

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD VIA SKYPE
AT 19.30 HRS ON TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2020**

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, County Councillor Hunt and 1 parishioner.

1. Apologies for absence and any declarations of interest.

Apologies were received and accepted from District Councillor Bovingdon.

Cllrs Day and Rash declared an interest in item 4.2. Cllr Hawes declared an interest in item 7.4.

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.

Cllr Rash had declared an interest in item 4.2 and therefore spoke as a member of the public. Peter Rash informed the council of the changes in plans for item 4.2.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 11 August 2020

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

4. Planning matters

4.1 Siting of an art installation (in the form of a hayrick-style pavilion space) for a temporary period until October 2021. National Trust, Wicken Fen Nature Reserve, Lode Lane, Wicken. Ref 20/01060/FUL

The Parish Council understood the reasons behind the extension of a year to the temporary planning permission which was granted in 2019. However, the Parish Council has concerns with the number of vehicles already parking in the village and fear that the extended period will encourage additional parking problems.

4.2 Construction of 2no. 3-bedroom, 1.5 storey detached dwellings and associated works – revised scheme of previously approved 20/00878/FUL. Land South of 22 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambs. Ref 20/00878/FUL

The Parish Council had no objections.

4.3 Update on Planning Applications Granted

The following planning applications had been approved by ECDC:

- Removal of Condition 18 (footpath) of previously approved 19/01697/VAR for variation of condition 1 (approved plans) and 7 (details of the fenestration and brick bonding) of previously approved 19/01177/VAR for variation of condition 17 (preliminary ecological appraisal) of previously approved 18/01216/FUL for erection of detached dwelling with

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garage and associated parking. Land South of 1 to 7 Old School Lane Upware. Ref 20/00391/VAR.

The following planning application was refused by ECDC:

- To add a first floor with a pitched roof on an existing flat roof extension. 1 Lower Road, Wicken. Ref 20/00876/FUL.

5. County and District Councillor reports

County Councillor Hunt reported on the following:

- A142/A10 Roundabout should be finished by Christmas 2020.
- A142 Lancaster Way roundabout starts in January and should be finished by Summer.
- The work on Histon Road Cambridge should be finish by Christmas. A similar system would then take place on Milton Road Cambridge in 2021 and would mean the removal of the trees.
- The A14 is open and should result in less traffic going through Wicken. Cllr Day pointed out that there was currently more traffic going through Wicken due to the roadworks in Ely.
- The Dock carpark at Ely was currently only 20% full due to less commuting on the trains.
- Cllr Hunt supports the A10 dual plan D as he feels this would be less disruptive and safer at Stretham and Little Thetford. Cllr Rash disagreed with this opinion due to the extra road being built which may result in further building.
- The roundabout at Stretham has recently been refurbished
- The Waterbeach incinerator appeal has been dismissed.
- Over 20,000 people were shielded in the area due to COVID-19. Marshalls had been put on standby to act as a morgue should this be needed. There was currently a £12m funding hole due to COVID-19.
- Cllr Hunt supports the CAM Metro Alconbury, St Neots, Haverhill, Trumpington, Mildenhall and Waterbeach. Cllr Hunt would like this extended to Stretham.
- North Angle Farm solar panels planning was moving forward and would supply twice the energy used by Soham to the National Grid
- Central Government would be making the decision about Sunnica solar farm.
- Viva at Soham had received £493,317 County Grant.
- Private people would be able to benefit from CCC bulk buying solar panels. More information could be found on cambridgeshire@solartogether.co.uk & 0800 048 8259
- CCC will be part of the GIGAband expansion.

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Hunt for his assistance with the pedestrian path along Lode Lane.

Cllr Hunt left the meeting at 20.15

6. Progress report on matters arising from the last meeting 11 August 2020

6.1 Cycle path – Work would commence once the hedges had been cut back. The clerk would ask CCC when this would take place.

6.2 Maids Head sign – the hole had not yet been made good. The clerk would chase.

6.3 EA car park in Upware – This was ongoing. EA had confirmed work would take place but had not confirmed a date.

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6.4 Speeding in the village – Cllr Rogers and sourced a possible post. This would be purchased and the Stretham Road speeding sign moved.

6.5 Pond Green Play Area – The swing seat had still not been replaced or the slide adjusted. Cllr Bye would continue to chase.

6.6 Village Marquees – Cllr Smith had mended the hole in the roof of the 30x20 marquee.

6.7 The Byway between the Pump House and the No Hurry in Upware – a restriction could not be placed on the byway.

6.8 Padney Road verges – Cllr Day reported that the verges had been cut today.

6.9 School Lane/Upware Road junction – Cllr Houghton would discuss the faded lines with the representative from Highways.

6.10 Upware Road hedge - The hedge had not yet been cut back by the landowner.

6.11 ECDC Small Business Grant for Wicken Cemetery – the £10k COVID-19 grant had been received. As there were no restrictions on how the money was to be spent, this would be added to the next agenda for ideas on projects.

6.12 Upware Open Space – A meeting had been arranged for the 22 September 2020. Cllr Day reported that work would commence on the land in the next 2 weeks.

6.13 Mortuary Chapel and Cemetery Paths – Cllr Rogers advised that work would commence on the footpath week commencing 28th September 2020. Cllr Rogers would contact CJ Murfitt's to inform them as the work could take place at the same time. Cllr Rogers had emailed Amey Cespa to inform them of the delay.

7. Financial matters.

7.1 Bill payments

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| CamSAR | Donation | £100 |
| Balfour Beatty | Replacement of Drury Lane lantern | £581.62 |
| Balfour Beatty | Replacement of 3 lanterns * | £2857.88 |
| The Community Heartbeat | Annual Support for defibrillator** | £151.20 |
| Truelink Ltd | March cuts. Not charged previously by error | £355.68 |
| Truelink Ltd | August cuts | £359.36 |
| E-on | Last electric bill for Recreation Ground | £18.03 |
| British Gas Lite | First electric bill for Recreation Ground 11/7/20 to 12/8/20 | £17.28 |
| Wave | Water for Recreation Ground | £11.97 |
| R Earl | Clerks wages | £359.36 |
| HMRC PAYE | PAYE | £90 |

* The Parish Council agreed to replace 3 streetlights in 2019:
Corner of Chapel Lane and Lower Road – Light no longer working – upgraded to LED

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Chapel Lane – Light working but the cover had been broken – upgraded to LED

Drury Lane – The electric box was broken and required replacing – upgraded to LED

The work had been completed in 2019 but had not been charged. The funds had been allocated from CIL money and remained in the budget. Further quotes were not obtained as the council has a maintenance contract with Balfour Beatty and the quotes were separately below the threshold for obtaining further quotes.

**The money for Community Heartbeat would be taken from the defibrillator ringfenced funds.

9.2 Monthly Finance Update

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

7.3 Ratification of Decision for the Long-term Hire of the 30x20 Marquee

The Maids Head had requested to hire the 30/20 marquee on a long term hire due to social distancing restrictions. The Council had agreed via email to charge £240 for the initial week and subsequent weeks at £50 per week.

7.4 Donation Request for Cambridge Search and Rescue

CamSR had contacted the Parish Council asking for a donation. The request was discussed and as CamSR had recently been involved in a search for a parishioner it was agreed that this would be a worthwhile charity to donate to. Cllr Day proposed that the annual budget of £200 for donations should be increased due to the grants received and that a donation of £100 should be made to CamSR. This decision was seconded by Cllr Wilson. All were in favour.

7.5 Quotes for Electric Supply for Street Lights

The clerk advised that the electricity contract with SSE for the street lights was due for renewal on 31 October 2020. SSE had sent the new tariffs which were higher than the current contract. The Clerk had asked Utility Aid (energy broker) to source further quotes. As notice on the current contract needed to be given by 1 October 2020 the clerk requested permission to change contract should Utility Aid find a contract which was cheaper than the renewal quote with SSE. The council agreed that the clerk could give notice if required.

8. Consultation on Reform of the Planning System

- Changes to the current planning system
- Planning for the future
- Transparency and competition: a call for evidence on data on land control

The Parish Council felt strongly that the proposed system would not be beneficial and did not support the reform. It was agreed that Cllrs Houghton, Rogers, Bye and Tory and the clerk would meet to answer the questions for the consultation.

9. Local Council Award Scheme

Cllr Tory had attended training and the Local Council Award Scheme had been discussed. Cllr Tory felt the Parish Council should apply to the scheme. The Parish Council agreed to discuss this at the October meeting. The Clerk would circulate further information so a decision could be made.

10. Road Verge Management

The Council had been approached by CCC enquiring if Wicken Parish Council would like to join a trial for a new cutting regime for protected road-side verges which would see less cutting of the verges. The Parish Council discussed the safety concerns for pedestrians as, in a number of places, the verges act as the pavements. There was also visibility concerns for drivers along the open

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countryside. The parish council had a number of conservation projects taking place. The clerk would write to CCC Biodiversity team and advise that the parish council would not be taking part in the trial and feedback the comments raised.

11. Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme

The clerk had been approached by a member of the public regarding the Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme. The information on this was limited and the clerk was awaiting further information. This would be on the next agenda. Cllr Hawes would assist with this.

12. Tree Survey

The last full tree survey which had taken place was in 2015 and a new survey was required. The clerk had obtained a quote from Peter Haine for £360 +vat. The council agreed that a tree survey should take place and accepted the quote.

The Parish Council would also like to thank the parishioner who donated the sapling on the Maids Head Green.

13. Afterway Allotments

The clerk advised that one of the allotments holders at Afterway Allotments had taken on the allotment which had been left with rubbish and other detritus which required clearing and had cleared it (it had previously been agreed that the Parish Council would pay for a van to clear the allotment). To thank the allotment holder the clerk proposed that rent would not be charged on the 2 allotments now held by the allotment holder for the next two years. The council agreed the rent-free period and asked the clerk to write to the allotment holder to thank her for her hard work.

14. Items for Information

Cllr Day reported that the willow trees and hedge along Hawes Lane needed to be cut back. The clerk would write to the owners.

Cllr Day also reported that the dog bin at Kingfisher had been installed but was not being emptied. The clerk would contact ECDC.

Cllr Bye advised the Teracycle bins would be put back at the Methodist Chapel.

There was no further items of information and the meeting closed at 21.12.