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 c/o 20 Styles Place Yelvertoft, Northamptonshire, NN6 6LR
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Minutes of the Parish Council Ordinary Meeting

Held on Thursday 7th December 2023 at 7:30pm
 Welford Village Hall, West Street, Welford

Attendees: Dr. M. Gorrod (Chairman), Councillors Brotherton, McCullagh, Forder and Phelan.

Clerks: Ian Kelly and Clare Valentine

Members of Public: 2

Unitary Councillor: Jonathan Harris

	<u>MINUTES</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
23/95	<u>APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE</u>	
	Apologies were received and accepted for Councillors Hughes and Curtis. (personal)	
23/96	<u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u>	
	It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 26 th October 2023 as a correct record.	
23/97	<u>OUTSTANDING ACTIONS OF MATTERS ARISING NOT INCLUDED ON THIS AGENDA FOR REPORT ONLY:</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To extend lease on Pocket Park with NCC The Clerk has written to WNC Assets team to enquire about the Pocket Park to ask if they would like to dispose of the land to the Parish Council. • Write to Land Registry re Spinney Boundary and Wayleave. Checking position of wayleave and title plan of 6a. Cllr Brotherton agreed to draw up a new Statutory Declaration in relation to the Playing Field. • To consider an agreement with owners to manage green space WP 4/6 off Newlands Road in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy W4 - Allocation of New Public Spaces. On going negotiations. Cllr Brotherton reported happy with idea creating a formal document. Noted three medium size trees could be planted in the area. • Street lights -to install 1 x solar lamp Butchers Close, 1 x solar lamp and 1 x mains lamp High Street near to Pocket Park. Order placed, contractor reportedly behind with workload. • Parking at the entrance to the Playing Field, Cllr. Gorrod to contact WYCC – action noted. • To arrange replacement of street lamp in West Street opposite phone box – Awaiting installation. • To confirm delegates for the West Northamptonshire Council Planning Briefing taking place on Thursday 30 November 2023. Councillors Gorrod and Hughes attended the briefing and the Planning Department are trying to improve their processes. Pre-app process to start in January. • To obtain a quote for the removal of a tree next to the church doors – Matter for January Agenda. • To arrange the annual hedge trim on Newlands Road – noted as arranged. • Cllr. Gorrod to send a letter of appreciation to John Hunt at Spratton for all his work with the bus service- Noted as letter sent. • To submit objections to LCC Planning in relation to Mick George at Husbands Bosworth. Noted the objection was submitted and planning permission declined by LCC so the site will operate at 7am rather than 6am. 	



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23/98	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS	
	None	
23/99	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	
	<p>A member of the public referred to the current COP28 in Glasgow and COP26 where at the time two years ago the Parish Council decided to not declare a climate emergency but review the matter. The member of the public asked for an update. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council had focused on actions such as installing an EVC point. It was discussed that prior to the Unitary Council forming DDC had formed a Climate Emergency Strategy Group which a couple of years ago had filtered down to Parish Councils and the PC were awaiting further news from the group.</p> <p>Unitary Councillor Harris confirmed he has a report on the 59/60 bus service. To note West Northants Council are drafting the budget for next week's cabinet meeting. Following this there will be a 6 week public consultation period. Cllr Harris added that in 2019 DDC declared a climate emergency and WNC have since declared a cross party sustainability advisory group. It has been running for 18 months but has not been very active. They are to put forward new strategies and ideas soon. Keen to have a green framework that can be filtered down bearing in mind parish councils limited powers. To keep us posted.</p>	
23/100	AGENDA	
a)	To approve the appointment of the new Clerk	
	It was RESOLVED to appoint Mrs Clare Valentine as Clerk (Proper Officer) to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer (S151 Officer) to Welford Parish Council. Clerk Ian Kelly was thanked for all his time and hard work as Clerk and the Council wish him well in his retirement.	
b)	To consider support for the Climate and Ecology Bill	
	It was RESOLVED to support the bill but write to Chris Heaton-Harris MP to ask for it to be strengthened. The wording would appear that the bill is not enforceable. The Parish Council do not wish to pursue supporting the zero hours campaign group as the PC is non-political.	CLERK
c)	To discuss the draft budget for 2024/25	
	The Clerk (Ian Kelly) confirmed that the cashbook is up-to-date and has been received by Councillor McCullagh. Draft budget circulated and the final approval will be at the January 2024 meeting.	
d)	To approve the renewal of the contract with SSE for the supply of electricity to the street lighting for a further 12 months	
	The Clerk (Ian Kelly) reported that he had contacted a broker for energy comparisons and they were unable to match the current provider SSE. Estimated spend next year is £1037.00 and there is a provisional £1050.00 in the draft budget. It was RESOLVED to continue with SSE with a new 24month contract and add a note in The Bugle about energy saving.	CLERK
e)	To receive an update from the Chairman in relation to the incident in Butchers Close and subsequent comments made at a Council meeting	
	The Chairman provided a report on the matter which we understand has now concluded.	
f)	To discuss the state of the A5199 to the south of Welford as a result of a farming operation in the week commencing 27th November 2023	
	It was reported that between 29 th and 30 th November the A5199 was in a dangerous condition with mud on the road making driving hazardous. During late afternoon early evening on 30 th November there was thick fog which made the situation more dangerous. The PC contacted Highways regarding the mud on the road, as did reportedly a number of members of public over the two days, but the issue was not addressed. Eventually Highways closed the road for two hours on Thursday evening after 19.30 from Welford Christmas Tree Farm A5199 (Northampton Road) to Court Lane. It is not known if it was closed due to the mud on the road, but a sweeper and	CLERK



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	digger were spotted. It was reported the mud was a result of nearby harvesting. People had to stop and clean their vehicle wheels at Welford Garage to make safe to drive as the mud was so thick. It was RESOLVED to write to Highways to ask why this issue was not dealt with sooner and if there will be any action taken against those who appear to have left the mud on the highway and to prevent it happening in the future. Include Unitary Councillors.	
g)	To consider and discuss the 59/60 bus service	
	Unitary Councillor Harris advised that there is a subsidy included for the bus service next year but UNO the contractor finishes their contract in March 2024. A new bus contractor will need to be found or alternative option to keep this important service running. Stagecoach have stepped in for the commercial routes but the 59/60 service is a subsidised route so is managed differently. Councillor Harris is encouraging councils to continue to budget for the annual contribution. The project will hopefully be managed by Brixworth Parish Council as the Chairman at Spratton has retired. Thanks were noted to Brixworth for helping. Councillor Harris who previously co-ordinated support between the parishes, is attending further meetings about the 59/60 service with the aim to keep it running.	
h)	To receive an update regarding the ACV application for the Elizabethan PH	
	West Northants Council has reached a decision on the application for registering the pub as an Asset of Community Value and has rejected the application on the grounds that it does not meet the required criteria, having not held regular public events in recent times, large portion of the building is for residential use and the current arrangements have only been in operation for 12 months. It was RESOLVED to arrange a village petition – via Facebook voting page to gauge residents thoughts regarding an ACV status and to feedback to West Northants Council.	CHAIRMAN
i)	To discuss a proposal from WNC in relation to the Pocket Park	
	It was RESOLVED for the Clerk to contact West Northants Council with the proposal of transfer of the land and the Parish Council will meet all reasonable costs for WNC and the PC.	CLERK
j)	To note that D-Day 80 will take place on the 6th June 2024	
	It was noted the History Society have been contacted with the information should they wish to arrange an event for 6 th June 2024.	
k)	To consider the complaint made by a resident of Roundhouse Close in relation to the use of the grassed are	
	It was RESOLVED as no action. The grassed area was outlined as an area for children to play as a planning objective. Thanks were given to the member of public in highlighting the matter.	
l)	To nominate a representative on behalf of the Parish Council to the Welford Educational Trust	
	A volunteer has come forward to help and it was RESOLVED that Michelle Wilson is the new representative.	
m)	Clerk's update	
	<p>In early November, a number of sheds in the allotments were broken into, these were the sheds nearest the canal. It is believed nothing was stolen and was mindless vandalism</p> <p>From Kier: West End, West Street & Church Lane, Welford - 7.5t weight limit: There have been some changes in personnel that has resulted in this scheme not progressing to public consultation. However this scheme is now being progressed again and public consultation will commence next week.</p> <p>If no issues arise from the public consultation then WNC will look to install the signing early in 2024.</p>	



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23/101	PLANNING			
a)	To note updates from previous Planning Applications			
	<p>The Clerk had previously circulated updates regarding outstanding applications prior to the meeting. WND/2022/0518, 22/01197/FULL, WND/2023/0148, and 2023/VOCM/0056/LCC were duly noted. To view and comment on a planning application:</p> <p>Planning application search - Planning register Planning register West Northamptonshire Council (planning-register.co.uk) https://wnc.planning-register.co.uk/</p>			
b)	To discuss the proposed development by Blenheim renewables on the South Kilworth Road			
	The Chairman reported that the presentation on the proposal had been held in the village hall and the Parish council await the application.			
23/102	REPORTS			
a)	Highways			
	It was RESOLVED for the Chairman to add cleaning the drains on FixMyStreet			Chairman
b)	Rights of Way			
	It was noted new markers have been replaced in Hall Lane but some of the Rights of Way signs are faded. Clearing of the ditches had made some of the Rights of Way very muddy for a short period of time.			
c)	Playing field			
	Cllr Brotherton reported the field is well drained and the ground is solid so good for pushchairs. The equipment is OK and is being used. The monkey bars have received good response.			
d)	Welford Youth and Community Centre			
	The Chairman has contacted the booking Secretary about blocking gates and the emergency entrance on the West End and they will inform anyone who books the building.			
e)	Village Hall:			
	Councillor Phelan reported that the village Hall had held a meeting. There are two new members and the hall is still being well used. The Billard Room walls are drying out after being re-lime plastered and work is ongoing. 25 recently watched a film event.			
23/103	FINANCES			
a)	It was RESOLVED Cllr. McCullagh reviewed the audit of the bank transactions on the 5 th December 2023 as a correct record.			
b)	<p>It was noted the bank working balances at Unity Trust on the 1st December 2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current account: £32,920.22 2. Savings account: £28,232.24 3. Total held by Unity Bank: £61,152.46 			
c)	<p>It was noted standing order for street lighting has been collected by SSE:</p> <p>September supply collected on 31/10/2023, £97.94</p> <p>October supply to be collected on the 6/12/2023, £104.69</p>			
d)	It was noted standing order for ICO registration paid on 9/11/2023, £35.00			
e)	It was RESOLVED to approve the following payments.			
	PAYEE	REASON	£	
	Staff costs	Salaries November and December	2,083.54	LGA 1972 (s112)
	Ian Kelly	Clerk expenses	4.47	LGA 1972 (S111)
	R & G	October grass cut	1,429.78	Open Spaces Act 1906
	Joe Hutchinson	Conifer trimming Playing Field	780.00	Open Spaces Act 1906
	Village Hall	Trees for Welford event November	86.00	Open Spaces Act 1906
	Goetre Villa Ltd	Consultation for Trees for Welford	1,200.00	Open Spaces Act 1906



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	WYCC	Hire of hall for Food Bank event	60.00	LGA 1977 (s144)
	Barbara Osborne	Payroll services	69.00	LGA 1972 (s111)
		TOTAL	£ 5712.79	
23/104	DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 25TH JANUARY 2024			
23/105	CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 2D, PUBLIC AND PRESS TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THIS SECTION			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss and approve the national pay award for 2023/24 			
	<p>Members of Staff left the room. It was RESOLVED to approve the National Pay Award for Staff which is backdated to April 2023. Meeting Closed at 20.57</p>			

Signed that the Minutes are a true and accurate record	
Signed by the Chairman	Dated

DRAFT