

Draft minutes not yet accepted.

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT 19:45HRS ON TUESDAY 9 APRIL 2024  
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted):  
B Pepper, L Houghton (chair), R Barnes, J Rogers, S Wilson, M Hawes, P Rash, S Hill.

This meeting immediately followed the Annual Parish Meeting held at 19.15.

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr C Robinson (holiday) District Councillor Vellacott and County Councillor Hunt.

**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.

Cllr Barnes declared an interest in item 15.

**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 12 March 2024, 2024**

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

**5. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 12 March 2024**

**5.1** Mission Hall BT manhole –This was ongoing. A different route into Openreach was being investigated.

**5.2** The memorial stability testing had taken place. A number of memorials were unstable and the clerk would start to contact families.

**5.3** Successful Application for 20mph Zones and Proposed Designs – The public consultation had opened on 8 April for 21 days. This would be circulated on the Parish Council Facebook page and a leaflet drop would take place throughout the parish. Leaflets would be printed by Ely Print Centre.

**5.4** Allotment access road and Maltings footpath– this was ongoing.

**5.5** Anglian Water concerns regarding Lower Road and Chapel Lane – This would be monitored and the clerk would contact Anglian Water if there were any further issues. A

Draft minutes not yet accepted.

quarterly report had been requested from Anglian Water showing the data from the pumping station.

**5.6** Repair of Village Sign –This was ongoing.

**5.7** Refurbishment of the Changing Rooms – Cllr Pepper had met with representatives from the football club and the Recreation Committee and would discuss further with Dan Hardingham.

**5.8** Repair of the Church Wall – Johnson Construction had confirmed that they were still interested in the job to repair the church wall and had given the name of a referee from Wilburton Parish Council. The Parish Council agreed that the work could go ahead depending on a good reference.

**5.9** 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Wicken Fen – The licence had been agreed by the East Cambs District Council but there were some discrepancies between the licence approval reported in the Ely Standard and the presentation to the Parish Council. Cllr Pepper would follow this up at the Forum meeting with Wicken Fen.

**5.10** Hawes Lane – The clerk was yet to contact Highways regarding the culvert at the bottom of Hawes Lane.

**5.11** Hedge Adjacent to the Mission Hall Car Park – The clerk was awaiting a response from the homeowner.

**5.12** Lower Road Ditch – Cllr Rash had talked to some of the landowners with some success. The clerk would write to the landowners explaining about Riparian responsibility of ditches.

**5.13** Padney Road Flooding – Cllr Hawes had discussed the flooding with the landowners of Padney Road and some work had been completed.

**5.14** Back Lane Road Surface – The surface had been reported to Highways.

## **6. Planning Matters**

**6.1 4 terraced one-bedroom homes with off-street parking and associated landscaping. Site to the East of 38A Chapel Lane, Wicken CB7 5XZ. Ref 24/00288/FEUL**

***Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 8.23pm***

The Parish Council was pleased to see that that the application was for smaller houses. However, we have the following concerns:

- 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.

Draft minutes not yet accepted.

- It is not in keeping with the street scene.
- Design only allows for one car parking space. Chapel Lane is a single-track road and there is nowhere for visitors to park.
- The Parish Council has concerns regarding the sewage system. In recent months there has been a problem with overflowing effluent in the village and the Parish Council would like Anglian Water to be consulted directly
- Biodiversity net gain – we note that the developers have cleared the site and the fruit tree shown in the design is in the neighbouring property at 38 Chapel Lane

If passed, the Parish Council was concerned that this development outside the envelope would set a precedent with proposals on the adjoining site and therefore would request what assurances/safeguards do the planning department have that this was classed as an exception site and did not set precedent for future applications outside the development area.

***Cllrs Wilson rejoined the meeting at 8.40pm***

## **6.5 Updates on Planning Application Approve/Refused by ECDC**

### **Approved**

- Construction of new tractor barn with driveway, gate, fencing and creation of a new turning head for Black Lane. Ref 23/00912/FUL
- Re-roof with thatch and slate including plain tiles to existing dormers, new patio door, replace rear windows and create additional bathroom at 1<sup>st</sup> floor. 3 Pond Green, Wicken. Ref 24/00213/LBC and 24/00212/FUL

## **7. County and District Councillor Reports**

District Councillor Vellacott had provided a written report advised the following:

- Encouraging local businesses to apply for ECDC's rural prosperity grant, for employment or new product development, to boost the viability of our high street.
- Mayor has included a service via Wicken in his deliberations for 'demand responsive rural proposals'.
- Commented in support of a new medical centre. Local people are right to question housing on the proposed scale of the Eastern Gateway, however, District councillor Vellacott will always support infrastructure improvements for the community. Both are due to be debated at a Special Planning Committee, date TBC.
- Op Services Committee approved the ECSS Business Plan for this year. Any changes to the service resulting from the Environment Act will be implemented in 2026, once decided.

## **8. Pond Green Posts**

This had been discussed at the March meeting, but review of the Financial Regulations stated that the clerk must 'strive to obtain 3 quotes'.

	<b>Posts Concreted</b>	<b>Posts Not Concreted</b>
<b>Ely Fencing</b>	£1717.66 plus VAT	£1427.50 plus VAT
<b>JW Landscapes</b>	£1750	£1150
<b>Les Yardy</b>	£1630 plus VAT	£1250 plus VAT

Draft minutes not yet accepted.

It was agreed that the posts would not be concreted in as this made it easier for them to be replaced if required.

Although the quote from JW Landscapes was the lowest the Parish Council knew the standard of Les Yardy's work. It was proposed that the slightly higher quote should be accepted on this occasion. This was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Rogers. All were in favour.

## **9. Neighbourhood Plan**

Research had been completed on other local Neighbourhood Plans and it was agreed that Wicken would benefit from a Neighbourhood Plan noting that this would be a long-term project and may take several years. Information on this would be included in the Around and About requesting other residents to join a Working Group. Cllrs Barnes, Hill and Pepper would be on the Working Group representing the Parish Council. initial areas to consider were planning and tourism/recreation.

## **10. Social Media Strategy**

Cllrs Houghton and Rogers had attended training on social media and had drawn up a Social Media Strategy. This was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Rogers. All were in favour.

## **11. Donation of a Yew Tree to be Planted in the Churchyard**

David Werner had donated a yew tree to be planted in the churchyard to replace the tree which had been removed. The Parish Council agreed that this could be planted.

## **12. CAPALC Affiliation**

Membership to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils was agreed for 2024/25.

## **13. Location for the King's Coronations Oak Tree**

It was agreed that the oak tree should be planted on the Mission Hall Green. Cllr Pepper would plant the tree.

## **14. Repair of the Equipment on Pond Green Play Area and Signage**

The rock unit on the Pond Green play area had been vandalised and required replacement and was not included under the warranty. The clerk would obtain a quote to replace.

It was agreed that signs were required for the play area stating 'This play park is for children under the age of 10. No dogs allowed.'

## **15. Request to Hire the Greens and BBQs for Wicken Fete**

*Cllr Barnes left the meeting at 9.55pm*

This was agreed by the Parish Council

*Cllrs Barnes rejoined the meeting at 9.56pm*

Draft minutes not yet accepted.

## **16. Financial Matters**

### **16.1 Bill payments**

Rachel James	Clerk wages April 2024	£509.60
HMRC PAYE	PAYE April 2024	£127.40
ICO	Data Protection Fee	£40.00
British Gas	Electric for changing rooms 13.1.24-12.2.24	£21.85
CCC	Allotment half yearly rent	£1068.00
SSE	Electric for streetlights February 2024	£48.61
SSE	Supply credit note	£80.00
PWLB	Mission Hall Loan repayment	£2640.77
Wave	Water 3/12/23 – 2/3/24 Butts Lane	£21.73
Wave	Water 3/12/23 – 2/3/24 Cemetery	£16.39
Wave	Water 3/12/23-2/3/24 Recreation Ground	£19.96
RH Landscapes	Various Tree Works	£1110.00

### **16.2 Monthly Finance update**

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

### **16.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 March 2024**

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

## **17. Items for Information**

Cllr Barnes reported that the path along Church Road flooded when there was a lot of rain. The clerk would report this to Highways.

Councillor Wilson undertook to attend the upcoming URA meeting.

Cllr Pepper was attending the community Liaison forum with the NT and would raise issues regarding the badger sett on Monks Lode, kayak/canoe access on Wicken Lode and why reeds along Wicken Lode were not part of the annual EA clearance programme.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 10.06pm