



PARSON DROVE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parson Drove Parish Council Annual Meeting held on
**Wednesday 8th May 2024 at Parson Drove Village Hall, Main Road,
Parson Drove**

Attended by Councillors: A Rouse (Chairman), G Booth (Vice-Chairman), P Spriggs, P Unwin, R Fowler & Y Reader.

FDC Councillors: G Booth & D Cutler | CCC Councillor: S King

Members of the public: 0

Also Present: Sarah Bligh (Locum Clerk)

Cllr Booth as the incumbent Chairman opened the meeting at 7:15pm immediately following the Parish Assembly.

120/24. To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman and receive their declaration of acceptance of office.

Cllr Booth was proposed by Cllr Unwin for the office of Chairman, but due to having been in the role for 15 years declined the nomination in favour of another Councillor stepping forward.

Cllr Rouse was proposed for the office of Chairman by Cllr Spriggs and seconded by Cllr Reader, which was accepted by Cllr Rouse. There were no other nominations, therefore Cllr Rouse was elected as Chairman.

Cllr Booth volunteered to undertake the Vice-Chairman role, this was accepted by Councillors and Cllr Spriggs officially nominated Cllr Booth for the office of Vice-Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Unwin. There were no other nominations, therefore Cllr Booth was elected as Vice-Chairman.

Both Councillors completed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed and signed by the Proper Officer.

121/24. To agree apologies for absence - Received and accepted from Cllr Williams and FDC Cllr Humphrey.

122/24. To consider any requests by Councillors for dispensation.

There were no requests from members for dispensations.

123/24. To receive Members Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Fowler & Cllr Spriggs declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item Number 131/24 (b) as they have family members that have adjacent properties to the development site.
- Cllr Booth also declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item Number 131/24 (b) as the allotment tenant abutting the development site.
- Cllr Unwin declared a non-pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item Number 136/24 as a committee member of Friends of St Johns.
- Cllr Booth declared a non-pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item 143/24 as he is a Committee Member of the Amenities 95 Management Committee.

124/24. Open Forum – Public participation. Agenda item time limited to 15 minutes.

To allow up to 3 minutes for each member of the public who wishes to address the Council.

Cllr Diane Cutler as the Co-Ordinator for the Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary Ward Community Speedwatch (CSW) firstly congratulated Cllr Rouse on his election to the office of Chairman of the Parish Council and reported that over the two sessions held within Main Road 30mph zone during April 2024, speeding traffic over 35mph were recorded at 6% and 2%. The most speeding is still occurring during the permitted tolerance level of 31-34mph, these were recorded at 14% and 11%. The proposed all day sessions will go ahead as enough volunteers have come forward.

125/24. To agree the minutes of the meeting dated 17th April 2024. The Council resolved including any amendments to accept as a true record, the minutes of the meetings. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

126/24. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered on the agenda (for information only) – No matters were raised.

127/24. To receive the District Councillors Reports

Cllr Gavin Booth reported that the FDC Full Council meeting has been postponed until 20th May 2024, and that due to being in purdah from the Police & Crime Commissioner Election, there was not many matters to report. Darryl

Preston was re-elected as Police & Crime Commissioners for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire; Fenland had a low turnout at the elections.

128/24. To receive the County Councillor Report

Cllr King had circulated his report and was happy to answer any questions in relation to it, he also congratulated Cllr Rouse on his election to the office of Chairman of the Parish Council.

Cllr Reader confirmed that the potholes at the top of Back Road, Murrow had been repaired the day after the previous meeting.

The Chairman reported that there had been another accident at the Swan Bridge junction, which had caused damages to street furniture, and raised the question whether there were any updates on the refresh of the junction linings. Cllr King confirmed that both the red strips and white line refresh had been ordered for the junction and reported (to prevent confusion) that these will be completed by different crews on separate occasions and will have a time scale of within 3 months.

Cllr Spriggs reported that there had been some individuals checking the signage surrounding the Swan Bridge junction. Cllr King surmised that this could be in connection with the LHI bid.

Cllr Spriggs expressed frustration that there had been many more accidents at Swan Bridge than at Bellamy Bridge and would like to see improvements at Swan Bridge given the same attention as Bellamy Bridge. Cllr King agreed and was grateful that the accidents at both locations hadn't resulted in any serious injuries or fatalities.

Cllr King drew attention to the fact that there will be a new Local Highways Officer (LHO) in place from 13th May 2024 covering Parson Drove.

129/24. Highways Matters

- a. To report any new street lighting issues – No items of discussion
- b. To consider the quote for adoption and upgrade of CCC streetlight near primary school of £735.00 (Exc VAT)
Following discussion it was agreed to upgrade the quote to include a back shield to stop light intrusion into nearby properties. Councillors gave the Clerk financial permission to accept the revised quote providing it is under £1000.00. This process was proposed by Cllr Booth, seconded by Cllr Unwin and unanimously agreed.
- c. For Councillors to receive update regarding LHI panel meetings
Cllr Booth reported that he attended the panel meetings via Teams, which took place on Wednesday 24th April 2024. Both applications were well received, and the Swan Bridge Application had good engagement from the panel. Cllr Booth reported that the final results will not be known until July.
- d. For Councillors to review and adopt CSW MVAS/SID Risk Assessment
Cllr Booth expressed concern that the inherent risk rated as 'High' was incorrect and felt this should be at a 'Medium' risk level, going down to 'Low' residual risk following mitigating measures. Following this amendment the document was adopted by Councillors.
- e. Any other Highways Issues to be raised by Councillors.
Cllr Booth reported that the pothole at Clough Bridge has been repaired but a further concern has been raised regarding the hedge along the footpath from Clough Bridge to The Bank, and he has added this onto the CCC online reporting tool.
Cllr Fowler reported that the fencing on the traffic island at Swan Bridge junction had been damaged. The Clerk to report to Highways.

130/24. Planning Applications – Decision Updates: - Noted

(a)	F/YR24/0174/TRTPO	Fell 1 x Ash tree covered by TPO 03/2000 at Village Pond Main Road Parson Drove Cambridgeshire	GRANTED
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The clerk reported that following the granted planning permission, she had instructed Iceni Tree Care to fell both the Silver Birch (which did not have a TPO) and the Ash tree at the pond as the quotes had been previously approved by Council at £750 each.

Cllr Booth reported that he had spoken to Iceni who stated that there had been a slight mapping issue with the location of the Ash tree and there were concerns raised that this could possibly affect the planning permission. Following further discussion with the tree contractor who determined that the description of the Ash trees' base being exposed and the fact that it was leaning should be sufficient, Cllr Booth stated that the contractor was happy that they continue.

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131/24. **Planning Applications** - For comment:

Councillor Gavin Booth declared an interest on this item due to being a substitute planning committee member, therefore he did not participate in any of the discussion to avoid any claims of predetermination should the applications go to planning committee in the future.

(a)	F/YR24/0347/F	Erect an agricultural building at Land Southeast of The Clough 39 The Bank Parson Drove Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL.
(b)	F/YR24/0344/RM	Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR22/1187/FDC to erect of 1 x dwellings (2-storey, 3-bed) involving demolition of existing garage block at Land North Of 6 Riverside Gardens Parson Drove Cambridgeshire The Parish Council recommended REFUSAL. The Parish Council raised concerns regarding the boundary that abuts to the Parish Council allotments – how would the demolition of the garages avoid encroaching onto Parish Council land, and would the wooden outbuildings on the boundary line be safe? There were concerns regarding the brick colour not being in keeping with the other properties and adversely affecting the street scene. Councillors would like a detailed construction management plan, as there are concerns regarding loading/unloading of material to the site. The proposed turning circle not being sufficient especially for the FDC refuse lorry and emergency services.

132/24. **Planning Applications** - Planning Committee Complaint F/YR23/0555/O Erect 1 dwelling (outline with all matters reserved) at Land North of Longways 1 Back Road Murrow Cambridgeshire - FDC Response.

The Clerk reported that a response had been received from the FDC Interim Head of Planning which stated that “the committee is within its powers to come to a different conclusion to officers on the planning balance in any case which comes before it. Not every application will be fully policy compliant, and it is the duty of the Planning Committee members to use their judgement and perception of local interests to assess whether non-compliant elements are balanced against local need.” The response also mentioned that the Planning Committee are no longer required to undertake group site visits, with the committee members being given details to attend independently. Finally, the response offered an apology “that the second consultation response submitted by the Parish Council on 7th March 2024 was not noted within the officer report. This oversight is regrettable, but the officer report did incorporate all the issues raised in the objection.”

Cllr Booth expressed frustration and felt that the issues raised within the complaint have not been fully addressed, namely the fact that the Planning Committee appear to be overturning officer’s recommendations based on their own opinions and not by following the policies of the local plan.

The Clerk recommended requesting a list of the Planning Committee members that attended the site and saw first hand the impact that building in the location would potentially have.

Cllr Booth reported that he had watched the recording of the meeting, and the agent went into great detail regarding sequential testing for flood risk, which left other matters (i.e. Backland development or development outside the envelope of Murrow) undiscussed and not considered.

Cllr Booth recommended that the Parish Council submit a Stage 2 complaint stating that there is a clear difference between finely balancing and completely overriding policy with their personal opinion which is contrary to the local plan.

The Clerk to draw up a response and liaise with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman before submitting to FDC.

133/24. **Finance Matters** - Approval of the Revised 2023/24 Accounts and AGAR as they stand prior to internal audit.

Cllr Reader reported that the end of year bank reconciliation and balance sheet have had to be revised by an increase of £13.27 which was the interest from the Deposit Account which when the bank statement arrived had been credited on 31st March 2024 and not the 1st April 2024. Cllr Reader further reported that the closing balance at the end of the year now stands at £95,706.98. With this amendment the revised bank reconciliation was signed by Cllr Fowler, approved by Council and the accounts will be submitted to the Internal Auditor.

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134/24. **Finance Matters** - To agree the outstanding payments of the Council:

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power to Spend	
(a)	Locum Clerks April Salary	£452.07	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(b)	HMRC – Month 2 Deductions	£113.00	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(c)	Locum Clerk April Expenses	£30.00	LG Act 1972 S112	Agreed
(d)	Zurich Municipal Insurance Renewal	£1139.84	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
(e)	North Level IDB – Permissive Walkway	£25.00	Public Health Act 1875 S164	Agreed
(f)	All Pests Controlled - Moles	£250.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 S15	Agreed

135/24. **Finance Matters** – To ratify payments made:

(a)	EE Telephone Bill (Direct Debit)	£22.80	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
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The Council resolved to authorise the expenditure for the month of April/May and ratified the payments already made totalling £2032.71.

The Clerk requested that two more invoices be approved for payment that had arrived too late for the agenda. The business rates for the Cage from FDC at a cost of £499.00 and an invoice for the felling of a silver birch tree at the village pond from Icen Tree Care at a cost of £750.00. These items were approved for payment by Council and the Clerk to add them to June’s agenda for ratification.

The Clerk also advised that there was another item that had been paid by Direct Debit, the electricity for the Cage from E-on Next had now exhausted the credit on the account and £0.49p had been requested for payment on 21st May 2024 to settle the April energy bill. This was noted by Councillors.

136/24. **Finance Matters** – Grant Applications

Friends of St John/John Peck Society - £1000 towards Heritage Open Days LG Act 1972 S137
 Following discussion and consideration of the S137 budget, it was approved by Council to award the full amount of £1000. This was proposed by Cllr Reader, seconded by Cllr Booth and agreed by majority vote.

137/24. **Asset Register & Risk Assessment of Assets**

For Councillors to review and approve updated Asset Register & Asset Risk Assessment

The Clerk reported that the Asset Register has been updated with two new assets; Lancaster War Memorial Book and Information Notice Board purchased during 2023-2024. With these additions the asset register was approved by Council.

The Clerk also reported that these new assets had been included on the revised risk assessment for assets with a risk level of Low and Acceptable Risk. With these additions the risk assessment for assets was approved and adopted by Council.

138/24. For Councillors to consider Permissive Walkway Hedge Cutting Quotes.

The Clerk reported that although she had approached many contractors; to date no quotes had been received. This item was deferred for the Clerk to keep trying to obtain a quotes.

139/24. For Councillors to consider Tree Inspection Report Quotes.

The Clerk advised that she had previously received two quotations for a full tree inspection report for the Village Green, Village Pond and Seadyke Pit. The quotation from Bowles Tree & Garden Services was for £150.00 (Exc VAT) but would not provide an acceptable arboricultural report for submission to the Planning Department at Fenland District Council should work be identified as being required. The second quotation was from David Wheatley for £1240 (Exc VAT) and would provide an adequate report for Planning Permission if necessary. Following the request by Councillors at the previous meeting to try and obtain a quote from Icen Tree Care Ltd; the Clerk reported that this had now been received at £900 (Exc VAT).

Following discussion, it was agreed to offer the Tree Inspections to Icen Tree Care at a cost to the Parish Council of £900, Councillors requested notification that Icen had the required arboricultural certificates. Cllr Reader surmised that this was the case as FDC had already approved a planning permission with an Icen Tree Report attached.

140/24. For Councillors to discuss the Garden Allotments – update

The Clerk reported that she had received confirmation of payment by BACS from the last of the outstanding rent invoices. However, this could not be confirmed until the bank statement was received.

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141/24. For Councillors to discuss the outstanding Wrydecroft Windfarm grant award.

(a) Acceptance of offer – update

The Clerk reported that both herself and Cllr Unwin had signed the acceptance forms from Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, and notification had been received that the £10,000 should be in the Parish Councils nominated bank account within 14 days.

(b) Village Green Enhancements

The Clerk reported that two quotes had been received for the fixture of bollards surrounding the village green. Fishlock Stables & Groundworks had supplied a quote with 2 options: 13 wooden bollards at a cost of £1950 (Exc VAT) or 13 composite bollards at a cost of £2710 (Exc VAT). Stephen Spriggs had supplied a quote for wooden bollards; 6x6" at £45 each, 7x7" at £55 each and 8x8" at £65 each including labour. Cllr Fowler stated that for £1950 the Parish Council could purchase a lot more than 13 wooden bollards if Stephen Spriggs quotation was agreed. Cllr Booth agreed but advised that a sufficient gap has to be left for the grass cutting equipment to get through. Cllr Reader agreed to approach the grass contractor for the minimum required gap for machinery to pass through safely.

Cllr Spriggs recommended removing the 4/5 existing bollards to be repurposed elsewhere allowing all the bollards surrounding the bus shelter to be of equal size; and also recommended using 6x6" bollards every 6ft. Cllr Booth agreed with this proposal up to a cost of £2000. The process was agreed by Council and Cllr Spriggs will liaise with Stephen Spriggs for the works to be completed and invoiced accordingly. Cllr Spriggs also agreed to liaise with the shop keeper to make sure all the bollards in the area are the same.

Cllr Booth stated that Amberol planters were used for the original grant application to Wrydecroft. The Clerk to obtain planter examples.

142/24. The Cage Maintenance – Update

The Clerk reported that she was still trying to obtain a date from Turners Contracting Ltd for the repairs to the ceiling boards and she will continue to chase up. Cllr Reader reported that the emergency light has been replaced as the existing one was corroded and unrepairable. Wisbech Electrical was asked by the Clerk to supply and fit a new one, which has now been completed. Cllr Reader reported that she is yet to look into the updated Fire Regulations but will follow this matter up.

143/24. To receive the Amenities 95 Management Committee Report

Cllr Booth reported that a committee meeting was planned for the end of May. The committee are currently undertaking a review of all policies and procedures. The new booking secretary is very enthusiastic and bookings at the hall are increasing; however, the running costs of the facility still remain high. The insurance claim is still ongoing as the insurance company is requesting an observation period of 6 months to see how the building is settling following the removal of the tree.

144/24. To receive the Police Report and Crime Statistics

Cllr Unwin reported that there had not been a Police Forum meeting, and the Clerk apologised for not producing the crime statistics for this meeting; these will be included in next month's statistics. Cllr Booth reported that there had been a few break ins to sheds and containers in the village recently. Cllr Unwin to liaise with the Wisbech Neighbourhood Policing Team to request some late night surveillance of the village.

145/24. **Staffing Matters**

(a) Recruitment of Clerk

Cllr Booth reported that he had liaised with the applicants and confirmed that interviews will take place on a Wednesday. Cllr Booth to work with the current HR subcommittee to arrange a suitable date and inform the applicants.

146/24. To collate agenda items for the next meeting

- Cllr Reader – Updated Fire Regulations & Fire Risk Assessment.
- The Chairman – Street Pride/Plants surrounding the War Memorial.
- Cllr Spriggs – Flagpole for the Village Green.
- Cllr Booth – New Parish Council Bank Account.

147/24. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th June 2024 7:00pm Parson Drove Village Hall, Main Road, Parson Drove

Meeting closed at 9:59pm

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