

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD
AT 20:00 HRS ON TUESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2022
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): Cllrs E Houghton (Chair), J Day, J Rogers, B Pepper, M Hawes, S Wilson and one member of the public.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the September meeting. This meeting was due to take place on 13 September 2022 but was delayed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 due to the death of the Queen. Wicken Parish Council was deeply saddened by the news of the death of our Nation's longest serving Monarch, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr P Rash (holiday) and Cllr L Tory (work). Cllr M Smith was absent.

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.

No members of the public requested to speak.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 9 August 2022

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

5. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 9 August 2022

5.1 Cycle path – This was ongoing.

5.2 Resurfacing of the paths and cleaning of the culvert at the Hawes Lane junction – This was ongoing. The clerk had started to report the state of the paths on the Highways website again.

5.3 A1123 repairs – This was ongoing.

5.4 Parish Council Emails – The Clerk was now circulating information to the parish council emails. Cllr Hawes would hold a training session.

5.5 LHI Bid – The double yellow lines on the High Street would be installed January 2023 to March 2023.

5.6 RoSPA Reports – James Petersen had completed the maintenance work needed on the zip wire. The clerk had received the replacement handles for the gym equipment and the bolt for the Pond Green play area and would install these.

5.7 Cemetery and Closed Churchyard Maintenance – Cllr Pepper had strimmed the ivy and would spray it again.

5.8 General Village Maintenance (posts) – This was ongoing

5.9 Mission Hall Car Park resurfacing – The clerk had not yet received a date for when the work would be completed.

5.10 Planning permission for a dwelling Land South East of 9A Stretham Road, Wicken. Ref 22/00137/FUL – This was ongoing [clerk’s note – Cllr Houghton had received a reply from Cllr Hunt who would follow this up with the Planning Department].

5.11 Village barbeques – The covers for the barbeques were currently out of stock but would be purchased when available. The community fund had agreed to make a contribution of £300 and the Swallowtails had donated £50 following the use of the barbeques.

5.12 Water leaks and low water pressure– The Clerk and Chair had met with Anglian Water. Following investigation, it was found the lowest water pressure was in Drury Lane and Chapel Lane. Pressure monitors had been installed across the village network and would help identify any leaks. Pressure control valves had been installed to ensure water pressure stayed constant and would be monitored indefinitely.

5.15 Members of the public using school buses – The clerk had contacted Cllr Schumann who had agreed to look into the matter further.

5.16 Village Pond – The village pond had been slubbed out. The Chair thanked Cllr Day for his hard work and use of his tractor and trailer for free for the day.

6. Planning Matters

6.1 Proposed two storey rear extension to dwelling and reconstruction of existing barn. The Vicarage, 5 Church Road, Wicken. Ref 22/00359/FUL. Amended plan is for the reduction in scale of the two-storey rear extension together with the reduction in scale of the alterations to the existing bar.

ECDC had not permitted an extension to the deadline for the Parish Council to make comments.

6.2 Proposed two storey rear extension to dwelling and reconstruction of existing barn. The Vicarage, 5 Church Road, Wicken. Ref 22/00359/FUL. Amended plan involves the removal of the window to the West elevation of the barn.

ECDC had not permitted an extension to the deadline for the Parish Council to make comments.

6.3 Proposal for the phased conversion of a barn into one family home for the farm owners and two holiday lets, as well as associated landscaping and infrastructural works. Barn at Spinney Abbey, 33 Stretham Road, Wicken. Ref 22/00379/FUL.

- **Amendment to the internal layout and design to address Conservation Officer comments.**
- **Submission of bat survey**
- **Submission of business case**

The Parish Council had no objections.

6.4 Proposal for the phased conversion of a barn into one family home for the farm owners and two holiday lets, as well as associated landscaping and infrastructural works. Barn at Spinney Abbey, 33 Stretham Road, Wicken. Ref 22/00220/LBC.

- **Amendment to the internal layout and design to address Conservation Officer comments.**
- **Submission of bat survey**
- **Submission of business case**

The Parish Council had no objections.

6.5 Reserved matters for Layout, Scale, Appearance, Access and Landscaping for Plot 3 of previously approved 21/00584/OUT for proposed residential development for 3 dwellings. Site west of 27 The Crescent, Wicken. Ref 22/00972/RMA

The Parish Council had no objections.

6.6 Construction of dwelling with detached garage, revisions to previously approved 22/00500/FUL. Plot 1 Land South of 3 Old School Lane, Upware. Ref 22/01016/FUL

The Parish Council reiterated its previous comments that the mass and bulk of the house was too large for the single plot.

6.7 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

Approved

Residential development of five bed dwelling. Site West of 27 The Crescent Wicken. Ref 22/00400/FUL

7. County and District Councillor Reports

There had been no reports received.

8. Minutes from the Allotment Committee Meeting 9 August 2022 and Quote for Work Identified

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

The Clerk had obtained a quote from RH Landscapes for cutting back the brush from the car park up to and including the ditch to the boundary and spraying back which was £300 plus vat.

The Clerk had also obtained a quote for cutting back the unused allotment/turning area which was £425 plus vat and an additional £375 plus vat for digging out the stumps.

The Parish Council agreed to the work for the carpark this was proposed by Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Day. All were in favour.

Cllr Pepper would look at the unused allotment and see if he could do the work with his digger.

9. Walkover Tree Survey Report

- **Removal of the decayed tree on the Mission Hall Green**
- **Work required on the ash tree outside 26 Lode Lane**

The Clerk and David Werner (Tree Warden) completed a tree survey walkaround with David Humphries Arboricultural Consultancy. A full report was shared with the Council and the next survey would be in 18 months so it was in a season when there were no leaves on the trees. The Clerk would organise for the work identified to be completed. There was one high priority identified which was the need to fell the Malus tree on the Mission Hall Green due to a decayed trunk. The Maple tree adjacent to this also required 2 dead branches removing although this was a low priority. The Clerk had asked RH Landscapes to quote for this work which was £250 plus vat. Cllr Wilson proposed that this work took place and this was seconded by Cllr Rogers, all were in favour.

The ash tree outside 26 Lode Lane was causing light issues for the homeowner. The homeowner had received a quote of £1300 plus vat from Eastern Landscapes to reduce the crown. The Clerk would obtain further quotes and this would be discussed on the November agenda.

10. Refurbishment of the Maids Head Green Notice Board

The Clerk had obtained a quote for a replacement notice board which was £610 plus vat for a single door noticeboard. The notice board companies who were contacted were unable to put an extension on the existing notice board at the Mission Hall as all notice boards were modular. This would therefore need a carpenter. The Clerk would ask Jerry Woodroffe for a quote and would arrange for the current notice board on the Maids Head Green to be removed due to rotting wood.

11. Parish Newsletter (Around and About)

The Around and About had ceased during lockdown due to the lack of income from advertisers. This had been superseded by a 6 monthly parish newsletter but general feeling in the village was that a more regular newsletter was required which included additional information on events and clubs etc. Due to the lack of advertisers the funding for the newsletter, should the Parish Council take this on, would need to be included in the precept. The cost was around £1000 per year although the Parish Council held circa. £460 from the Around and About when it ceased in ringfenced money in the Parish Council bank account. It was agreed in principle for the Parish Council to take on the parish newsletter. Marilyn Fry had kindly offered to continue as editor.

12. Insurance of the Lychgate

The Clerk was waiting to hear from Cambridge Restorations with an estimate as to how much it would cost to replace the lychgate. This would be on the next agenda

13. Permission for the National Trust to Install Three Benches Along Monk's Lode

The Chair and Clerk had met with the National Trust to discuss the location of the three benches. These would be at the corner near Norman's Bridge, the T junction and between the trees and allotments. The Parish Council gave permission for these to be installed.

14. Replacement of the Parish Owned Street Light Outside 42 Chapel Lane by James Construction.

As part of the development along the south side of Chapel Lane, the developers were required to install new streetlights. A request had been received from James Construction for them to replace the street light currently owned by the Parish Council and then for CCC to take over the maintenance and electricity costs. The Parish Council gave permission for this.

15. Street Light Energy Contract

The street light energy contract was on a 2-year fixed rate contract which was due to expire 31 October 2022. The clerk had received notification that to enter another 2-year fixed rate contract the costs would increase from £1500 to around £4500. The clerk had contacted the following companies for a quote but all had declined to offer a quote and none were taking on new contracts:

- Npower
- Green Energy
- Opus

The Parish Council would therefore need to remain with SSE. The Clerk would contact SSE and ask if there was a better deal as the contract was for an unmetered supply and the Parish Council had recently upgraded the majority of the street lights on the contract to LED.

16. Completion of the Limited Assurance Review for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

PKF Littlejohn had completed the limited assurance review. They had found that the information in Section 1 and 2 of the AGAR was in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. There was one matter noted which did not affect their opinion and that was that the AGAR had to be returned to the clerk for amendment.

15. Financial Matters

15.1 Bill payments

Rachel Earl	Clerk wages September 2022	£440.33
HMRC PAYE	PAYE September 2022	£110.00
SSE	Electricity for streetlights for August 2022	£103.26
HE Services (Plant Hire) Ltd	Hire of digger and operator to slub out the pond*	£938.74
PKF Littlejohn	Audit charges	£360.00
Anne Delph	Surrender of Burial Rights	£70.00
The Community Heartbeat Trust	Annual support cost	151.20
Calloo Ltd	Replacement handles for outdoor gym	£67.20
David Humphries Arboricultural Consultancy	Tree survey report	£375.00
James Home and Garden	Maintenance on zip wire	£80.00

15.2 Monthly Finance update

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

15.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 August 2022

The bank statements and reconciliation reports had been circulated to all Councillors. This was noted.

15.4 Request for a Donation from Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue

A donation of £50 was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Pepper. All were in favour.

16. Items for Information

- **New Life in the Old West Family Fun Day 29 October 2022**

As part of the fun day the organisers would be planting some plug plants around the village. This would be advertised on social media

- **Warm Hubs**

The Parish Council discussed whether the Mission Hall or Methodist Chapel could be used as a Warm Hub during the winter. It was felt that Warm Hubs would be better suited to facilities which were open every day such as libraries etc.

The clerk had received a request for a plaque to be put up at the cemetery informing members of the public that there were war graves in the cemetery. The Parish Council felt this was a good idea. The Clerk had received a letter from Lucy Frazer offering to assist with any issues which impacted the community. The Clerk would write asking for help with the surface of the A1123.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.30pm

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