

WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2024
WICKEN MISSION HALL

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted):
Cllrs L Houghton, S Hill, P Rash and C Robinson, District Councillor Vellacott, County Councillor Hunt and 1 parishioner.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The clerk opened the meeting. As apologies had been received from the chair and vice chair it was proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Hill that Cllr Houghton should chair the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs B Pepper (holiday), R Barnes (illness), M Hawes (personal), S Wilson (personal) and J Rogers (illness).

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.

There were no declarations of interest.

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. Planning Matters

4.1 Conversion of a redundant barn and outbuildings into one self-build, family home for the farm owners and an events venue, as well as associated access, landscaping and infrastructure works (revision to development approved as part of Application 22/00379/FUL). Barn at Spinney Abbey Farm, 33 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire. Ref 24/00859/FUL

The Parish Council had concerns regarding the entrance and exit of vehicles during an event. The entrance is on the 60mph section of the A1123 opposite the junction for Way Lane and is a concern if a large number of vehicles arrive/leave at the same time. The Parish Council would like Highways to assess the junction.

4.2 Conversion of a redundant barn and outbuildings into one self-build, family home for the farm owners and an events venue, as well as associated access, landscaping and infrastructure works (revision to development approved as part of Application 22/00379/FUL). Barn at Spinney Abbey Farm, 33 Stretham Road, Wicken, Cambridgeshire. Ref 24/00860/LBC

As 4.1

4.3 Demolition of the west outshut of the Tractor Shed, make good to the remaining building, removal of asbestos containing roof sheets and replacement roof sheets. Provision of 3 containers for a period not exceeding 3 years. National Trust Wicken Fen, Wicken Rose Cottage, Lode Lane, Wicken, Cambs. Ref 23/01375/FUL

The Parish Council had no objections.

4.4 Extension of an existing garage building to create a new home gymnasium. Paddock House, 6A Lower Road, Wicken, Cambs. Ref 24/00827/FUL

Wicken Parish Council would like a condition applied that the garage/gym cannot be converted into a residential dwelling.

4.5 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

Approved:

- Single storey front extension and alterations to existing conservatory. Fenways, 11 Lode Loane, Wicken
- Installation of a remote control operated roller shutter garage door in the car port and erection of a close board timber fences. 8 Augustine Place, Wicken
- Delivery of peatland restoration at Wicken Fen NNR. Spinney Bank, Wicken Fen.
- Planning appeal APP/V0510/W/24/3341431: Land North West Of 9 Stretham Road CB7 5XH had been. The appeal was allowed and planning permission was granted for full planning permission for change of use from Use Class B8 to C3 residential including the removal of storage containers, erection of four detached dwellings, along with associated works including closing and relocating the existing access.

5. County and District Councillors Reports

County Councillor Hunt:

- Had met with a parishioner regarding the use of Redit Lane by large vehicles.
- Had worked with Highways on the repair of the Upware Road
- The Eastern Gateway and new doctors surgery had been agreed at an ECDC extra ordinary planning committee meeting. The project also included conditions including grants for primary and secondary school as well as 16 acres of open space.
- Working with Haddenham Parish Council regarding a safer Station Road (A1421)
- Continuing to work with Stretham CLT on a new doctors surgery at Stretham
- Continues to support the 20mph speed limit in Wicken
- Has contacted Highways regarding the dangerous footpath crossing on the Ouse river bridge between Stretham and Wicken where there was sadly a recent fatality.

District Councillor Vellacott:

- Has been working with a representative from Sanctuary Housing regarding repairs and empty houses.
- ECDC had found no legal reason to object to Sunnica
- Waste services changes would be announced by ECDC
- Had met with planning regarding the possible future housing demands in the parish and sites which would provide Section 106 contributions.

Cllr Hunt left at 8.25pm

7. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Bus Franchising Consultation

Cllr Rash agreed to attend the presentation on 12 September 2024.

Cllr Vellacott left the meeting at 8.35pm

6. Redit Lane Large Vehicle Access

This was the subject of the current LHI bid scheme but results had been delayed until late September/early October. County Councillor Hunt had suggested a jointly funded sign with the home owner on the corner of Redit Lane and North Street. The clerk would contact.

8. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 13 August 2024

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

9. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 9 July 2024

9.1 Allotment access road and Maltings footpath—Cllr Rash had completed a large section of the Maltings footpath and would continue further along the path. Thanks were extended to Cllr Rash for undertaking this work.

9.2 Repair of Village Sign –Work should be completed in September/October.

9.3 Repair of the Church Wall – Work had been completed.

9.4 Hawes Lane culvert –This would be looked at when the brambles had died back.

9.5 Pond Green Posts – Les Yardy would complete the work as requested. Posts in front of the pond would be installed after the pond maintenance had taken place.

9.6 Cleaning of Parish Benches – The Working Party was unable to meet on 7 September and another date would be arranged.

9.7 Pond Green Play Equipment Insurance Quote – The replacement equipment would be installed w/c 14 October 2024. A number of volunteers had offered to help with the maintenance of the Pond Green play area. The clerk would arrange a date.

9.8 St Andrews Primary School Admissions – this was still being dealt with by the School Adjudicator.

9.9 Lower Road Ditches – The clerk would obtain a quote from HE Services to remove the self-set trees and bushes and dig the ditch at the bottom of the Afterway Allotments.

9.10 ECDC Traveller Liaison Officer – ECDC were advertising for a TLO and the clerk would ask them to attend a meeting once they were in post.

10. Neighbourhood Plan

As the concept of creating a Neighbourhood Plan had previously been agreed, the following was further agreed:

The Parish Council would be appointed as the Qualifying Body.

The area for the Neighbourhood Plan would be the Parish of Wicken including Upware and Padney

The Working Party would be Cllr B Pepper, R Barnes and S Hill and volunteers from the parish. A further request for volunteers from the parish would be made.

11. Decision on Principle Regarding the Repair of the Manhole Cover on the Mission Hall Car Park

An estimated cost of £1021.94 had been received from Open Reach for the work to the manhole cover. Cllr Houghton proposed that the work should take place and the clerk should be authorised to agree work to the price of £2k if this fell between meetings. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson. All were in favour.

12. Pond Maintenance and Repair of the Duck House

The clerk had received quotes from SR Harradine and Meads and both had quoted £550 plus VAT per load for muck away. The clerk was awaiting a quote from G Webb. It was estimated that there would need to be 3 muck aways loads. Cllrs Hill and Robinson advised that they had been approached by a number of residents who would volunteer to maintain the pond and keep the reeds clear. This was discussed in full and it was agreed that work should be carried out as originally proposed to clear the pond and this would give the volunteers a clear pond to work with. It was suggested that the reeds were removed and placed on the side for a week before being removed. The clerk would contact the muck away companies to ascertain if they had grab lorries and if this was possible. Authority was given to the clerk to book this up to the cost of £550 plus VAT per muck away and for a date to be fixed for the end of October. It was agreed that the duck house should be repaired if possible or replaced. The clerk would discuss this with Jerry Woodroffe. [clerks note – Jerry Woodroffe would look at the duck house once the work to clean the pond had been completed].

13. Wicken Lode Maintenance and Update form the Meeting with Wicken Fen

Cllrs Pepper, Rash and Houghton and the clerk had met with Alan Kell from Wicken Fen and the maintenance of the Lode had been discussed. Cllr Rash had followed this with a further meeting with Wicken Fen and the Environmental Agency. Cllr Rash reported that he had a short meeting with the Environment Agency who advised they do not have the finances or resources to clean small sections of river instead concentrating on the main waterways. Wicken Fen agreed to cut the reeds and weeds along the bank and to cut swims for fishing access. They will do this once a year in October. The fen would investigate how much it would cost to clear the river in lengths of 50 metres at a time. The Parish Council would have to contribute to this work.

14. Parish Grass Cutting

Cllrs Hill and Robinson had created a proposal for the grass cutting in the parish. The accepted proposal would be retained with the minutes. This would be used for the grass cutting tender due to take place in November.

15. Quote for a Crown Lift of the Lime Tree Next to the Pond Green Play Area

RH Landscapes had provided a quote of £250 plus VAT for the crown lift. Acceptance of the quote was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Rash. All were in favour.

16. Changing Rooms Refurbishment and Repair of the existing Showers

The clerk had requested 3 quotes for the repair of the showers. One had declined to quote.

CB7 Oil and Gas	£1853.00
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Kalahari	£2132.00
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Cllr Houghton proposed that the work should be carried out by CB7 Oil and Gas. This was seconded by Cllr Hill. All were in favour.

The clerk had received an estimation of the cost of the full project for the changing rooms and this was within budget.

17. Financial Matters

17.1 Bill payments

Rachel James	Clerk wages September 2024	£509.60
HMRC PAYE	PAYE September 2024	£127.40
RH Landscapes	Grass cutting August 2024	£1320.00
RH Landscapes	Removal of a limb on the willow tree over the bench for H&S reasons	£300.00
*Johnson Construction	Rebuild of section of the church wall	£4900.00
Screwfix	Equipment for painting the benches	£74.15
Morelock	Solar batteries for the Speedwatch signs (CIL money)	£1035.60
SSE	Streetlight electric supply for 12 July 2024 to 31 July 2024	£26.28
Wave	Water for Butts Lane allotments 3/6/24-2/9/24	£38.85
Wave	Water for Recreation Ground 3/6/24-2/9/24	£21.42
Wave	Water for cemetery 3/6/24-2/9/24	£17.56

* cheque signed between meetings agreed via email.

17.2 Monthly Finance update

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

17.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 August 2024

This had been circulated.

24. Items for Information

The clerk had received a request from the church to advertise the Harvest Festival on the advertising frame on the Mission Hall Green. The Parish Council had no issues with this and the clerk would let the Mission Hall Committee know.

The meeting closed at 10.29pm