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**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD  
AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 11 APRIL 2023  
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): L Houghton, J Rogers, B Pepper J Day, P Rash, M Hawes, S Wilson and 1 parishioner.

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors L Tory (work commitments).

The meeting started at 7.34pm immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting.

**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

Cllr Wilson declared an interest in item 6.1

**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 were no requests to speak.

**4. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 14 March 2023**

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 10 January 2023**

**5.1** Mission Hall car park resurfacing – the car park had been resurfaced but the white lining had not yet been completed. Due to the resurfacing the BT manhole cover near the hall entrance needed to be raised. The clerk would obtain permission from BT and get quotes.

[Clerk's note – white lines would be completed on 25 April 2023]

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

**5.4** The Village Clean-up had taken place on 26 March 2023. Attendance was low but the main zones of the village had been cleared. Thanks were expressed to all those who took part.

**5.4** Highways – There had been an issue in the village with the A1123 being closed without notice for work on an emergency water supply. Signage for the closure was poor with road closure signs placed at Stretham roundabout and Downfield roundabout but no details of where the road was closed. The clerk would ask Highways to include a post code on the closure signs in the future and

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also to include that businesses were open as usual. The clerk would also write to the Street Works team pointing out the serious issues the closure, due to the 'emergency work', had caused.

**5.5 Upware Open Space** – The benches had been purchased and would be delivered to Laura Petchy ahead of installation. The Parish Council thanked Laura Petchy for taking delivery and storing the benches.

**5.6 Empty properties on North Street** – only one of the properties was empty. The clerk would contact the housing society.

**5.7 Coronation Big Lunch** – This would be held on Sunday 7 May 2023 from 1pm until 4pm on Pond Green.

## **6. Planning Matters**

### **6.1 Erection of 2 detached four bedroom dwellings with car ports, off-street parking and associated works. Site to the East of 38A Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 22/01229/FUL**

Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 7.55pm

The Parish Council would like the permission refused due to the following concerns:

- The Parish Council rejects and disagrees with the use of the 'potential deviation' as a route to obtain planning
- The proposal is outside the defined development envelope for Wicken
- Wicken has particularly suffered with speculative development that has yet to be assimilated into the small community so allowing more seems contrary to the fully adopted Local Plan 2015.
- The proposal is deemed Over development of the site due to the mass, scale, height bulk and closeness of the proposed dwellings and adjacent dwellings.
- The proposal is deemed to have poor design and not in keeping with other nearby dwellings.
- It is not in keeping with the street scene as these large houses are amongst bungalows and cottages some of which are yet to be built.
- Existing concerns with the surrounding development being built by the same developers. These concerns have been made to ECDC planning department and the LLFA regarding drainage issues and overflowing water from the site on to the highway.
- Single track road with the cars from the proposed development turning on to a very narrow section of the Chapel Lane.
- Concern that the development will cause detriment to road users during building as there is no allocated area for works' vehicles to park or turn without blocking the Lane to others.
- No biodiversity net gain. The proposal is to fell 7 healthy trees including ash trees
- Known drainage issues with the neighbouring property, having flooded in the past.
- This site has been used for agricultural and building storage in the past so recommend the need for a contamination report.

The Parish Council also sent a strong response to the letter from Howard Sharp and Partners refuting planning policy statements made by them. This letter could be found on the ECDC Planning Portal.

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Cllr Wilson returned to the meeting at 8.21pm

#### 6.4 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

##### Approved

- To place a glamping pod and small fenced off area. 9A Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 22/00645/FUL
- Vary condition 1 (drawing numbers) of previously approved 22/00183/FUL for proposed residential development of 6 dwellings. Land adjacent to 14 Church Road Wicken. Ref 23/00042/VAR

#### 7. County and District Councillor Reports

There were no reports from the County of District Councillors.

The Chair advised that Cllr Dan Schumann had resigned as County Councillor as well as standing down from being a District Councillor. The Chair would write to Cllr Schumann thanking him for all of his support and hard work.

#### 8. Renewal of SSE Streetlight Energy Contract

The current 6 month contract was due to expire in May 2023. SSE had offered a contract for 12 months with a noticeable price drop in unit rates:

MPAN	Description	Current	From June 2023
1050001858753	Monthly Charge FiTs Recovery Charge All units	£4.66 .0.753 p/kWh 60.185 p/kWh	£5.42 .0.883 p/kWh 32.87 p/kWh
1050001858771	Monthly Charge FiTs Recovery Charge All units	£4.66 .0.75 p/kWh 59.276 p/kWh	£5.42 .0.883 p/kWh 33.019 p/kWh
1050001858762	Monthly Charge FiTs Recovery Charge All units	£3.68 .0.751 p/kWh 60.853 p/kWh	£4.3. .0.883 p/kWh 32.015 p/kWh

Acceptance of the 12-month contract was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Pepper. All were in favour.

Cllr Hawes joined the meeting at 8.40pm

#### 9. 20 mph Zone Funding

Cambs County Council had opened a funding programme to create 20 mph zone countywide. The Parish Council discussed this in full considering the following:

- Road safety including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrian users
- Pollution
- Partial zoning
- Enforcing the speed limit
- Additional noise

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It was agreed that the A1123 should remain at 30mph due to the additional pollution and noise of lorries changing gear that a lower speed limit can incur.

It was agreed that an application should be placed for all of the lanes and for Upware.

The Parish Council would invite the police to complete a speed check on Stretham Road requesting that they park in the Stretham Road layby near Hawes Lane to monitor vehicles entering the village.

## **10. Financial Matters**

### **10.1 Bill payments**

Rachel Earl	Clerk wages April 2023	£475.06
HMRC PAYE	PAYE April 2023	£118.60
SSE	Street Light electricity	£115.03
CCC	Half year rent	£1068.00
CAPALC	1 day councillor training for B Pepper	£75.00
CAPALC	Understanding the AGAR	£30.00
Information Commissioners Office	Data protection fee renewal	£40.00

### **10.2 Monthly Finance update**

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

### **11.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 March 2023**

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

## **12. Items for Information**

Cllr Wilson advised that the rubbish bin in the cemetery car park had been used as a toilet. This would be monitored and the car park closed if this behaviour continued.

Cllr Rash advised that a meeting was being held on the 17 April with regards to the cycle path. It is proposed that work would start in October 2023.

Cllrs Tory, Smith and Day had decided not to stand for re-election. Cllr Houghton thanked them for all of their hard work and dedication during their time on the council.

The clerk advised that the bank card would be used to purchase a number of items for the Coronation Big Lunch event. A donation of £500 had been agreed by the Community Fund Committee towards the cost of the event and these funds were held in the Parish Council bank account.

The Fete Committee had confirmed that they would be donating £300 towards the village BBQs and also £250 towards the cost of the Around and About. The clerk would write to the committee thanking them for their kind donations.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.08pm

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