



# PARSON DROVE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Parson Drove Parish Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at The Pavillion, Main Road, Parson Drove**

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

FDC Councillors: G Booth & D Cutler | CCC Councillor: A Osborn

Members of the public: 1

Also Present: Sarah Bligh (Locum Clerk)

### **241/25. To agree apologies for absence**

Apologies of absence were received and accepted from Sarah Phillips (The Clerk)

### **242/25. To consider any requests by Councillors for dispensation.**

There were no requests for dispensation from Councillors

### **243/25. To receive Members Declarations of Interest**

- Cllr Fowler declared an interest in respect of agenda item 260/25 due to a family member submitting a quote for work on behalf of the Parish Council.
- Cllr Spriggs declared an interest in respect of agenda item 261/25b and 264/25 due to submitting quotes for work on behalf of the Parish Council.
- Cllr Rouse declared an interest in respect of agenda item 263/25 due to being employed by FACT.
- Cllr Booth declared an interest in respect of agenda item 265/25 as he is a committee member of the Amenities 95 Management Committee

### **244/25. 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) reported that CSW sessions will be taking place this month and enforcement is an ongoing process. CSW was aware that the MVAS/SID battery needs recharging on Fen Road and will be dealing with this matter as soon as possible. CSW will be attending the Golden Age Fair being held at the Wisbech St Mary Community Centre on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025 with the intention of recruiting new volunteers for the group.
- Cllr Diane Cutler also reported that the advertising for the Women's Institute is occurring, and she is producing and displaying monthly posters on their behalf locally and for the Parish Post magazine.
- Cllr Diane Cutler also reported that "Coffee with Our Neighbourhood Copper" will be taking place on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 in Parson Drove Village Hall and hoped that residents can attend to raise any concerns. Dates will also be arranged so the full FDC Community Partnership Team can attend Parson Drove in the future.

### **245/25. To agree the minutes of the meeting dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

The minutes of the meeting dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **246/25. Matters arising from previous minutes and Clerks update not covered on the agenda (for information only)**

The Chairman reported that due to the Clerks absence this item will be dismissed.

### **247/25. To receive the Chairman's Report**

- The Chairman firstly offered his apologies for the unavoidable late receipt of the agenda.
- The Chairman reported that he attended the VJ Day Memorial event, which was very well attended. Praise was given to Parson Drove Street Pride for their hard work to the War Memorial, the Village Green and the Cage; making them all look very patriotic. Thanks, were also given to Cllr Pam Williams for organising tea & biscuits for everyone and allowing books and photos to be available for visitors to look at and read about the local history over the years. The Chairman felt it was a fitting remembrance for the young men of the parish that sadly did not return home.
- The Chairman reported that he has received quotes from companies for the replacement of the Parish Council noticeboard which will be discussed further on the agenda but feared that recycled plastic would not be an option due to its inability to last more than a few years if sited in bright sunlight.

--

- The Chairman gave thanks to Cllr Richard Fowler for cutting the grass verge along Murrow Bank, giving up his own free time to provide this service for the village.
- The Chairman reported that he had liaised with the owners of The Swan PH regarding cars parking on the grass next to the Cage and has been assured that as soon as they are aware of this occurring the matter will be addressed.
- The Chairman also advised councillors of the resignation of the Clerk Sarah Phillips which will be further discussed under staffing matters during the confidential session at the end of the meeting.

#### **248/25. To receive the District Councillors Reports**

Cllr Booth reported that the next FDC Full Council meeting will be held next Monday with most of the items being fairly standard and procedural, but advised that there is a motion regarding solar panels and food security and a constitutional amendment regarding enforcement; giving planning officers powers to approve matters without going through the planning committee, which in his opinion hopes is a step in the right direction for better enforcement.

Cllr Spriggs raised a concern regarding a planning matter on Seadyke Bank and Cllr Booth agreed to follow this matter up with FDC. The Chairman requested that this issue was added to the next agenda for full discussion.

#### **249/25. To receive the County Councillor Report**

Cllr Osborn reported that Clough crossing will be closed for three weeks for bridge repairs from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Cllr Osborn also reported that he had been successful in securing a public meeting regarding the road closure on Barton Road, Wisbech, involving both Anglian Water and Cambridgeshire Highways. The meeting will take place on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7pm however the location is yet to be confirmed. Cllr Osborn advised that he has received more than 100 emails from frustrated residents regarding this ongoing situation.

Cllr Osborn raised the possibility of the bollards at the Swan Bridge triangle being replaced by the flexible black and white reflective posts the same as situated at Murrow memorial. The Parish Council gave their approval and support for Cllr Osborn to follow this up and request them from Highways, in replacement to the currently broken wooden fencing.

Cllr Osborn reported that he has managed to secure a trial use of a newly designed special machine produced by JCB for pothole repair, which is to be used near Murrow.

Cllr Osborn also reported that a company used for providing elderly home aids and disability equipment has recently gone bankrupt. A company called Mediquip has taken over from them, and they are contactable via the existing phone number detailed on the label attached to the equipment.

#### **250/25. Highways Matters**

- To report any new street lighting issues and consider quotation received in relation to PC4 The Bank.  
Cllr Booth proposed to accept the quote for £1195.29 (Exc VAT) for the replacement of PC4, which was unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Booth expressed frustration that this is the first quote provided by FDC in a long time, with many still outstanding. Cllr Fowler expressed his frustration that a new streetlight for Fen Road had been outstanding for over three years. The locum Clerk agreed to liaise with FDC and chase these up.
- Any highways Issues to be raised by councillors  
The Chairman expressed his concern regarding the number of potholes needing repair again down Silvers Lane.  
Cllr Fowler reported a pothole has appeared on Johnsons Drove, which Cllr Booth added onto the reporting tool online during the meeting.

#### **251/25. Planning Applications – Decision Updates: Nil**

#### **252/25. Planning Applications - For comment: Nil**

#### **253/25. Finance Matters – To agree the outstanding payments of the Council:**

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power to Spend	
(a)	Clerks August pay	576.16	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Agreed</b>
(b)	Clerks September pay	576.16	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Deferred</b>
(c)	Clerks August Expenses – includes working from home allowance	30.00	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Agreed</b>

(d)	Clerks September Expenses – includes working from home allowance	30.00	LG Act 1972 S112	Deferred
(e)	David Wheatley – Tree Canopy Work	600.00		Agreed
(f)	Charlie Molyneux – The Cage Brickwork	4600.00		Agreed
(g)	FACT – Village Shuttlebus	352.86		Agreed

Councillors resolved to approve the payments listed above except the Clerks September salary and expenses which would be deferred until the October meeting payments.

The Chairman requested that another invoice be approved for payment from FACT for the village shuttlebus of £305.69 which was unanimously approved.

Due to the absence of the physical invoices Cllr Booth proposed that the agreed invoices are approved in principle and signed during the next meeting.

#### **254/25. Finance Matters – To ratify payments made:**

(a)	Tesco Mobile	9.50	LG Act 1972 S111	Approved
(b)	E-on – The Cage July Energy (Direct Debit)	18.09	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	Approved
(c)	Bank charges – Unity Bank	6.00		Approved

Councillors resolved to ratify the payments already made as listed above.

#### **255/25. Finance Matters – Grant Applications - Nil**

#### **256/25. Finance Matters – Wrydecroft Small Grants Programme**

Cllr Spriggs recommended that the Parish Council utilise the funding for the payment of the hedge trim as listed at agenda item 260/25 so that the funding remains topped up to £5000 for the availability of community groups during the next year.

Cllr Reader expressed concern that a recent grant application was on hold due to the monitoring report being outstanding for the £10,000 grant given for the benches, bollards, planters and other village enhancements. The Locum Clerk agreed to follow this matter up.

#### **257/25. Finance Matters – To discuss highways payment**

Cllr Booth reported that the invoice was still outstanding from Cambridgeshire Highways for the PFHI providing the MVAS and Speed Limit changes to Murrow Bank and Fen Road from 2021/22. Cllr Reader expressed frustration that this was still outstanding after so many years which meant the reserves and precept calculations were always going to be approximate until this was invoiced and paid for. Cllr Booth recommended giving Cambridgeshire Highways three months to produce this invoice or the Parish Council was going to consider the account closed. The Locum Clerk agreed to follow this matter up with David Allatt (Service Director for Infrastructure and Project Delivery) at Cambridgeshire Highways.

#### **258/25. Launch of Government Reorganisation – Phase 2 Public Engagement Survey**

Cllr Spriggs expressed frustration that Parish Councils were not specifically invited to comment as a contributing stakeholder. Councillors gave weight to 'value for money' 'Local Identity' and 'Population Figures' as their most important priorities when deciding on an option.

Following further discussion by Councillors, the Locum Clerk was asked to reply to the consultation expressing support for proposal C Unitary 1, which included Peterborough CC, East Cambs DC and Fenland DC along with County Council functions.

#### **259/25. To consider the purchase of a noticeboard**

The Chairman recommended that (although he had received some quotes) deferring this item until the next meeting would be advisable to allow a grant application to Wrydecroft Wind Farm to be progressed following the submission of the outstanding monitoring report. The Chairman expressed awareness to the fact that the noticeboard would be sited in a conservation area and therefore would need to be quite like what is currently in existence.

#### **260/25. To consider quotation for hedge trim on Murrow Bank**

The Locum Clerk reported that a quote had been received from D Rowell to cut the hedge along Murrow Bank from Murrow to Clough Bridge using a tractor and flail at a cost of £55.00 per hour (Exc VAT), to a maximum of 10 hours.

Cllr Fowler reported that he would be prepared to help D Rowell with the cutting of the hedge

--

with his own flail; free of charge to make sure the job was a cost effective as possible to the Parish Council. The Chairman thanked Cllr Fowler for his very kind offer, and the council unanimously approved the quote up to the max of £550.00 (Exc VAT) which could be mainly funded from the Wrydecroft Small Grants Programme with the remainder being funded through the money left from the village enhancements grant.

The Chairman agreed to liaise with D Rowell and arrange a date for the hedge works to be completed.

Cllr Reader reported that a meeting on site is to be held between Cllrs Rouse, Booth, Spriggs & Fowler and North Level IDB before the Murrow Bank Permissive Walkway can be given the go ahead for public use due to several issues including a steep bank. The Clerk to liaise with all parties to arrange a mutually agreeable date and time.

#### **261/25.Assets update**

- a) To receive an update on the village sign

The Chairman reported that the paint is flaking off the village sign which was only refurbished a year ago. The Locum Clerk advised that the lady that painted it no longer lives in the country but would contact her to see if she can recommend a lacquer or varnish to stop this occurring.

- b) To consider quotations for railings around the war memorial

The Chairman reported that the railings needed some repair before stripping them back and repainting them. Cllr Booth expressed concern that due to Remembrance being only a couple of months away that this matter should be deferred until the Spring.

#### **262/25. Allotment update**

Cllr Spriggs reported that he had met on site with the two prospective tenants that the Clerk had put forward which required the tenancy agreements for them to sign.

Cllr Spriggs reported that the only allotment left was the one right at the bottom and had received an enquiry from a local passing by and was waiting on confirmation of their name and address to be able to provide the tenancy agreement.

Cllr Booth reported that he had been advised by residents that had tried to fill in the online form for an allotment had found that it was not working. The locum Clerk to follow this up with Tamar IT who maintain the website.

Cllr Reader offered to provide three blank tenancy agreements and deliver them to Cllr Spriggs.

#### **263/25. For Councillors to receive an update and decide if a further grant should be obtained for the FACT Shuttle Bus Service.**

The Chairman reported a breakdown of what had so far been spent for the provision of the Shuttle Bus up until the end of July 2025 which was a total of £2020.27 which was is a long way short of the total amount provided by a Wrydecroft grant for the service of £7265.

The Chairman expressed sadness that the service had not received a great uptake from residents.

Cllr Spriggs expressed the opinion that if the service was not being used the fairest thing would be to give the money back to Wrydecroft to benefit other projects.

Cllr Booth recommended another push to promote the shuttle bus with an emphasis that the service is under threat of termination due to poor uptake, which FDC Cllr Cutler agreed to provide.

Following further discussion, the Parish Council agreed to re-assess the uptake and financial situation in six months.

#### **264/25. The Cage Maintenance**

The Chairman reported that the brick work repointing had been completed but there had been a problem with the guttering.

A quote had been received for £475.00 (No VAT) to supply and fit using 18m of ½ round PVC guttering painted green or to supply and fit a metal guttering (due to being in a conservation area) would be £875.00. If the Parish Council wished to purchase the guttering themselves, the cost to just fit would be £250.00.

Cllr Booth recommended the use of the metal guttering, which would be replacing like for like and due to the cost being over £500, the supply of three quotes should be obtained to make a decision on provision to adhere to the Parish Councils Financial Regulations.

#### **265/25. To receive the Amenities 95 Management Committee Report**

Cllr Booth reported that the insurance works have been taking place, this has been recently completed but the hall still needs to be cleaned before its reopening.

The next meeting is scheduled for 4th October 2025.

--

**266/25. To collate agenda items for the next meeting**

- Finance for the Parish Post Magazine
- Allotment Rents
- Streetlight Quotation for Fen Road
- Remembrance Wreaths
- External Audit
- Tree Planning Applications
- Deferred Items

**267/25. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025

7:00pm

Parson Drove Village Hall, Main Road, Parson Drove

**268/25. Staffing matters**

- (a) To agree to entering a closed session under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss a Staffing Matter.

Members were asked to consider a resolution for Council to exclude members of the public and press from the meeting pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted under this item. This was proposed by Cllr Booth, seconded by Cllr Fowler and agreed by Council. The members of the public present were duly asked to leave.

The public meeting was closed at 8:30pm

--