

## WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 13 July 2022 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

---

**Present:** M Housden (Chairman), J Bibby, L Holdaway, K Mackender, J Lucas, S Wilkin

*In attendance* Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)  
M Inskip (District Councillor)

**22/125 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from County Councillor L Dupré

**22/126 To receive any declarations of interest**

Councillors to declare any pecuniary interests in any items on the agenda - none

Councillors to declare any personal interests in any items on the agenda - none  
Councillors to declare any prejudicial interests in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chairman if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation – L Holdaway Agenda Item 22/133 Planning Applications, Witcham House, Headleys Lane (owner)

**22/127 Dispensations**

To note any new Dispensations granted: Nil

**22/128 Public Participation**

Chairman opened the meeting for the Public Participation session and L Holdaway gave background to planning application 22/00578/FUL and answered questions including update regarding issues raised by the Tree Officer and one neighbour's comments. The proposals allowed for the horsebox to be kept under cover to improve visual look and necessary storage space currently lacking for paddock maintenance equipment and useable garage area. Conversion of the existing garages and erection of orangery improved facilities for family use particularly to take into account two people home working.

**22/129 Minutes**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 June 2022, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, and the agenda of the same date signed by the Chairman as confirmation of the business transacted at that meeting. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded J Bibby and agreed.

Noted that under Item 22/116 the working party had included provision in the draft Tender that contractors would need to devise a scheme which complied with the provisions of 'permitted development'.

*Play  
working  
party*

**22/130 Matters Arising**

*22/115b) Tree Works in infant play area.* Clerk to re-send Tree Officer's report to the adjoining neighbour.

*Clerk*

*22/086 22/067, 22/109 Recreation Ground – Installation of Cycle Racks:* The racks had been satisfactorily installed, including the base. Clerk to add to asset lists as previously discussed.

*Clerk*

*22/093d), 22/109 Dog Signs.* Chairman had installed 3 new dog signs from Seton. Noted that at the time of order a special offer was available for solid rather than stick on signs and 5 had been ordered giving 2 spare (£21.35 plus delivery and VAT)

*22/115c) Recreation Ground* Information still awaited from Witcham Cricket Club  
*22/117 Cemetery Management* Interment ashes planned for 18 July 2022

*Clerk*

*Clerk*

22/131 **Reports from District and County Councillors**

The reports had been previously circulated. District Councillor M Inskip advised that some villages were still experiencing problems with bin collections and there was to be a review of arrangements by consultants. Zipper bus service would continue until October. The Covid finance support had ended and bus services were under review as detailed in the District Councillors' report.

7.57pm District Councillor M Inskip was thanked for attending and he left the meeting

22/132 **“What's On” village newsletter**

Latest edition discussed. Clerk to write to editor thanking her for her work and discuss arrangements for ensuring parish council items receive some priority for publication especially concerning Neighbourhood Plan Working Party and notice of dates for Council meetings. Councillors were happy to help with deliveries of hardcopy to houses as required and it was hoped the take up by residents for an electronic copy would increase so as to reduce printing costs. Also noted that for some the electronic copy had gone into Spam folder so worth flagging this with editor to pass on to subscribers.

*Clerk*

The editor had enquired about the Council's feelings for additional insert to go in Christmas edition, ie a small local business directory for 'shopping small'. This would be where anyone who has a small business locally could put a little advert about 'products' they are selling for Christmas, and she was suggesting advertisers pay £2 to cover additional printing costs.

**Resolved** that the Parish Council would increase budget (s142) to cover additional costs of printing, from approximately £120 to £313 pa. Proposed J Lucas, seconded L Holdaway. (Virement of funds to be finalised at review of quarterly accounts at next meeting but it was noted there had been no expenditure on Best Kept Garden Competition under s142 as the competition had been cancelled again this year.)

*All*

**Resolved** that the Parish Council was happy for editor to include an insert as proposed for the Christmas edition, subject to recovery of additional printing costs from advertisers using the publication. Proposed J Lucas, seconded Chairman.

*Clerk*

22/133 **Planning Applications**

22/00649/FUL 5B Martins Lane, Construction of partially single and partially two storey rear extension

**Resolved** that the Parish Council had no concerns

*Clerk*

22/00638/FUL Land west of Hillcrest Mepal Road, Installation of solar panels and wind turbine

**Resolved** that the Parish Council, in principle could see no problems but would the District Council please ensure that all neighbours had been consulted.

Proposed K Mackender, seconded L Holdaway.

*Clerk*

8.25pm L Holdaway left the meeting room

22/00578//FUL Witcham House, Headleys Lane Construction of double detached garage/horse box store, conversion of existing garages with room above and an orangery

The Tree Officer's report regarding protection of trees and the comments seen on the ECDC website under neighbours comments were noted.

*Clerk*

**Resolved** that the Council had no concerns subject to protection of the trees as guided by the Tree Officer. Proposed J Bibby, seconded K Mackender

8.33pm L Holdaway returned to the meeting

22/133 **Planning Applications** (cont)

The following ECDC decision was noted  
22/00622/TRE Yew Tree House T1 Yew – crown lift 3 lowest limbs over low pitched roof and trim back by max of 1m near gable end to enable erection of scaffolding and provide working space. Approved

22/134 **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party**

Chairman reported that it had been a good meeting and two new members had joined with another indicating they would attend the next meeting, 26 July. A couple in High Street had now pulled out. A leader had been appointed. Notes of June meeting had been circulated to all Councillors together with findings from the leader regarding appointment of consultants. The group would be manning a table at the Village Hall Afternoon Tea event on 24 July 2022.

It was confirmed the Parish Council would settle invoices for use of the village hall for monthly meetings, which could be reclaimed from grants. J Lucas undertook to attend September and October meetings as Council representative. She would be accompanied by J Bibby in September to provide continuity. M Housden and J Bibby to attend the July meeting. Clerk to write to leader to thank him for the information and to say how pleased the Council was with the response from villagers in coming forward to be involved with the project.

*JL**Chair/  
JB**Clerk*

Parish Council would await further details on recommendation from the working party on engagement of consultants

22/135 **Recreation Ground**

- a) Chairman had completed usual weekly inspections of recreation ground and play equipment, and there was nothing to report on the play equipment. He had removed the bench alongside the roadway, top end nearest Village Hall, because it was broken. He was monitoring others in case they needed removing before the new ones delivered. He had installed 3 new dog signs banning dogs on the site.
- b) Tree works – quotes still awaited. Clerk given further contacts. To be reviewed at September meeting.

*Clerk*22/136 **Play and Outdoor Fitness Refurbishment Project**

The working party had circulated the proposed tender document which was discussed and updated. Text to be amended to cover equipment for use by adults and young people. Tender specification requires contractors to provide schemes to comply with permitted development, eg height of tower and accessibility requirements for wheelchairs etc.

*Working  
party*

L Holdaway asked for Clerk's assistance in getting information for grant application and they will liaise to do this in due course. Proposed timescales noted and agreed. Clerk to liaise with L Holdaway early next week for making arrangements to meet dates for publishing tender on Contract Finder website.

*LH  
Clerk**LH  
Clerk*

**Resolved** to approve the tender document subject to updating in accordance with discussions tonight, and that document be uploaded to the Contract Finder website. Grant application to be prepared to meet closing date of 1 November 2022. Closing date for receipt of tenders - noon on 20 August 2022. Tenders to be opened in presence of Chairman, S Wilkin, J Bibby on 22 August, 10am at Clerk's office. Working party to oversee site inspections and deal with queries with Clerk and L Holdaway being key contacts for the process. Proposed Chairman, seconded S Wilkin

*Working  
party  
Clerk*

22/137 **Annual Village Inspection**

Chairman and J Bibby submitted forms for areas they had recently inspected. J Lucas would check bins Silver Street and K Mackender would check bins at Headleys Lane/High Street junction and forward report to Clerk in next few days. Clerk to type up reports and circulate for next meeting.

JL  
KM  
Clerk

**Resolved** Clerk to contact grounds contractor to flag any items needing attention under the contract. Proposed Chairman, seconded L Holdaway.

Clerk

22/138 **Finance**

- a) The July 2022 schedule had been circulated. Clerk advised that she had received the invoice from Seton that morning, and it had now been added to the list. Cheque for Brignells required based on quote and confirmed by Brignells earlier in week, for handing over on collection of the bound Minute books next week.

Cheques and supporting documents, checked by J Bibby and S Wilkin, were confirmed correct. (Listed at foot of Minutes).

**Resolved** to approve the receipts and payments for July 2022 and release cheques. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded S Wilkin.

Clerk

- b) MiJan, Internal Auditor. Notice advising MiJan giving up role of undertaking internal audits for parish councils had been previously circulated to Councillors.

**Resolved** Clerk to obtain quotes for new Internal Auditor and to thank MiJan for all their work over the years

Clerk

- c) Renewal of Lease with RSPB for drove land at Ouse Washes  
The draft Heads of Terms, previously circulated to Councillors, were discussed.

**Resolved** to agree the Draft Heads of Terms subject to Clerk checking with RSPB on details of environmental and government subsidies clause. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded J Bibby.

Clerk

RSPB had agreed, as an exception, to contribute towards Council's legal costs for new document. Clerk to contact solicitors regarding costs.

Clerk

22/139 **CCC Cambridgeshire Local Heritage List**

Letter of 24 June 2022 regarding funding for Cambridgeshire County Council from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) to create pilot projects for Local Heritage Lists in their areas had been circulated. They sought to engage with people from across the community to find out which local heritage assets people thought were important. They suggested reviewing as part of any Neighbourhood Plan development. Clerk was instructed to pass on the details to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party for consideration.

Clerk

Chairman said a resident had recently advised him about a barn located off High Street, formerly site of Coaching Inn, as being recorded on an 1830's map. He would go back to the resident to advise him of the above project.

MH

<https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire>

22/140 **Police**

- a) Chairman advised that the Police had contacted him to advise drain covers had been stolen at The Slade and Silver Street. He had referred them to the Highways Officer who had arranged for replacement.
- b) Monthly speed data had been previously circulated.
- c) Chairman advised that the application to mount MVAS equipment on street lights at High Street and Silver Street had been refused because

22/140 **Police** (cont)

217/.....

these were old columns and not suitable for taking the weight of the equipment. There would therefore be no further progression of ordering and placing brackets for speed recording at High Street and Silver Street.

22/141 **Street Lights and Highways**

- a) Clerk gave details of the new Highways Officer, who had now commenced duties covering Witcham.
- b) Footpath 2. High Street/Back Lane. The Public Rights of Way Officer had advised that the surface vegetation had in fact been cut by contractors on 26 May but annual summer cuts exclude encroaching vegetation from bordering hedgerows. He had visited on 17 June and found the path to be very passable. He also advised that he was organising for a contractor to repair rotting planks on the walkway/ bridge and for the bordering hedges to be cut back tight in the autumn.

20/142 **Temporary Traffic Order by Environment Agency**

Closure footpath/Public Rights of Way – Cradge Bank between Welney to Mepal (namely parishes of Little Downham, Coveney, Witcham and Mepal) 1 August 2022 to 31 October 2022 - noted

22/143 **Correspondence**

Chair reported that he had received correspondence from County Councillor - Help with energy costs for residents on low incomes – organising local events. Councillors felt an event at Witcham would not be well attended and therefore no arrangements to be put in hand.

*Clerk*

The following, previously circulated, were noted for information only:

CCC TMC/IHMC Incident Reports  
CCC Highways 2022 Gripfibre and Micro asphalt Surface Treatment Program  
Pension – Employer Survey  
ECDC Community Catalysts  
East Cambs Youth Strategy review  
ECDC newsletter  
NALC/CAPALC New survey on dementia-friendly councils  
NALC Events, bulletins/newsletters  
CAPALC Operation London Bridge notes  
ACRE Building affordable homes in our community  
ACRE Cambridgeshire Local Access Form  
Changes to CAPALC drop in sessions for Clerks and Councillors  
CAPALC Carbon Literacy  
Zurich Municipal change of status  
Arthur Rank Hospice Charity Arthur's Sheds  
Kings Lynn Hospital – modernisation  
Eastern Learning Alliance Cambridge Maths School: Section 10 Consultation (29.7.22)  
Environment Agency Ouse Washes Bank raising works - Newsletter July 2022  
Environment Agency Hundred Foot River works – desilting etc update  
Environment Agency newsletter  
Greater Cambridge Partnership Connections consultation report  
Ann Robson Trust

The Clerk reported on an email from the County Councillor regarding feedback for the Local Highways Improvement scheme. Councillors felt that in the past the scheme had been unhelpful. For example the speed reduction measures Mepal Road and The Slade had had to be undertaken under a third party scheme. Submissions for schemes in earlier years had never been successful because there was always so many submissions and too little funding available.

*Clerk*

22/143 **Correspondence** (cont)

The scoring system had changed and made it difficult for potential projects for Witcham.

It was noted that Councillors were invited by the Village Hall Committee to an Afternoon Tea event on 24 July 2022. J Bibby was already attending as a helper, M Housden was attending as a representative for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party. Jane Lucas would attend and L Holdaway would attend if possible.

*All*22/144 **Reports of any Meetings/Seminars attended by Clerk and Councillors**

No reports received

22/145 **Date of next meeting:** 14 September 2022

Clerk advised that a planning application for 15 Martins Lane, new drive and access had been received after publication of July agenda. Agreed to hold an additional meeting to deal with this on Wednesday 20 July 2022

*All*

Items for September agenda:

Licence car park (circulated 12.7.22)

Local Access and Bridal Way Officer of British Horse Society - Support to extend Seasonal Traffic Regulation Orders to include Old Lynn Drive (Byway 7)

Review Actions – omitted

Meeting closed at 10.00pm

**Schedule of Receipts and Payments**

		£	£	£
Receipts:	Nil			
Payments	001997 Truelink Ltd June	359.20	71.84	431.04
	001998 Clerks salary (Jul)	354.82		354.82
	001999 LGPS	126.75		126.75
	002000 Reimbursement Clerks exp incl MS	208.16		208.16
	002001 Reimbursement What's On printing	27.50		27.50
	002002 Brignell Bookbinders (Minutes 2015/21)	294.00		294.00
	002003 Brady Corp Ltd Seton dog signs	28.30	5.66	33.96
	d/d IONOS (June)	22.03	4.41	26.44

Signed..... Dated .....