

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD
AT 19.30 HRS ON TUESDAY 11th MAY 2021
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): Cllrs E Houghton (Chair), M Hawes, J Day, S Wilson, J Rogers, M Smith, P Rash and L Tory. District Councillor Bovingdon.

1. Apologies for absence and any declarations of interest.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bye (personal) and Cllr Day (work).

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Cllr Houghton was proposed as Chairman by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Hawes. There were no other nominations for the role of Chair. It was agreed unanimously to appoint Cllr Houghton. Cllr Houghton accepted the role and signed the Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Rogers was proposed as Vice Chairman by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Hawes. There were no other nominations for the role of Vice Chair. It was agreed unanimously to appoint Cllr Rogers. Cllr Rogers accepted the role and signed the Acceptance of Office.

3. 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.

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

4. Appointment of Committee and Trustees

A review of Committees was made, and it was agreed members be reappointed en bloc.

Burial Board	Cllr Rash Cllr Tory Cllr Wilson Cllr Smith
Allotment Committee	Cllr Wilson Cllr Bye Cllr Day
Recreation Committee	Cllr Hawes
Mary Hatch Alms Houses	Cllr Wilson
Village Hall Committee	Cllr Wilson
The Chair and Vice Chair were members of all Parish Council committees	

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5. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 12 April 2021

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

6. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 12 April 2021

These would be agreed at the Annual parish Meeting in 2022.

7. Signing of the Previous Minutes Agreed at Virtual Meetings

- October 2020
- November 2020
- December 2020
- January 2021
- February 2021
- March 2021

These minutes were signed by the Chairman in the presence of the Councillors.

8. Planning Matters

8.1 Proposed residential development for 3 dwellings. Site South West of 27 The Crescent, Wicken. Ref 21/00584/OUT.

The Parish Council would like to see the footpath continue along the frontage of the scheme to the second access road. The Parish Council also felt that Plot 2 was too close to the neighbouring garden boundary.

8.2 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

The following planning applications were approved by ECDC:

Enlargement and re-profiling of an existing pond (Maximum water depth 0.5m). The Recreation Ground, Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 21/00347/FUL

Creation of a new 4m x 4m pond (with the maximum water depth of 0.5M). The Recreation Ground, Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 21/00340/FUL

G1 Two Ash Trees – reduce the entire crown by 1.5m all over. G2 Two oak trees – reduce the limbs to clear the bungalow by 2m.

The following planning application was being appealed:

To Remove Condition 12 (General Permitted Development) of previously approved 18/00861/FUL for Proposed 4 bed detached dwelling and garage. The Parish Council had already deferred the decision to remove the condition back to ECDC. These comments still stood.

The following planning applications were refused by ECDC:

Erection of a detached dwelling along with a new vehicular access point and the provision of a pedestrian footpath. Adjacent Second Breeds Farm 9 Stretham Road Wicken. Ref 21/00268/FUL

The following planning applications had been withdrawn:

Residential development comprising three dwellings, garages, parking, turning and associated site works – phased development. Land adjacent to 14 Church Road Wicken. 21/00273/FUL

Partial demolition of existing garage and outbuilding and erection of replacement garage, potting shed, garden room and games room. 6 Butts Lane, Wicken. Ref 21/00302/FUL

The clerk had received an amendment to planning application 21/00345/FUL which had been discussed in full at the last meeting. The amendment concerned parking which was the concern raised by the Parish Council at the April meeting. The clerk had written to ECDC requesting an extension to the deadline, but this had not been granted. The Parish Council therefore discussed the amendment in principle and would include it on the June agenda. The Parish Council had concerns regarding the 1.1m high fence which could obstruct the view for motorists exiting Redit Lane.

9. County and District Councillor reports

District Councillor Ian Bovingdon advised the following:

- Anglian Water Authority would commence work in August 2021 to create a resilient water supply via Stretham.
- A bus, walk, cycle survey had been completed which would link Soham and Wicken and the results would be known shortly. CPCA had allocated some funding for this but it had not been ringfenced and due to the change in Mayor it was unclear what might happen.
- The five-year housing supply had held against two appeals. Further appeals had now been withdrawn.
- ECDC was looking to better control parking.
- The County Council was now a hung council which may cause some delays.

10. Report from the Internal Auditor

The internal audit had been completed by Stephen Joyce FCPFA who reported that the audit for 2020/21 was an unqualified audit. There were no issues although some best practice was advised. A copy of the report would be held with the minutes.

The Parish Council formally thanked the clerk.

11. Approval of the Annual Return 2020/21

The Parish Council answered Yes to all sections of the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21. The AGAR form was signed by the Chairman and Clerk. The Council agreed that the Accounting Statements 2020/21 presented fairly the financial position of the authority and this was also signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

12 Progress report on matters arising from the last meeting 12th April 2021.

12.1 Cycle path – Work had started on the cycle path by Cllr Smith and two parishioners. A tractor and trailer had been loaned by Peter Fuller. The first stretch of 100m had been completed and the next 100m would be completed on Saturday 22 May 2021. There had been no further updates from Soham Town Council.

12.2 Non-payment of invoices by National Trust – The National Trust still owed the October 2020 invoice for the 2020/21 rent, totally £226.

12.3 Highways issues – The clerk had not yet received a reply from Highways in regard to the boundary question in Upware and the sign for Redit Lane.

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12.4 LHI Bid – Upware Speeding. A decision should be received by June/July.

12.5 Cemetery tap – The tap had not yet been replaced.

12.6 Cemetery hedge and brambles – The brambles had been cut back.

12.7 Mortuary Chapel Air Bricks – The Clerk had asked CJ Murfitt’s to complete the work.

12.8 Code of Conduct training – There was some online training available, but this was open to other councils. The Clerk had requested a quote for face-to-face training.

12.9 Maids Head benches – The Clerk had written to the landlord of the Maids Head and made him aware of the agreed area for the picnic benches. This had not been adhered to and Cllr Houghton had met with the part owner and discussed the need to work with the Parish Council. The picnic benches had since been moved. Cllr Houghton had also made it clear that there was to be no camper vans on the green overnight and if the Maids Head had agreed for camper vans to stay at the pub overnight, these must be parked in their car park.

13. Financial Matters

13.1 Bill payments

Rachel Earl	Clerk wages May 2021 (included back dated pay rise)	£497.20
HMRC PAYE	PAYE May 2021 (included back dated pay rise)	£124.20
Shane White Plant Machinery	Equipment Hire for footpath (to be paid from ringfenced money)	£432.00
Stephen Joyce	Internal audit fee	£100.00
CGM Group	April grass cutting	£737.15
Came & Company	Insurance for equipment hired from Shane White	£50.00
E Houghton	Chairman’s expenses	£150.00
PWLB	Loan Repayment (Mission Hall Loan)	£2640.77

13.2 Monthly Finance Update

The Council noted the stable position.

13.3 Chairman’s Expenses

The agreed annual payment of £150 was paid by cheque to Cllr Houghton.

13.4 Purchase of Street Lights

The replacement of two streetlights had been agreed in 2020/21 in line with the Climate Strategy. The clerk had finally received a quote from Balfour Beatty of £1717.92 (£858.96 per streetlight). This was a large increase from 2020 when the same work cost £519.35 each. The clerk would go back to Balfour Beatty.

14. Upware Open Space

The clerk had met with John Brown who had given a verbal quote of around £500 for supplying and drilling the grass. This quote also included further cultivations. The area would need to be

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sprayed and left for around 10 days prior to drilling. There was a number of large stones which would need to be picked up after the grass had been drilled.

The Action Plan was reviewed and updated.

15. Village Clean Up – 6th June 2021

ECDC had agreed to lend the Parish Council the litter picking equipment on the 6 June 2021. Cllr Wilson was unable to attend but would cover Chapel Lane prior to the 6 June 2021.

16. Purchase of a Storage Container

The Recreation Committee had agreed to move the pavilion fence to have a container installed. However, they did raise concerns regarding access for vehicles when the ground was wet and suggested siting the container near the Lower Road/Chapel Lane entrance. The Parish Council felt this was not a suitable place. Cllr Rash suggested siting it at the location of the old cricket nets. This would involve dropping the kerb and may possibly require planning permission. The Parish Councillors discussed putting the items back in the Mortuary Chapel for now until a decision was made. It was agreed that the equipment should be sorted to ensure only the necessary items were kept. This would be placed on the next agenda.

17. RoSPA Annual Report

The annual report had been received and was a much-improved picture. The Clerk would work with Cllr Smith to rectify the issues raised.

18. Crabb Apple Tree on the Mission Hall

Permission had been received to fell the tree however the tree had improved and looked nice with the blossom. Cllr Smith would remove the dead bough and the tree would be monitored.

19. Items for Information

There were no items for information and the meeting closed at 9.05pm.