

Cosgrove Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Cosgrove Parish Council held on **Wednesday 4 September 2024** at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr D Smith (Chairman), Cllr C Bird, Cllr ~~A Bracey~~, Cllr S Comerford (Vice Chair), Cllr M Draddy, Cllr J Proctor, Cllr P Roberts

Mrs J Evans (Clerk to the Council)

	Action
CPC/24/09/01 Cllr Bracey was absent on holiday.	
CPC/24/09/02 Cllr Comerford declared an interest in CPC24/09/06 Clerk's report.	
CPC/24/09/03 The Minutes of the July meeting were approved unanimously.	
CPC/24/09/04 Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere in the Agenda were: Advice received from West Northants Highways recorded under CPC/24/07/05 has been overtaken and will be covered under CPC/24/09/06.	
CPC/24/09/05 Public speaking. There were three members of the public observing the meeting but they had no matters to raise. Ward Cllr McCord reported changes to house building targets set by central government might result in a reconsultation on the Local Plan. If the land supply available was too low, there might be a number of speculative development applications (see CPC24/09/14) lodged with Planning. The DHL warehouse application AL1 (WNS/2021/1819/EIA) at Bell Plantation, Towcester was going before the Strategic Planning Committee on 10 September 2024 with a recommendation to approve. The meeting could be useful to those opposing the proposed warehouse development AL5 (WNS/2022/1741/EIA) at Furtho Pit, Old Cosgrove Road. Cllr Comerford left the meeting because she is a resident of Bridge Road	
CPC/24/09/06 The Clerk's report had been circulated ahead of the meeting and is attached to these Minutes at Appendix A. Following a complaint from a resident about overhanging vegetation outside the cottages on Bridge Road, the Clerk had sought guidance from Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils (NCALC). It was confirmed the PC has "no powers to deal with overhanging vegetation". Further, "the PC should not get involved in what may be a neighbour dispute." The PC noted the guidance given by West Northants Highways under CPC/24/07/05 (to write to homeowners of overhanging vegetation) contradicted that received from NCALC. It was felt the PC should adhere to the guidance offered by NCALC as it was based on what legal power Councils could act under. The PC noted this would set a precedent going forward and agreed any future complaints about overhanging vegetation would be directed to reporting under FixMyStreet.	
Cllr Comerford re-entered the meeting	
CPC24/09/06 continued The PC resolved the Clerk should undertake GDPR training at a cost of £42 plus VAT The PC recognised the value of volunteers working to keep the village tidy and were grateful to them. The PC resolved volunteers wishing to be refunded for their expenses should get agreement from the PC before carrying out the work. The PC noted there is provision in law to request time off for public duties but there was some scepticism about how supportive employers might be to requests.	Clerk to arrange GDPR training
CPC/24/09/07 a). The PC received the update on the current finances in comparison to the budget and this is appended to these Minutes at Appendix B 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			
31.07.2024	£108.00	DNH Contracts	dog waste collection July invoice 2678
31.07.2024	£1,596.84	NJ Blackwell Garden Services	grass mowing July
10.07.2024	£626.81	Clear Council Insurance	annual insurance premium
03.08.2024	£47.40	HMRC	PAYE July
03.08.2024	£610.10	J Evans	July salary
15.07.2024	£6.05	FastHost	email monthly charge July invoice number 77383935
08.07.2024	£11.99	HugoFox	website hosting - July Inv number 6885
02.08.2024	£14.78	YU energy	1 to 31 July 2024 standing charge
02.08.2024	£129.23	YU energy	1 to 31 July 2024 unmetered supply
For payment by BACS transfer 07.24			
31.08.2024	£120.00	DNH Contracts	dog waste collection August invoice 2702
30.08.2024	£861.12	NJ Blackwell Garden Services	grass mowing August
31.08.2024	£47.40	HMRC	PAYE August
31.08.2024	£610.10	J Evans	August salary
16.08.2024	£478.80	Sovereign Design Play Systems	Contract to inspect playpark equipment to 2029
Direct debit and debit card payments			
13.08.2024	£6.05	FastHost	email monthly charge August invoice number 77718804
13.08.2024	£11.99	HugoFox	website hosting - August
02.09.2024	£14.72	YU energy	1 to 31 August 2024 standing charge
02.09.2024	£131.50	YU energy	1 to 31 August 2024 unmetered supply

The PC queried the difference in the July and August invoices for grass mowing. This was because there were three cuts in July plus £40 for bramble clearance and in August there were only two rounds of cutting.

Clerk to circulate grass mowing invoices for July and August

CPC/24/0/08 Councillor updates:

Cllr Bird displayed photos he had taken of a large area of field adjacent to Cosgrove Park but in Castlethorpe Parish that has been fenced off. Nothing was known about the purpose of the new fence which has a push button control lock in the gate adjacent to the public right of way from Cosgrove. The PC will monitor closely as it was agreed any further expansion of Cosgrove Park without alternative access would be undesirable for Cosgrove. Cllr Smith reported Google had notified him of an increase in hits on the website with visitors consulting the events calendar and food and drink opportunities in the village. This was felt to be a positive development following the problems earlier in the year in finding the website via the Google search engine.

CPC/24/09/09 Village Memorial: A). The village memorial would not go ahead as the public consultation showed 63% of respondents were against the proposed design. The majority also felt there was already too much on the triangle at the crossroads. B). The PC decided to revisit the matter ahead of the 2025 Remembrance Sunday.							
CPC/24/09/10 Playpark working group: The PC received the update on the Playpark Working Group given by Cllr Proctor. The PC resolved that the working group: should carry out a survey on behalf of the PC, should investigate forming a Community Group, and could arrange an initial design consultation.	Clerk to inform Playpark working Group of resolutions						
CPC/24/09/11 Gigaclear update: No reply had been received to the letter asking for the green box to be moved. A reminder had been sent. Next steps, if no reply received, will be to contact the Ombudsman.							
CPC/24/09/12 Parish Burial Ground a). The new trees donated by the Woodland Trust, now they were more established, were scheduled to be planted in October and would again follow the line of the fence. The fence had been damaged by cattle in the adjacent field and needs repairing. b). It was agreed to name the two burial grounds looked after by Cosgrove Parish as Rectory Grounds Cemetery (formerly known as the new cemetery) and Meadow View Cemetery (formerly the new, new cemetery). c). It was resolved to cease burials in Rectory Grounds Cemetery with effect from 1 January 2025. Those with Exclusive Rights to plots in Rectory Grounds Cemetery would still be able to avail themselves of those Rights. There was discussion about the layout of Meadow View Cemetery, and it was agreed the Clerk would produce a drawing at the October meeting having taken advice from the gravedigger. d). It was noted Old Stratford Parish Council had declined to contribute to the upkeep of Rectory Grounds Cemetery. e). It was resolved to remove the self set holly tree adjacent to plot 128 and for quotes to be obtained to cut back the overhanging trees in Rectory Grounds and Meadow View.	Cllr Bird to arrange tree planting Clerk to publicise the names of the cemeteries & closure of Rectory Grounds cemetery wef 01.01.25 Clerk to draft plot plan Cllr Draddy to take down holly Clerk to obtain quotes						
CPC/24/09/13 Christmas Lights Switch on: a). the lights team have decided the event should continue to be independent of the PC b). It was agreed a draft risk assessment will be submitted for approval by the PC (needed as the event takes place on PC land) at the October meeting. c). The lights paid for by the PC in 2023 had sustained damage, but the team are hopeful they can be repaired. It was agreed if the lights team come to a future meeting with an estimate of the cost of Public Liability Insurance for the event, the PC will consider meeting that cost.	Lights Team to supply Risk Assessment and quote for PL insurance at Oct Mtg						
CPC/24/09/14 Planning: 29 Main Street 2024/3451/FULL Proposal First floor front and side extensions and insertion of windows in left (West) elevation - information only 6 Stratford Road 2024/3918/FULL Porch to front and side of house –no comment 024/3481/MAO OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION - Major An outline planning application for up to 174 dwellings (including affordable housing), a new roundabout at the junction of the A422 & Buckingham Road in Deanshanger. It was resolved to object to this application on grounds of increased traffic, impact on the character of the area, effect on trees and wildlife and impact of the community and other services.	Clerk to draft objection letter						
CPC/24/09/15 Speed Indicator Devices (SID): The PC received detailed information on data from the SIDs in Stratford Road (SR), Yardley Road (YR) and Bridge Road (BR). It was noted outward data was not collected from the Yardley Road SID. Inward figures recorded by the Bridge Road SID were consistently lower because convoys of traffic (caused by road conditions) were often recorded as a single vehicle. The PC noted that the number of vehicles going out past the Bridge Road SID expressed as a percentage of all vehicles entering the village were highest in April and May. It was also noted Cosgrove Park opens in April.							
minutes	minutes	minutes	minutes	minutes	minutes	minutes	minutes

			Inward YR					
February	9,569	8,947	13,067	7,966	8,913	22,636	39.38	
March	11,710	11,486	15,685	9,976	11,131	27,395	40.63	
April	16,364	16,338	18,954	15,686	18,612	35,318	52.70	
May	18,258	19,373	17,477	16,905	19,546	35,735	54.70	
June	17,292	18,022	17,936	9,697	10,276	35,228	29.17	
July	18,443	18,693	19,376	11,782	12,591	37,819	33.29	
August	19,209	19,802	20,045	10,578	11,330	39,254	28.86	
<p>The SIDs also track speeds, and the PC were pleased to hear most drivers were keeping within the speed limit in the centre of the village. Notable exceptions were a vehicle recorded as travelling at 75.97mph at 05.58 on 27 Dec on Yardley Road and another going 63.00mph at 20.31 on 7 Dec on Bridge Road. The PC thanked the volunteer for the work he had put in compiling the figures.</p>								
<p>CPC24/09/16 Dot Gov Dot UK: Quotes from three approved Registrars to move the Parish Council from the current email address to one ending in dot gov dot uk had been received. The PC noted Old Stratford had made the move with the assistance of Netwise and to date were happy with how it was working out. A summary of the different offers had been circulated ahead of the meeting together with information from each of the Registrars. It was agreed Councillors would take the time to study the papers, ask any questions they might have and once they had identified their preferred Registrar would email the Clerk. If possible, the decision should be taken ahead of the October meeting as the funding of £100, to defray costs, offered by central government was limited and NCALC had advised of the need to act quickly in order not to miss out.</p>								All to study papers and email Clerk any questions and their preferred Registrar
CPC/24/09/17 Meeting appraisal: Effective								
CPC24/09/18 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 2 October 2024 (Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 Part II para 8.1)								
Meeting closed at 21.10								

Appendix A

CPC24/09/06: Clerk's Report: September 2024

I need to go on GDPR training to complete an assignment in CiLCA but as importantly to make sure we are keeping records and are GDPR compliant (now we have a basic GDPR policy only). There is one on 9 September 2024 which costs £42 plus VAT. Please can you **resolve** I should undertake this training?

You may be interested to know, if you want to take training but are working, there is provision in law for you to request time off for public duties.

The proposed memorial bench at the bottom of Mansel Close has fallen at the final hurdle. West Northants Highways asked for further information (a plan of the site, design and size of bench, agreement from adjacent landowners for its placement, agreement to maintain the bench, copy of our public liability and whether it need to be dug in or just placed). Agreement from adjacent landowners was not given. I have now emailed the donor family and suggested one of the new burial grounds. I wait to hear their decision.

Highways have agreed to supply us with six speed reduction signs but they are currently out of stock. The lengthy email gives guidance on placement and how often the signs will have to be moved. I have added this to the action tracker to make sure we don't forget to chase Highways if the signs don't turn up.

There are a couple of consultations which may need a response from us:

Local Transport plan which closes on 17 October 2024

And from central government there is Planning Policy Framework closing on 24 September 2024.

Details of other WNC consultations can be found at <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/>

NCALC are advertising a free consultation briefing on the new Tree Strategy for West Northamptonshire. The Tree briefing will be via zoom on 24 September, register interest by 20 September.

I checked with the insurance company about who is covered by our public liability insurance. The guidance I received is "all employees and volunteersworking at the sole request of and under the sole control of the Parish Council, using tools, materials and equipment provided by the Parish Council [then] the existing Public and Employers Liability Sections of the policy would apply." Only non-hazardous tasks can be carried out by volunteers (who must be aged between 16 and 75). It is possible, therefore, for volunteers to be used for painting and tidying up, litter picking and path maintenance. It is not possible for a volunteer to be covered to cut grass as we do not have a lawn mower or strimmer. Two residents have asked to be refunded the cost of materials (vinegar-based solution) they have used to spray weeds on the bridge and near the horse tunnel. Going forward any volunteers who want to be refunded the cost of materials, must ask in advance and provide receipts. In this case, please can you **resolve**, retrospectively, to refund their expenses?

Another resident has been cutting grass on the triangle at the Castlethorpe turn and along the bridlepath. It has been suggested we offer to refund the cost of the petrol. As we cannot cover him under our insurance, I suggest we thank him for volunteering and let him know he carries out the work at his own risk. Refunding his costs would imply we take some responsibility for the work he has done. If we would like to use him for small grass cutting tasks, then he will need to show us a copy of his public liability insurance and quote in advance.

I have received an email complaint

"I would like to raise a complaint regarding overgrowth outside cottages in Bridge Road just prior to the right angle junction of Bridge Road and Main Street. This makes it very difficult to pass between the cars parked opposite the cottages, I have now brushed my car against the overgrowth. So far I have managed to remove the scuff marks with some polish."

I replied advising the complainant to report on FixMyStreet and only after this has been done, would the PC consider if a letter to the homeowner would be appropriate. I received a further email:

"I am surprised that you cannot take this up with the related residence as I personally [was] approached by the PC when my Weeping willow was affecting the pedestrians. I was very strongly told to trim the tree and my failing to do it I was told PC would take appropriate action to trim the tree and send me the bill. Therefore, I am surprised of your advice."

I propose to reply restating my understanding that the PC has no legal authority (power) to instruct a homeowner to cut back vegetation. This is in line with the guidance I have received from NCALC which is the PC should not get involved in what could potentially be a neighbour dispute.

For the record, I have looked at the vegetation outside the cottages on Bridge Road and it is true that there is a small amount of shrubby growth slightly overhanging the front garden. I have circulated images separately.

I had a call on my personal phone about a burial matter. The caller had been given my number by the previous Clerk. When I spoke to the caller, he told me he had found Mr Everett's details online as the person to approach. I have done a couple of searches online and can find no incorrect information about how to contact the Clerk. If anyone else feels like digging around online to see what they can find that would provide reassurance that the right information is out there.

Finally, I received an email from National Grid asking for my address as the wayleave cheque they sent (wrongly) to Old Stratford had been returned marked as 'not this address'. I have sent the correct information. I have also started a list of address changes that must be made prior to handover to my successor as I received no such list now.

JM Evans, Clerk

Appendix B
Cosgrove Parish Council
August 2024 Summary of Financial Records

Revenues	YTD	Projected income to end of year	Forecast	Budget	Variance
Precept	(12,500.00)	(12,500.00)	(25,000.00)	25,000.00	-
Interest	(267.63)	(1,040.00)	(1,177.63)	1,563.00	(385.37)
Burial Ground	(805.00)	(640.00)	(1,365.00)	979.00	386.00
VAT Reclaim	(2,046.96)	-	(2,046.96)		2,046.96
Misc Income	-	-	-		-
Mowing Grant	-	(999.00)	(999.00)	999.00	-
Account transfers		-			
Total Revenue	(15,619.59)	(15,179.00)	(30,588.59)	28,541.00	2,047.59

Regular Costs	YTD	Projected Costs to end of Year	Forecast	Budget	Variance
Clerk Salary	2,630.00	5,650.00	7,575.00	8,470.00	895.00
Grass Mowing	4,180.10	3,812.00	7,228.10	6,860.00	(368.10)
Clerk Sundries	295.34	200.00	470.34	300.00	(170.34)
Church Clock	195.00	-	195.00	195.00	-
Street Lighting	4,780.30	2,102.00	6,620.30	3,150.00	(3,470.30)
Allotments	-	100.00	100.00	100.00	-
NCALC	374.63	-	374.63	650.00	275.37
Admin	327.01	-	327.01		(327.01)
Dog Waste Bins	495.00	950.00	1,325.00	1,430.00	105.00
Village Hall	0.00	360.00	360.00	360.00	-
Insurance	626.81	-	626.81	780.00	153.19
Training	578.00	505.00	1083.00	1100.00	17.00
IT Costs	224.33	776.00	965.33	916.00	(49.33)
Play Park	1368.35	2,140.00	3,508.35	2,140.00	(1,368.35)
Other	81.28	590.00	671.28	590.00	(81.28)
Total Costs	16,156.15	17,185.00	31,430.15	27,041.00	(4,389.15)

Section 137 Costs (Max of £9.93 per electorate)	YTD	Projected Costs to end of Year	Forecast	Budget	Variance
NACRE	35.00	-	35.00	35.00	-
CPRE	-	36.00	36.00	36.00	-
Christmas lights	-	250.00	250.00	250.00	-
SNAST	-	25.00	25.00	25.00	
Village Projects	-	317.00	317.00	423.00	106.00
Total Costs	35.00	628.00	663.00	769.00	106.00

Discretionary Spend	YTD	Projected Costs to end of Year	Forecast	Budget	Variance
Poppy Wreath	0	50.00	50.00	50.00	-
Village Hall	0	200.00	200.00	200.00	-
Old Mail	265.00	481.00	746.00	481.00	265.00
Flags	70.00		70.00		70.00
School trim trail	1999.00		1,999.00		1,999.00
Total Costs	2,334.00	731.00	3,065.00	731.00	2,334.00

Movement	YTD	Projected Net (Revenue)/ Costs to end of Year	Forecast Net (Revenue)/ Cost	Budget	Variance
Net (Revenue)/ Cost	2,905.56	1,664.00	4,569.56	28,541.00	(4,569.56)
VAT paid to date	2,343.97				
VAT received back	(2,046.96)				

Current and savings	18,236.15
Fixed Deposit accounts	30,201.65
Total bank balance as at 15 August 2024	£ 48,437.80

Earmarked Reserves 2024-2025		
Item	Amount	Notes
Contingency	£ 12,500.00	six months of 2024-2025 precept
Street lights	£ 12,900.00	replacement of up to 2 lamps: ground works £6,00 each plus £450 lighting unit each
Children's playpark repairs and refurbishment	£ 15,000.00	£10,000 replace equipment £5,000 running repairs
School trim trail	£ 2,000.00	to replace equipment
Trees and Hedges	£ 2,000.00	maintaining trees and hedges
Fencing	£ 2,250.00	providing defensive fencing around new cemetery
Community projects (to be decided)	£ 2,000	identify and fund community project
Total earmarked reserves @ 1 April 2024	£ 48,650	

Cosgrove Parish Council
Appendix C: BACS Payments Bchedule 06.24

Date of Invoice	Amount	Payee	Description	Email date	BACS reference	minute reference	Notes
31.07.2024	£ 108.00	DNH Contracts	dog waste collection July invoice 2678	01.08.2024	BACS06.24		
31.07.2024	£ 1,596.84	NJ Blackwell Garden Services	grass mowing July		BACS06.24	CPC/24/3/8(a)	
10.07.2024	£ 626.81	Clear Council Insurance	annual insurance premium		BACS06.24	CPC/24/7/8	
03.08.2024	£ 47.40	HMRC	PAYE July		BACS06.24		
03.08.2024	£ 610.10	J Evans	July salary		BACS06.24		
	£ 2,989.15						
15.07.2024	£ 6.05	FastHost	email monthly charge July invoice number 77383935	01.08.2024	debit card		Direct debit and debit card expenditure
08.07.2024	£ 11.99	HugoFox	website hosting - July Inv number 6885		Direct Debit		
02.08.2024	£ 14.78	YU energy	1 to 31 July 2024 standing charge		Direct Debit		
02.08.2024	£ 129.23	YU energy	1 to 31 July 2024 unmetered supply		Direct Debit		
Total DD and card	£ 162.05						

Cosgrove Parish Council
Appendix ~~E~~ BACS Payments Schedule 07.24

Date of Invoice	Amount	Payee	Description	Email date	BACS reference	minute reference	Notes	
31.08.2024	£ 120.00	DNH Contracts	dog waste collection August invoice 2702		BACS07.24	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
30.08.2024	£ 861.12	NJ Blackwell Garden Services	grass mowing August		BACS07.24	CPC/24/3/8(a)		
31.08.2024	£ 47.40	HMRC	PAYE August		BACS07.24	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
31.08.2024	£ 610.10	J Evans	August salary		BACS07.24	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
16.08.2024	£ 478.80	Sovereign Design Play Systems	Contract to inspect playpark equipment to 2029		BACS07.24	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
	£ 2,117.42							
13.08.2024	£ 6.05	FastHost	email monthly charge August invoice number 77718804		debit card	CPC/24/09/07 a)	Direct debit and debit card expenditure	
13.08.2024	£ 11.99	HugoFox	website hosting - August Inv number 7577		Direct Debit	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
02.09.2024	£ 14.72	YU energy	1 to 31 August 2024 standing charge		Direct Debit	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
02.09.2024	£ 131.50	YU energy	1 to 31 August 2024 unmetered supply		Direct Debit	CPC/24/09/07 a)		
Total DD and card	£ 164.26							