

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD
AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2022
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): Cllrs E Houghton (Chair), J Rogers, J Day, M Hawes, S Wilson, P Rash, B Pepper, L Tory and District Councillor Bovingdon and 2 parishioners.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the November meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor M Smith (work).

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 a prejudicial 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.

No members of the public requested to speak.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 11 October 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 11 October 2022

5.1 Cycle path – This was ongoing. The clerk would arrange a date for the work when the weather improved.

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

5.3 A1123 repairs – Lucy Fraser MP had agreed to support with the issues with Highways. The Clerk will provide details.

5.4 Parish Council Emails –Cllr Hawes held a training session prior to the meeting.

5.5 General Village Maintenance (posts) – The posts had been replaced. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Day for the work.

5.6 Mission Hall Car Park resurfacing – Work would take place w/c 5 December 2022 and would last 4 days.

5.7 Planning permission for a dwelling Land South East of 9A Stretham Road, Wicken. Ref 22/00137/FUL – This was ongoing [Clerks note: The Chair had received a full explanation after the meeting as to why this was agreed outside the planning envelope]

5.8 Village barbeques –The covers for the barbeques were currently out of stock but would be purchased when available.

5.9 Members of the public using school buses – A response had been received from CCC which had detailed the following reasons for not allowing members of public on school buses:

- Safeguarding
- Closed contracts meaning Local Authorities were not able to sell spare seats
- Unpredictable usage

5.10 Ash tree outside 26 Lode Lane – The clerk had received a further quote and was awaiting a quote from RH Landscapes

5.11 Maids Head Green notice board – Jerry Woodroffe would remove the rotten sign on the Maids Head Green. It was not possible to extend the noticeboard at the Mission Hall.

6. Planning Matters

6.1 **Erection of 2 detached four bedroom dwellings with car ports, off street parking and associated landscaping. Land East of 38-38A Chapel Lane, Wicken, CB7 5XZ. Ref 22/01229/FUL**

Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 7.47pm

The Parish Council strongly objects to this application due to the following reasons:

- 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, bulk and closeness of the proposed dwellings to each other and next door.
- 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
- 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.

- It should also be noted that this location and application has nothing to do with No 42 Chapel Lane which is a privately occupied residence with no connection to JD Developments.

Cllr Wilson returned to the meeting at 7.59pm

6.2 Replace roof on front part of property. Bakers Cottage, 36 High Street, Wicken. Ref 22/01107/LBC

The Parish Council had no objections.

6.3 Replace roof on front part of property. Bakers Cottage, 36 High Street, Wicken. Ref 22/01106/FUL

The Parish Council had no objections.

6.4 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

Approved

Revisions to previously approved 22/00500/FUL. Plot 1 Land South of 3 Old School Lane, Upware.

7. County and District Councillor Reports

Cllr Bovingdon reported the following:

- Strong objection to the Cambridge congestion charge
- Local elections would take place in May 2023
- The Police Commissioner was looking into running a trial for parking enforcement in East Cambs
- Talks were underway with Network Rail to increase the Soham train service to hourly
- Surveys had taken place on the number of people using the bus route from Soham to Ely
- Cllr Hunt remained supportive of the Ely Zipper bus

8. Street Light Energy Contract

The clerk had contacted UKPN who had reduced the estimate for the unmetered usage following the upgrade of a number of lights to LED. A further 2 lights which had not worked for some time were decommissioned. The new annual consumption had reduced from 7246.85 kWh over the three MPANs to 2875.20 kWh. The information had not been passed to SSE the electricity provider by UKPN as yet so the Parish Council were currently out of contract and paying the variable rate. Fixed rate contracts were only currently being issued for 6 months.

The Parish Council had a rolling programme of upgrading all of the street lights to LED. The Parish Council currently had 6 lights that required upgrading and it was proposed that, as the difference in usage was so great, all 6 were upgraded this financial year using CIL money. This was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Hawes. All were in favour.

9. Village Newsletter

At the September meeting the parish Council had agreed in principle to sponsor the costs of the parish newsletter and to increase the editions from 2 to 4 per year.

The costs for the printing of the parish newsletter had been received and ranged from £169.55 to £247.70 per edition.

Cllr Pepper proposed that the Parish Council trialled the 420 copies with mixed print cover and mono Inners, 24pp A5 at a total cost of £214.10 per edition. The was seconded by Cllr Rogers. All agreed.

It was also agreed that the name returned to the Around and About.

10. Trees on the Allotment

There was an increasing number of trees being planted on the allotments. Although trees were allowed under the current allotment holders agreement this could be an issue when the current allotment holders decided to hand back the allotments. It was agreed that a meeting of the Allotment Committee should be called to discuss this on site.

11. Fees and Charges – Ratification of the Decisions by the Recreation Ground Committee

A meeting of the Recreation Ground Committee had been held and the following had been agreed:

- The beer festival would take place on 13 May 2023
- The cost of hiring the football pitch for the Wicken football team would increase from the subsidised rate of £12.50 to the standard rate of £25 with effect from 1 January 2023
- All other rates to remain the same
- Repairs to the changing rooms needed to be made and prices would be obtained
- Request made to the Parish Council to purchase 4 new picnic tables made from recycled plastic at the cost of around £600 per table.

The change to the hiring rates and the purchase of the picnic tables was proposed by Cllr Hawes and seconded by Cllr Pepper. All were in favour.

12. Financial Matters

12.1 Bill payments

Rachel Earl	Clerk wages November 2022	£440.33
HMRC PAYE	PAYE November 2022	£110.00
Rachel Earl	Clerks annual expenses	£500
SSE	October electric for street lights	105.55
Roland Fletcher	Late season footpath cut	£644.40
Royal British Legion	Donation for poppy wreath	£100.00
RH Landscapes	October cuts plus August verge cut and first cut of Upware Open Space	£1350.00

12.2 Monthly Finance update

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

12.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 October 2022

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

12.4 Pay Increase for the Clerk in line with NALC recommendations backdated to April 2022

The 2022-23 national salary award had been agreed by the LGA and the new pay scales for 2022-23 had been circulated by NALC which were to be implemented from 1 April 2022. Employers were encouraged by NALC to implement the pay award as swiftly as possible. As part of the agreement there was also an increase of 1 day holiday per year with effect from 1 April 2023. The increase of the Clerk's salary and holiday pay in line with the recommendations was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Rogers. All were in favour.

12.5 Payment of the Clerks Annual Expenses

The annual cost of £500 was paid to the clerk for expenses. The expenses include stamps, ink, paper, electricity, telephone and fuel.

12.6 Donation to the Royal British Legion

The cost of the poppy wreath this year was £25. It was proposed by Cllr Houghton to increase this to £100 to include a donation. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson. All were in favour.

12.7 Half Yearly Budget

The clerk had circulated the accounts up to the end of September 2022. This showed that the accounts were in a stable position. The clerk advised that a further £4286.49 CIL money was due to be received.

13. Review of Council Documents

13.1 Risk register

The risk register was reviewed and agreed.

Risk 6. The risk level regarding street lighting would be reviewed after the remaining lights were upgraded to LED.

Risk 24. The risk regarding COVID 19 would be amended to general pandemic.

13.2 Review of the Village Action Plan including the Climate Strategy

This was reviewed and agreed

Item 34. Training for Councillors would be reviewed after the May elections. [clerk's note – Cllr Pepper would be attending the new councillor training in November 2022]

13.3 Review of Model Financial Regulations

These remained unchanged again this year. Adoption of the model financial regulations was proposed by Cllr Pepper and seconded by Cllr Wilson. All were in favour.

13. Items for Information

Cllr Tory advised that the brambles on the Upware Open Space needed to be cut back. The clerk would obtain a price from RH Landscapes.

Cllr Tory requested compost bins and benches were installed on the Open Space. This would be on the December agenda.

There were no items for information.

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