

**Wybunbury Parish Council
(Extraordinary Meeting)**

2nd December 2024

Commenced: 7.30 pm

Terminated: 8.05 pm

**Present: Councillor Buckingham (Deputy Chair in the Chair)
Councillors Cheshire, Clark, Denby, Guilliard, Howcroft and Lightfoot**

Councillor Clowes – Cheshire East Councillor

There were no Members of the Public in attendance at the meeting

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ellison-Jones, Pike and Thomas.

2. COMPLETION OF A FLOOD RISK ACTIVITY PERMIT (FRAP)

For the purpose of these Minutes, Councillor Clark declared her interest in this matter. She remained in the meeting for part of the discussion, she retired when it became apparent that some matters of confidentiality were to be discussed, and then she returned to the meeting when invited to do so by the Clerk. Councillor Clark did not take part in any of the discussions or voting on this matter.

Councillor Clowes reported that the Environment Agency had requested a bespoke Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP), as Wybunbury Brook was categorised as a main river. This was specialist work that could not be completed by Gravitas, therefore four specialist consultants had been contacted, of which three, had submitted quotes.

As the cost of the Permit had not been considered during the budgeting process of the Project, Councillors Denby, Howcroft and Lightfoot, had called this Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council to consider and approve the expenditure of an additional sum of £1,800 (plus VAT) to obtain this Permit, which would enable the proposed works to progress on the site.

However, after the Extraordinary Meeting had been called, there had been a number of pivotal developments, which would affect the progress of this Project. These were as follows:-

- (i) A bespoke Flood Risk Activity Permit, was project specific. Therefore, if this particular project did not continue, then the FRAP could not be transferred to another project at the same site. Councillor Clowes therefore, recommended that the Parish Council should not complete with the FRAP application unless the FCC (the Grant Funders) approved the funding and extended the deadline date for the completed project to June 2025.
- (ii) The backfill costs, to be completed by Gravitas, had increased from £12,000.00 plus VAT to £27,000.00 plus VAT which represented a significantly higher expenditure. If the Parish Council was unable to obtain the works for £12,000.00 plus VAT, then this particular project could not proceed, as the Parish Council simply did not have the funds available.

On this basis, Councillor Clowes suggested that the Parish Council should not agree to the commencement of an application for a Flood Risk Activity Permit, until it had received assurances from Gravitas on the price of backfill, and the FCC for the extension of the date.

As the FCC was awaiting additional information from the Parish Council, so that it could further consider the application, Councillor Clowes had compiled a letter, on behalf of the Parish Council, which she read to the Members, seeking approval.

RESOLVED

That at this stage of the project, the following procedures be approved:-

- (i) That the Clerk and Councillor Clowes, notify the Chair, Deputy Chair, and Councillor Denby on the outcome of discussions with Gravitas regarding the Parish Council's request to reduce the price of the backfill costs, to the original quote of £12,000.00 plus VAT;**
- (ii) That the Clerk writes to the FCC, asking for an extension to the December deadline which allows the Parish Council until 3rd June 2025, to complete the project;**
- (iii) If Gravitas cannot reduce its quote, then the Parish Council to not proceed with this company;**

At this juncture, Councillor Clark left the meeting.

- (iv) If the work with Gravitas proceeds, the Parish Council approves the appointment of RAB, to complete the application for a Flood Risk Activity Permit, for a fixed fee of £1,800.00.**

At this juncture, Councillor Clark returned to the meeting.

3. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were any other items which should be considered as a matter of urgency.