

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD  
AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 9 JANUARY 2024  
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted):  
B Pepper, L Houghton (chair), R Barnes, J Rogers, P Rash, S Wilson, S Hill and District Councillor L Vellacott.

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr C Robinson (illness), Cllr M Hawes (work), District Councillor Bovingdon and County Councillor Bill Hunt.

**2. To Receive Declarations of Interest**

- a) Councillors to declare any personal interest in any items on the agenda.
- b) Councillors to declare any prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chairman if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation.
- c) Councillors to declare any pecuniary interest in any items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Public Participation.**

**The meeting will be adjourned for up to 10 minutes to allow any members of the public and Councillors declaring a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.**

There was no public participation.

**4. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 12 December 2023**

The minutes were agreed as a true and correct copy and signed by the Chair.

**5. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 12 December 2023**

**5.1** Mission Hall BT manhole –Documents for the wayleave application had been submitted.

**5.2** Parking on the Village Greens – This would continue to be monitored.

**5.3** Bark chippings – Cllr Pepper would arrange for the chippings to be spread around the tree base. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Pepper for removing the ivy which had been left on the green by Network Power.

**5.4** Hedge Adjacent to Wicken Mission Hall Car Park – The clerk had replied accordingly and again offered to meet with the home owner.

**5.5** The memorial stability testing had been postponed due to the weather. This would now take place in February 2024.

**5.6** Maids Head Public House – The clerk had written to the new landlord.

Minutes accepted as a true and correct copy.....

**5.7** Successful Application for 20mph Zones and Proposed Designs – Highways had requested speeding data to assist with the consultation of the project as the Police had raised an objection. The Parish Council thanked Jonathan Angrove and Carl Shavitz for responding to the request so quickly. The data clearly highlighted the issues with speeding in the village. Further data would be submitted to show a typical working week as the data provided was over the New Year period.

**5.8** Parish Nature Recovery Plan – This had been submitted to ECDC and would be put on the village website.

**5.9** Speedwatch Session in Upware – Cllr Pepper would obtain a Speedwatch location code for Upware and complete a session in January/February 2024.

**5.10** Church Wall Repairs – The clerk was obtaining quotes for repairs to the wall. This would be on the February agenda.

**5.11** Assets of Community Value for the Maid’s Head – The clerk had submitted the application.

**5.12** Refurbishment of the Recreation Ground Changing Rooms – This was ongoing.

**5.13** Hawes Lane pinch point – This was with ECDC enforcement team as work should have completed during 2023.

**5.14** Allotment access road – plainings would be used to repair the access road and also on the turning point.

## **6. Planning Matters**

**6.1** Construction of new tractor barn with driveway, gate, fencing and creation of new turning head for Back Lane. Land to the East of 16 Back Lane, Wicken. Ref 23/00912/FUL. The amendment involves/additional information receive includes:

- Proposed barn reduced in scale
- Planning statement submitted

The Parish Council would like a condition applied that the barn was not to be used for residential use in the future without a further planning application being submitted.

**6.2** Demolition of the west outside of the Tractor Shed, make good to the remaining building, removal of asbestos containing roofing sheets and replacement roof sheets. Provision of 3 containers for a period not exceeding 3 years. National Trust Wicken Fen, Rose Cottage, Lode Lane, Wicken, Ref 23/01375/FUL

The Parish Council had no objections.

**6.3.** Updates on Planning Application Approve/Refused by ECDC

There were no updates.

## **7. County and District Councillor Reports**

District Councillor Vellacott:

- Meeting Olivia Roberts, planning officer at ECDC to discuss the development on Chapel Lane and SVC 3G pitch
- Meeting Headteacher at Soham Village College and will discuss the new cycleway
- Mayoral precept due to increase by 200%
- Email discussion with the Mayor regarding bus service for Wicken
- Contact Dennis Vacher regarding the blocked culvert at Upware
- Met with Louisa Wood from Staploe Medical Centre and supporting the planning application for a new medical centre as part of the Eastern Gateway
- ECDC will invest in building a new crematorium at Mepal
- ECDC in a good position to freeze its proportion of Council tax for the 11<sup>th</sup> year

## 8. Review of Council Documents

### 8.1 Risk Register

**Risk 8** (trees) the next tree survey was due to take place November/December 2024 but the clerk would contact the tree specialist to see if this was needed earlier due to the extreme wet weather.

The risk register was updated.

### 8.2 Review of the Village Action Plan including the Climate Strategy

**Item 10** (electric charging point at the Mission Hall) Cllr Pepper would research and report back.

**Item 15** (second pond for wildlife) the second pond had been created in the Millenium Wood on the Recreation ground. This would be removed from the plan.

**Item 18** (composting area for the allotments) – the allotment holders preferred their own compost. This would be removed from the plan.

**Item 22** (street lights) all street lights had been updated to LED. This would be removed from the plan

Actions arising from the Nature Recovery Plan would be added to the Action Plan.

Solar panels – there had been a number of solar panel installations in the conservation area. The clerk would investigate if planning permission was needed for these installations and put a piece advising of this in the Around and About if planning was needed.

## 9. Financial Matters

### 9.1 Bill payments

Rachel James	Clerk wages January 2024	£509.60
HMRC PAYE	PAYE January 2024	£127.40
Rachel James	Purchase of two sets of searches from Land Registry	£6.00
SSE	Streetlight electricity December 2023	£52.10
CAPALC	Councillor training (S Hill)	£75.00
CAPALC	Councillor training (Social media) L Houghton, J Rogers	£140.00
Wicken Mission Hall	Hire October, November, December 2023	£90.00
PWLB	May payment of the Loan for the Mission Hall	£2640.77
PWLB	November payment of the loan for the Mission Hall	£2640.77

## **9.2 Monthly Finance update**

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

## **9.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 December 2023**

The bank statements and reconciliation reports had been circulated. These were noted.

## **10. Policies**

10.1 Conflict of Interest Policy

10.2 Data Protection Policy

10.3 Disciplinary Policy

10.4 Dignity at Work Policy

10.5 Public Access and Amenity Policy

10.6 Privacy Policy

Approval of the policies en bloc was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Pepper, all were in favour.

## **11. Items for Information**

A concern had been received regarding the condition of the village sign. The clerk would arrange for this to be assessed by a builder.

A street renumbering notification had been received for 9B Chapel Lane. The resident of 9A Chapel Lane had advised that this was due to an additional electricity supply being needed.

There had been issues with the water system along Lower Road which Anglian Water had attended. Due to the amount of rain the system was unable to cope and had overflowed sewage affecting the neighbouring ditch. The clerk will contact Anglian Water further.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.25pm