public information meeting, then we need to look at possible dates in the new year. I think it may need to be a standalone occasion rather than tagged onto a PC meeting so it might be worth thinking of another presentation at the same meeting – defibrillator information or Helen Howard talking about highway priorities might work.

I completed an online consultation about bus policy priorities for WNC – my comment was a more comprehensive bus service might lead to greater use.

The old burial ground audit will take place on Saturday 4 November at 10.30.

*J Evans*

24 October 2023

# Appendix B

## Cosgrove Parish Council

### November 2023 Summary of Financial Records

Revenues	YTD	Projected income to end of year	Forecast	Budget	Variance
Precept	(25,000.00)	-	(25,000.00)	(25,000.00)	-
Interest	(297.16)	(150.00)	(447.16)	(360.00)	87.16
Burial Ground	(475.00)	-	(475.00)	-	475.00
VAT Reclaim	(3,782.16)	-	(3,782.16)	(650.00)	3,132.16
Misc Income	(25.00)	-	(25.00)	-	25.00
Mowing Grant	-	(900.00)	(900.00)	-	900.00
Account Transfers	-	-			
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>(29,579.32)</b>	<b>(1,050.00)</b>	<b>(30,629.32)</b>	<b>(26,010.00)</b>	<b>4,619.32</b>

Regular Costs	YTD	Projected Costs to Year End	Forecast	Budget	Variance
Clerk Salary	6,567.05	3,750.00	10,899.45	7,716.00	(3,183.45)
Grass Mowing	5,043.60	900.00	6,565.70	7,000.00	434.30
Clerk Sundries	240.68	125.00	365.68	1,200.00	834.32
Church Clock	195.00	-	195.00	195.00	-
Street Lighting	2,980.66	513.00	4,042.36	3,500.00	(542.36)
Allotments	5,775.00	-	5,775.00	2,000.00	(3,775.00)
NCALC	566.50	203.50	770.00	770.00	-
Old Mail	250.00	-	250.00	250.00	-
Dog Waste Bins	455.00	500.00	1,030.00	850.00	(180.00)
Village Hall	-	836.00	836.00	836.00	-
Insurance	734.36	-	734.36	580.00	(154.36)
Training	0	400.00	400.00	400.00	
IT Costs	35.29	75.00	125.32	-	(125.32)
Play Park	-	1,000.00	1,132.00	1,000.00	(132.00)
Other	225.00	150.00	855.62	150.00	(705.62)
Capital Reserves	-	2,350.00	2,350.00	2,350.00	
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>23,068.14</b>	<b>10,802.50</b>	<b>36,326.49</b>	<b>31,047.00</b>	<b>(5,279.49)</b>

Section 137 Costs (Max of £9.93 per electorate)	YTD	Projected Costs to Year End	Forecast	Budget	Variance
NACRE	35.00	-			(35.00)
CPRE	36.00	-			(36.00)
Scout Camp Defib	204.00	-			(204.00)
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>275.00</b>	<b>0</b>			<b>(275.00)</b>



Discretionary Spend	YTD	Projected Costs to Year End		Forecast	Budget	Variance
Flooding Report	2,000.00			-	-	(2,000.00)
Poppy Wreath	19.99	200.00		219.99	-	(219.99)
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>2,019.99</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(2,219.99)</b>

Movement	YTD	Projected Costs to Year End		Forecast	Budget	Variance
Net (Revenue) / Cost	-1,760.34	9,952.50		8,192.16	5,037.00	(935.17)
VAT reclaim to date	3,996.13					
<b>Total bank balance as at 31 October 2023</b>	<b>£ 65,315.29</b>					