

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD  
AT 19.30 HRS ON TUESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2020  
VIA SKYPE**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): Cllrs E Houghton (Chair), C Bye, J Day, S Wilson, J Rogers, M Hawes, P Rash, M Smith and L Tory and District Councillor Dan Schumann. Two members of the public were present.

**1. Apologies for absence and any declarations of interest.**

Apologies were received and accepted from County Councillor Hunt.

There were no declarations of interest with any item on the agenda.

**2. Public Participation. The meeting will be adjourned for up to 10 minutes to allow members of the public and Councillors who have declared an interest to make a statement on matters to be discussed. The Chair advised speakers that by speaking their names and what they raise will be minuted and be in the public domain.**

A resident of Back Lane shared his concerns with the planning application for Back Lane (Redit Lane) due to the size of the house and the width of Redit Lane.

A parishioner had sent in a letter with concerns of the loss of the local pub as it became more of an eatery and also the continued use of the larger area of the green for the tables.

**3. Update on COVID-19**

Due to the second lockdown the meeting had returned to Skype and therefore the standing orders on virtual meetings returned into force. The clerk advised that the outdoor gym had been closed and would remain closed for the duration of the lockdown. Under current government guidelines the playgrounds could remain open.

**4. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and correct copy and would be signed by the Chair.

**5. Planning matters**

**5.1 Proposed 3 bedroom 2 storey detached dwelling. 11 Back Lane, Wicken CB7 9YL.  
Reference 20/01352/FUL.**

The Parish Council did not support the application for the following reasons:

- Although listed as 11 Back Lane the entrance to the property is on Redit Lane which is a small one-track lane.
- Over development of the plot – the bulk and size of the house is too large in relation to the size of the plot
- Not in keeping with the street scene - the ridge height is far higher than neighbouring properties.
- Road safety – Redit Lane is a single-track lane. Ingress and egress from the property is a safety concern with the number of cars expected for a 3-bedroom house and the tight turning circle shown on the plans. The only house on the lane is directly opposite the entrance and could result in cars entering/exiting the pinch point at the same time.
- The amount of paving on the site is a concern for flooding

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- The Design and Access statement does not show consultation with ECDC.
- There are a number of factual errors in the statement regarding the village

**5.2 To vary the conditions 1(approved plans) and 7 (Highways Works) of previously approved 16/01492/OUT for the erection of up t 8 dwellings with parking, garages and associated works. Land south of Chapel Lane, Wicken CB7 5XZ. Ref 20/00709/VAR**

**The Parish Council made the following comments:**

- Concerns over the road safety as there is already a large amount of traffic using the single track road including cars, lorries, horse, pedestrians and children accessing the recreation ground. The houses in this development and the developments further up Chapel Lane will add to the amount of traffic using the road.
- Noted that CCC originally recommended the road to be widened to 6m but the proposal is for 3m plus 1.5m footpath which we do not feel is acceptable or safe.
- Would like to see the streetlight which was previously agreed to be put back into the plans.

**5. Update on Planning Applications Granted**

The following have been granted by ECDC:

- Tree work at 30 High Street, Wicken
- Construction of 2no 3-bedroom, 1.5 storey detached dwellings and associated works – revised scheme of previously approved 20/00155/FUL. Land South East Of 22 Stretham Road Wicken. Ref 20/00878/FUL
- Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and development of 6 dwellings. Dimmock's Cote, 46 Stretham Road, Wicken 20/00771/FUL

**6. County and District Councillor reports**

District Councillor Dan Schumann updated the council on the following update on projects and information from ECDC:

- ECDC COVID-19 Recovery Plan and associated work
- Outbreak Plan – identifying sites for screening and flu vaccinations
- Working with businesses during COVID-19 and distributing business grants
- Self-isolating support payments
- Climate change
- New supplementary plan
- Banned sky lanterns and helium balloons on county land
- Challenges to the 5-year land supply have been successfully defended
- Government is consulting on an overhaul of the planning system. Whilst ECDC would welcome some reform they are not happy with the downgrade of local plan and Community Land Trusts.
- 100k homes are ready in Fordham and more will be rolled out across the district.
- Consulted on the Equalities Policy
- Roundabout at the A10/A142 is now complete – work will commence soon on the Lancaster Way roundabout.
- Approved a motion to enforce illegal parking in the district

Councillor Schumann asked for projects which could be championed by Lucy Fraser MP. The council recommended the AWA linkage pipe.

Councillor Schumann left at 20.10

## **7. Progress report on matters arising from the last meeting 8 September 2020**

**7.1** Cycle path – The hedge had been cut back by ECDC on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The clerk had received information on a ‘Places to Ride’ grant to improve cycle paths etc. The council asked the clerk to submit an application. Cllr Smith was ready to start work once the weather improved.

**7.2** Maids Head sign – the hole had not yet been made good. The clerk would continue to chase.

**7.3** EA car park in Upware – This was due to be repaired on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and would need to be closed for 2 days. The clerk had agreed to put out no parking cones and details would be put on the Upware Facebook page.

**7.4** Speeding in the village – The post had been erected by Cllr Smith and the speed watch sign had been installed. The change of location meant that drivers were aware of their speed once they reached the 30mph sign and gates. The council thanked Cllr Smith and Carl Shavitz for their work with this.

**7.5** Mortuary Chapel and Cemetery Paths – Cllr Rogers advised that the footpath work had been completed. Work had now started on the Mortuary Chapel. Cllr Rogers had chosen teak stain for the doors, cream for the window frames, black for the drain pipes and guttering and a plain sandblasted effect glass for the windows.

**7.6** Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme – The clerk had requested the Rural Gigabit Team attend a meeting. This was ongoing.

**7.7** Purchase of rubbish bin for the Rec. The clerk had ordered the rubbish bin. There was a £41 delivery charge which had increased the price.

**7.8** Non payment of invoices by National Trust – The National Trust had still not paid the outstanding invoices. Cllr Houghton had asked for details from Wicken Fen of who to escalate this to at the National Trust.

**7.9** Local Council Award scheme - The clerk had submitted an application for the Foundation Award.

**7.10** Upware Open Space – The hedging for the Open Space had arrived. The land had now been levelled by Cllr Day. The clerk had received a quote from Peter Haine of £250 including VAT for the removal of the remaining conifers. The clerk would arrange the following:

- Peter Haine to remove the trees and stumps from the front of the land.
- Truelink to seed the whole area with grass
- Order the weed control plastic for the hedge plants

It was agreed a temporary fence would be erected to enable the hedging to be planted.

**7.11** Fixed Assets Register – The marquees were currently on the fixed asset register at a replacement value of £11493.00 an up to date quote had been provided by Weatherill Brothers at £13680 plus vat. It was agreed that the current value on the fixed asset register would be updated with insurance being increased when it was renewed in July.

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**7.12** Wooden posts next to the war memorial – Cllr Day had fixed the posts.

**7.13** Grass cutting around the war memorial – Nigel Houghton had cut the grass around the war memorial for Remembrance Sunday. The clerk would arrange for the base stone of the war memorial to be cleaned before Remembrance Sunday 2021.

**7.14** Reflector posts along Lower Road – Cllr Rash had removed the broken reflector posts.

**7.15** Grass cutting tender – The clerk had sent the grass cutting tender out with a closing date of the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020. This would be on the next agenda.

## **8. Financial matters.**

### **8.1 Bill payments**

Rachel Earl	Clerk wages November 2020	359.56
HMRC PAYE	PAYE November 2020	89.80
Rachel Earl*	Wage error October 2020	20.80
HMRC*	PAYE error October 2020	5.20
Rachel Earl	Clerks annual expenses	£500.00
Rachel Earl (Broxap)	Purchase of litter bin (CIL money)	371.94
Weatherill Brothers	Deposit for cleaning the marquees	£200
Truelink Ltd	Cuts in September	989.64
Truelink Ltd	Cuts in October	355.68
Haine Tree Services	Tree Survey	£360.00
PWLB Loan	Loan repayment November 2020	£2640.77
PWLB Loan	Loan repayment May 2020	£2640.77
British Gas Lite	Electricity for Rec 12/8/20 to 11/9/20	£15.87
British Gas Lite	Electricity for Rec 11/9/20 to 11/10/20	£16.10
SSE	Street light electric October 2020	£115.45

\*Although the correct salary had been put through the payroll for October 2020, the clerk had written a lower amount on the salary cheque and PAYE.

### **8.2 Monthly Finance Update**

The monthly finance update showed the Parish Council was in a stable position.

### **8.3 Consideration of Fees and Expenses**

The council agreed that the current fees and expenses should continue for 2020/21. The Chair requested the Clerk's salary be added to the next agenda.

### **8.4 Upgrade of Two Street Lights**

The council had agreed in the Climate Strategy to upgrade three street lights per year using CIL money. The light in Drury Lane had not been repairable due to water damage and had therefore been upgraded in this financial year. The council agreed to replace the light on Pond Green outside No 7 and the light at the bottom of Drury Lane, opposite No 53.

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### **8.5 Donation to the Royal British Legion**

The council agreed to donate £100 for the poppy wreath. This was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Bye. All were in favour.

### **9. Review of Council Documents**

The Standing Orders had been updated using the NALC Model Standing Orders. Adoption of these was proposed by Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Tory. All were in favour.

### **10. Update on ACRE Conference**

Cllr Rogers had attended the ACRE virtual conference and reported back to the council.

### **11. Tree Survey**

The council had commissioned a walk over tree survey of all of the trees which were the responsibility of the council. A copy of the report will be kept with the minutes. Two trees were discussed (trees 8 and 37 on the High Street list). These would be discussed at the next meeting after the councillors had a chance to review. The clerk would review the work needed on the trees which had been flagged as high risk and medium risk. The following updates could be provided:

- Lime tree next to the playground: The hanging branch had been removed following the high winds soon after the survey had been completed.
- Weeping ash tree at the cemetery – the branch had broken off in the high winds.

### **12. Request for a Deed of Easement 26 High Street Wicken**

The Parish Council agreed the deed of easement for 26 High Street. The clerk would arrange the paperwork.

### **13. Items for Information**

The clerk had received an email from Kingfishers Bridge Nature Reserve regarding the number of visitors now going to the Reserve and the parking concerns etc. This would be on the December agenda and the Clerk would ask the Reserve Manager to attend.

Following the letter the Parish Council will ask the Maids Head landlords to move the picnic benches closer to the pub.

Cllr Houghton had received a draft copy of the new Around and About newsletter which would be circulated twice a year. The remaining Around and About funds would be transferred to the Community Fund and ringfenced for the production of future newsletters.

Cllr Tory advised that the residents of Upware had met and discussed the speeding in Old School Lane and had asked whether they could borrow one of the speed watch signs for a month. It was thought that a month would be too long but a two week period could be possible. Cllr Tory would discuss this further with Cllr Rogers.

There was no further items of information and the meeting closed at 21.45.

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