MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WATER ORTON PARISH COUNCIL

held on Thursday 18th May 2023 at 6.30pm at the Pavilion, Open Field Croft.

Present: Cllr S. Stuart (Chair from item 23/002), Cllr K. Brown, Cllr. C. Chown, Cllr. R. Coldrick, Cllr. F. Freeman, Cllr. R. Lowe. Cllr K Hailstone, Cllr. W. Rees, Cllr P. Robinson (Chair - item 23/001)

Guests in Attendance: 0

Public in Attendance: 4

Minute Taker & Clerk: Kate Clover, clerkwopc@gmail.com

23/001. Election of Chair for the ensuing year: Cllr. Robinson opened the meeting. Cllr. Stuart was nominated by Cllr. Coldrick and Cllr. Lowe and it was RESOLVED to elect Cllr Stuart to the office of Chair of the Council. Cllr Stuart thanked Cllr Robinson for his efforts in the prior year. The declaration of acceptance of office of chair was signed before the Clerk.

23/002. Appointment of Vice Chair for the ensuing year: Cllr. Rees was proposed by Cllr. Freeman, seconded by Cllr. Coldrick and it was RESOLVED to elect Cllr Rees to the office of Vice-Chair of the Council.

23/003. Declaration of Acceptance of Office: All Councillors present signed their declarations of acceptance of the office of councillor before the Clerk.

23/004. Apologies: None

23/005. Public Participation:

a) **Members of the public and press:** WOCAG bench for old toilet site, due to be put in this month. Water Orton Heritage and Culture Group had applied for numerous Tree Protection Orders within the village and to extend the conversation area. NWBC due to approve 50% of the TPO's requested, the group wished for the Parish Councils support to aid the pursuit of the remaining TPO's**.** In addition to this in Attleboro Lane the removal of a streetlight and move of a telegraph pole had caused concern amongst residents due to a lack of consultation on this and whether this was being done as part of the larger development and proposed access route on Attleboro Lane which has not yet been approved. County Cllr Watson has been contacted but had not yet provided a response. Clerk asked the resident to provide a copy of the correspondence and would contact County Councillor Watson to chase.
b) **Reports from County and Borough Councillors**: None
c) **Police representative:** None

23/006. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations: None

23/007. Minutes:

a) It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27th April 2023

23/008. Reports from Chairman and Councillors (for information only):

a) Cllr Stuart – thanked Cllr. Robinson for his role as chair and thanked retiring Cllr. Bevan for his work on the Parish Council
b) Cllr Robinson provided a verbal update on the Bowls Pavilion Toilet Rebuild. The project was due to be completed this month. Fencing Contractors should commence work on Monday 22nd May.
c) Cllr Robinson provided a verbal update regarding the new Village Green to replace previous registered common land near the Dog Inn. Kingslea Homes were due to submit their application for a small housing development at the Dog Inn (9 dwellings) and once approved by the Local Planning Authority, the transfer of the land and associated compensation to maintain the new green should be awarded to the Parish Council. Cllr Freeman asked whether the new land would meet accessibility requirements for wheelchair users. Currently the land is not fully accessible, but the Parish Council will have the opportunity to implement more accessible features in the future should they wish to do so.

23/009. Clerk Report: The Clerk report was noted.

23/010. Planning:

a) To consider new application/s:

Reference	Address	Details	WOPC Comments

Chairman's Initials: ……..

PAP/2023/0056	Land At Junction Lichfield Road Watton Lane Water Orton	Battery Energy Storage Site, substation compound, with associated infrastructure, fencing, access off Watton Road, drainage and landscaping	

Traffic Flow information – survey carried out in 2019 and feels that this survey is not outdated due to increased traffic from the HS2 development and others and concerns with proximity to M42 / A446 and underground gas pipes. Application refers to pylon and hedging which no longer exists, screening for battery compounds. Where is electrical connection to be made. It was RESOLVED for clerk to finalise and submit comments under delegated authority.

b) To report decisions on previous planning applications made by NWBC.

Reference	Address	Details	NWBC Decision
PAP/2023/0096	144 Coleshill Road Water Orton Birmingham B46 1QE	Single storey rear extension with mono pitched roof and rooflights. Extent of extension will be rendered to match front of existing property -	Granted

c) North Warwickshire Playing Pitch Strategy - Parish Council Survey. Cllr Freeman volunteered to carry out this task, on the proviso they can grant an extension to the existing deadline (19th May)

23/011. Committees, Working Groups and Representation: (**APPENDIX 4**)

a) It was RESOLVED to dissolve the existing committee structure and appoint a Governance Committee and sub-committees for staffing, finance, maintenance, and complaints.

b) The review and adoption of terms of references for committees and sub-committees was deferred. Council to agree terms of reference for each committee and sub-committee before any meetings are arranged.

c) It was RESOLVED to appoint members to the committees and sub-committees as follows:
Governance committee – Cllr. Stuart, Cllr Freeman, Cllr. Coldrick
Staffing sub-committee – Cllr Brown, Cllr Coldrick, Cllr Rees (sub – Cllr Lowe)
Finance sub-committee – Cllr Lowe, Cllr Freeman, Cllr Rees (sub - Cllr Robinson)
Maintenance sub-committee Cllr Chown, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Brom (sub - Cllr Stuart)
Complaints sub-committee – On a rotational basis (excluding Cllr Stuart)

d) New committees appointed as per Standing Order 4 as detailed in minute 23/011 a) – c)

e) Representation on and work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back were reviewed. Representatives should report back to the Council at the next full Council meeting regarding any meetings attended as a Parish Council representative. A written report submitted to the Clerk in advance of the agenda date would be preferred where possible.

f) To appoint representative/s to the following external bodies:

i. It was RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Rees as Parish Council representative to the St Thomas's Dole Charity. Cllr Rees would report back to the council of meetings attended and share information relevant to the Parish Council. Minutes from the Charity meeting would not be circulated due to the confidential nature of the requests for donation.

ii. The Board of Governors at Water Orton Primary School do not have an arrangement for a Parish Council representative, so the council are unable to appoint a member to the board.

iii. It was RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Freeman and Cllr Robinson as Parish Council representatives on the North Warwickshire Special Management Zone (SMZ) Group. Cllr Freeman & Robinson would report back to the council on meetings attended and share information relevant to the Parish Council. Minutes from the SMZ Group would be circulated amongst Parish Councillors for information, these minutes are not for publication due to the confidential nature of some matters. Queries for the SMZ Group and HS2 / BBV should be raised with the Parish Council representatives.

23/012. Policies:

a) It was RESOLVED to review and adopt Standing Orders

b) It was RESOLVED to review and adopt Financial Regulations

c) It was RESOLVED to ratify the Code of Conduct adopted in March 2023

d) It was RESOLVED to review and adopt the Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk, review date set for three months.

e) It was RESOLVED to ratify the remaining policies which have been reviewed within the past twelve months and approve the review dates set for these in accordance with the document review tracker including: review of the Council's complaints procedure; review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21); Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media; Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures.

23/013 General Power of Competence: It was RESOLVED that the Council meet the eligibility criteria set out in the (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 to exercise the General Power of Competence in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

Chairman's Initials: …….

23/014. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.

a) It was RESOLVED to agree the 2023-2024 grounds maintenance contract with NWBC and fix the price for 3 years
b) It was RESOLVED to continue the contract with Turnock for the storage & installation of the Christmas Lights at £3337 per annum for 2023 a review to be taken before 2024 & 2025.
c) To review the contracts with Chubb for Fire Protection and Intruder Alarm Servicing – Item delegated to the Finance Committee to review.
d) It was RESOLVED to accept the contract with Croner for HR services is tied until Jan 2025
e) Opus Energy Ltd for electricity at the Pavilion – Item delegated to Finance Committee for review prior to Sep 23
f) To review the contract with BT for Broadband at the Pavilion – Item delegated for review to the Finance Committee prior to Aug 23
g) It was RESOLVED to continue the contract with Waterplus for Water at the Pavilion.
h) With the exception of the Open Spaces society which has been deferred for further review. It was RESOLVED to continue the subscriptions paid to:
    i. West Midlands and Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (including National Association of Local Councils)
    ii. Society of Local Council Clerks
    iii. Information Commissioners Office
    iv. Open Spaces Society – delegate to the Finance Committee to review

23/015. Insurance:

a) It was RESOLVED to confirm the arrangements of insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks
b) It was RESOLVED to approve the insurance policy and associated costs from 1st June 2023

23/016. Maintenance:

a) The annual independent play inspection reports for the Playing Field & the Green were noted.
b) The quarterly operational inspection from NWBC for Openfield Croft was noted.
c) The monthly play inspection report from Cllr Chown was noted. Swing bushes and shackles require replacement, Clerk to liaise with village caretakers. Wet pour repair may be required below slide, Clerk to source quote.
d) To consider purchase of secure replacement bollards for the current drop-down bollards at the Green –It was RESOLVED to suspend financial regulations to allow Clerk delegated authority to purchase a replacement bollard at the Green. Clerk to liaise with Cllr Stuart on this matter.
e) Hawkes Blacksmith quotation to replace three panels for Kickball wall at a cost of £1074+VAT (£358 per panel) was delegated to the Finance Committee for decision.
f) It was RESOLVED to contract Hawkes Blacksmith to complete welding repair to the blue swing frame at the Playing Field for £75 + VAT

23/017. Playing Field / Pavilion Hire: It was RESOLVED to allow hire of the playing field / pavilion for youth football teams throughout the summer. Two enquiries received, one team (U9's) for Sunday mornings from May to end of August and another for Saturday Evenings in June. It was RESOLVED to allow delegated authority to Clerk (in consultation with member via email) to set appropriate pitch fees and draft an outdoor hire agreement.

23/018. Finance:

a) It was RESOLVED to approve the list of regular payments for 2023-24
b) It was RESOLVED to approve the payment schedule for May and items paid under delegated authority since the previous schedule. Cllr Rees & Cllr Chown will authorise the payments on Unity Trust.

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Transaction No	Payee	Supplier	Payment Type	Invoice no.	Details	Net Amount	VAT	Total	Payment Status
16a,16b, 17	HMRC/NEST	HMRC/NEST	BACs / DD	N/A	Staffing Costs (includes repayment of Employment Allowance for prior years)	£ 1,656.87	£ -	£ 1,656.87	PAID MAY
					Total Paid	**£ 1,656.87**	**£ -**	**£ 1,656.87**	
	Chubb	Chubb	BACs	9870339	Fire Extinguishers - Bowling Club	£ 131.15	£ 26.23	£ 157.38	Due by 02.06.23
	M Jenkins Construction Ltd	M Jenkins Construction Ltd	BACs	4	Main Works - Final Stage + additional electrical work	£ 7,325.00	£ 1,465.00	£ 8,790.00	
	Hyperbole	Hyperbole	BACs	1479	Website Admin Fees	£ 25.00	£ 5.00	£ 30.00	
	Kim Squires	Kim Squires	BACs	23/13	Internal Audit Fees	£ 175.90	£ -	£ 175.90	
	D Burley	ASDA	BACs	26.04.23	Gardening Hand Fork	£ 3.50	£ -	£ 3.50	
	D Burley	ASDA	BACs	27.04.23	Fuel (10L)	£ 11.97	£ 2.40	£ 14.37	
	D Burley	B&M	BACs	27.04.23	6 x 50L Compost	£ 30.00	£ -	£ 30.00	
	D Burley	Coleshill Tools	BACs	27.04.23	2 x Strimmer Cord Reels	£ 10.00	£ -	£ 10.00	
	D Burley	ASDA	BACs	08.05.23	Work Gloves	£ 3.00	£ -	£ 3.00	
	K Clover	Microsoft	BACs	05.05.23	Microsoft 365 Licences	£ 49.90	£ 9.98	£ 59.88	
	K Clover	Tesco	BACs	27.04.23	Blu-tack	£ 1.40	£ -	£ 1.40	
	K Clover	Home Bargains	BACs	08.05.23	Paper Ream	£ 3.74	£ 0.75	£ 4.49	
	BT	BT	DD	M025 &&	Broadband - Pavilion	£ 33.72	£ 6.74	£ 40.46	Due 20.05.23
	Opus Energy	Opus Energy	DD	74027849	Electricity - Pavilion	£ 188.28	£ 9.41	£ 197.69	Due 24.05.23
	Croner HR	Croner HR	DD	C000676527	HR Fees	£ 124.71	£ 22.18	£ 146.89	DUE 29.05.23
					Outstanding amount to pay	**£ 8,117.27**	**£ 1,547.69**	**£ 9,664.96**	
					TOTAL EXPENDITURE	***£ 9,774.14***	***£ 1,547.69***	***£ 11,321.83***	

c) It was RESOLVED to approve the 2022-23 Accounts and Bank Reconciliation to 11th May 2023

d) It was noted that the Councils expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for 2022/23 was £1,005 in Grants.

23/019. Internal Auditors report for year ending 31st March 2023 and appoint the Internal Auditor for 2023/24: It was RESOLVED to approve the Internal Auditors Report for 2022/23 and appoint Kim Squires Internal Audit Services for 2023/24. The Council wished to pass on their thanks to the Internal Auditor for her work via the Clerk.

23/020. Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31st March 2023: It was RESOLVED to answer the following questions (yes, no or n/a) as stated below and to approve the governance statement for 2022/23
**'Yes' means that this authority*

1. **We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.** **Prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.* **YES**

2. **We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.** **Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.* **NO**

3. **We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.** **Has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.* **NO**

4. **We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.** *******During the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.* **YES**

5. **We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.** ** Considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.* **NO**

6. **We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.** ** Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.* **YES**

7. **We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.** ** Responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.* **YES**

8. **We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.** ** Disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.* **YES**

Chairman's Initials: ……..

9. **Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.** ** Has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts* **N/A**

23/021. Accounting Statements for the year ending 31st March 2023: It was RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements for 2022/23.

23/022. Details of the arrangements for the exercise of public rights: To note the date of announcement (4th June) and the period of public rights set by the Clerk / RFO 5th June – 14th July 2023

23/023. Update Bank Mandate: It was RESOLVED to approve the removal of Neil Bevan and the addition of Ralph Coldrick, Felicitas Freeman and Keith Brown to the Unity Trust Bank Mandate.

23/024. Items for the next meeting: To review the inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment. TPO's, Attleboro Lane utilities. Items from the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting.

23/025. Parish Councillor Public Surgery: It was RESOLVED to trial a Public Surgery ahead of each Parish Council Meeting in 2023/24 from 6:30pm

23/026. Date, Time and Place of Parish Council Meetings in 2023/24: It was RESOLVED to confirm the schedule of Parish Council Meetings for 2023/24 as follows:

Thursday 29th June 2023
Thursday 27th July 2023
Thursday 28th September 2023
Thursday 26th October 2023
Thursday 30th November 2023
Thursday 25th January 2024
Thursday 29th February 2024
Thursday 28th March 2024

All meetings to be held at 7:00pm at The Playing Field Pavilion, Openfield Croft

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20:50

..... Signed ..... Date

Chairman's Initials: ……..