

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 9 March 2022 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

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

In attendance Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)
Cllr M Inskip (E CDC)
1 member of the public

Action

- 22/040 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies received and accepted for K Mackender (ill)
- 22/041 **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 – M Housden Agenda Item 22/049 Kings of Witcham and 10A The Slade (consultee neighbour) and would therefore not take part in discussion.
L Holdaway Agenda Item 22/049 Paddocks East of Witcham House (consultee neighbour)
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 - none
- 22/042 **Dispensations:**
To note any new Dispensations granted: Nil
- 22/043 **Public Participation**
Chairman opened meeting to the member of the public who was attending to ask if the Parish Council was organising events to mark the Queen's Jubilee.
Chairman advised that the Council did not plan to organise events. Normally the Church or Village Hall would organise village events. With Covid infections still being prevalent it was difficult to plan. It was noted that the Peashoot had been cancelled again. J Bibby confirmed that the Village Hall Committee was cautious about organising large events and M Holdaway thought the Church might be organising something. The resident advised that on a previous royal occasion residents at Westway Place had organised a 'street' party on the green space. Chairman advised that residents were free to choose to organise events for neighbours in their street as had been the practice in the past and did not need Parish Council consent.
The member of the public asked who to contact to plant a Jubilee tree on the green space at Westway Place. She was advised the land belonged to East Cambs District Council and she would need to seek their consent.
8.43pm meeting closed to public participation
- 22/044 **Minutes**
Minutes of the meeting of 9 February 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 J Bibby, seconded S Wilkin.

- 22/045 **Matters Arising from previous minutes**
J Bibby reported she had attended the site meeting regarding cycle parking facility project at Recreation Ground. See also item 22/048b).
- 22/046 **Reports from District and County Councillors**
The reports had been previously circulated and Councillors invited to contact County and District Councillors regarding any points they sought further information on.
Noted letters had been sent by the Police to drivers undertaking unsocial driving activities late at night on the Elean Business Park, and in recent weeks it had been quiet. Councillor Inskip and Councillor Dupré were thanked for all their efforts on this matter. There were no further questions from Parish Councillors.
8.48pm Cllr Inskip left the meeting and was thanked by members
Member of Public left the meeting and was thanked by members for attending.
- 22/047 **Finance and General Administration**
- a) Quarterly accounts and reconciliations to 31 December 2021.**
Copies of receipts and payments with bank reconciliation had been prepared and previously circulated by the Clerk for Councillors to review and approve. The original bank statements were presented and the documents checked by J Bibby and Chairman.
Resolved to approve the quarterly accounts to 31 December 2021 and confirm bank statements. Receipts £19679.22 (including full year Precept of £15300 and CIL monies for projects). Payments £12333.73. Balance at 1 January 2022, £54173.33 including all earmarked reserves for projects/capital works. Proposed J Bibby, seconded L Holdaway.
- b) New Email System**
Councillors confirmed their emails working. First month was free and subsequent months required payment using card. Noted that a personal card had had to be used to set up system.
Resolved that the Council approve application for debit card for Clerk. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Lucas.
Clerk to make necessary arrangements and obtain signatures. Clerk
- c) Renewal of CAPALC membership**
Resolved to renew CAPALC membership, £308.18, including DPO membership, effective 1 April 2022. Proposed J Luas, seconded L Holdaway
- d) Donation for local First Responders**
Clerk had forwarded Council's grant application form and it was noted the First Responder was awaiting the result of applications to Sutton and Mepal. He was in the process of setting up a group to cover Sutton Mepal and Witcham with the team working on a rota system. He would be supplying the Clerk with details for a note to go in the next newsletter, noticeboards and website. Clerk
- e) Receipts and Payments for March 2022**
The March 2022 schedule had been circulated. Cheques and supporting documents, checked by J Bibby and S Wilkin, were confirmed correct.
Resolved to approve the receipts and payments for March 2022 and release cheques. Proposed J Lucas, seconded S Wilkin. Clerk

- e) Receipts and Payments for March 2022 (cont)**
Resolved that the Clerk would make arrangements for payment of outstanding invoices due in the current financial year, and report back at next meeting. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Lucas. *Clerk*
- f) 2021/22 Risk Assessment Report**
 The report, previously circulated, was examined.
 Clerk to check insurance regarding lease income. Confirmed Annual Inspection of play equipment, due June 2022, should be booked. Arrangement with Mepal PC under Complaints Policy to be added to section Conduct of Council Business/Meetings. *Clerk*
Resolved to approve 2021/22 Risk Assessment Report. Proposed J Lucas, seconded Chairman.
 Subsidiary risk assessment documents discussed and to be reconsidered at next meeting. *Cllrs*
- g) Arrangements for year-end accounts**
 It was noted that the Council was likely to qualify for exemption from the limited assurance review of the External Auditor, subject to completing the Certificate of Exemption and complying with internal audit procedures and publication of details as normal.
 In April the year-end accounts would be prepared for the Annual Parish Meeting and examination by the appointed independent Internal Auditor. Details for the AGAR form were awaited from the External Auditor. *Clerk*
- h) Preparation of Annual Report**
 Content discussed. Reports to be submitted to Clerk by Councillors, ie Chairman's Report, speed monitoring data, play refurbishment, neighbourhood watch, and information for public rights of way, droves and cycleways agreed. *Clerk
JL/LH*
- i) Coronavirus Risk Assessment**
 Existing risk assessment had been previously circulated for Councillors to review, together with updates (bulletins) cascaded by NALC and Cambridgeshire ACRE in February and March regarding meetings and staff.
Resolved that the Council noted the Government guidance had been relaxed and all restrictions due to be lifted from 1 April 2022. Council to maintain a watching brief – if Government introduced any new measures or advice the Council would undertake a new risk assessment for compliance. Proposed J Lucas, seconded J Bibby *Cllrs*
- j) Review of Policies**
 Clerk had reviewed and circulated the Training Statement of Intent (2011). The document was discussed and minor amendments agreed.
Resolved to approve Training Statement of Intent. Anyone not undertaken CAPALC Councillor training were encouraged to do so. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded Chairman.
 Chairman confirmed he had completed the Safeguarding risk assessment and would forward to Clerk for inclusion on next agenda for approval by the Council. *Cllrs*
- k) Renewal of Lease with RSPB for drove land at Ouse Washes** *Chairman*
 Clerk had now had response from RSPB Rural Surveyor who had agreed in principle to pay the Council's reasonable costs for new document. Heads of Terms awaited from RSPB and the Council's solicitors had been contacted with a view to looking over the document and taking forward. *Clerk*

I) Clerk's Hours

Timesheet for February previously circulated. Clerk had also circulated update on 2021 national salary review.

Resolved to accept the recommendation of NALC to adopt the new rates of pay, effective from 1 April 2021, as agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) for the Clerk's salary - based on current spine point. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded S Wilkin and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

Resolved to approve payment in next pay run of additional 21 hours worked. Proposed J Bibby, seconded J Lucas and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

Noted that Clerk's hours would increase to 32 hours per month as agreed in the 2022/3 budget with effect from 1 April 2022.

22/048

Recreation Ground

- a) Chairman had completed usual weekly inspections of recreation ground and play equipment.

He reported that during the recent gales the Cricket Club's nets had blown over twice and been re-erected, although part was bent and being addressed by the Club's officers. Truelink had carried out the ordered works at the cemetery and recreation ground, and all was satisfactory. Chairman reported that the residents with property bordering the boundary on the north side of the recreation ground had asked about cutting back the hedge. Chairman had confirmed to the resident that the hedge and fence were put up by the developer, and resident had now confirmed arrangements would be made for a contractor to cut back.

J Bibby confirmed she had filled in worn dips at recreation ground where goals been placed. She was thanked for her work.

- b) Cycle Parking – Cambridgeshire County Council initiative under Emergency Active Travel Fund

Following report from J Bibby under 22/045:

Resolved to consent to Cambridgeshire County Council erecting 4 galvanised Sheffield stands on the small patch of Parish Council land to the left of the entrance to the Village Hall carpark. Stands 715mm wide and 800mm high. Geogrid to be placed under stands to allow grass to continue to grow. Proposed J Lucas, seconded J Bibby.

- c) Play and Outdoor Fitness Refurbishment Project

L Holdaway reported she would prepare item for next newsletter as discussed at previous meeting. She would circulate to the working party before passing to Clerk for publication in next newsletter.

Members of Working Party

She had received amended quotes taking in suggestions from public sessions, which had now been circulated to all Councillors. Clerk had forwarded information to all Councillors regarding planning and procurement advice as requested at previous meeting. L Holdaway would review planning requirements and suggested taking up offer from Haddenham Clerk to share experience and advice on the project, in particular dealing with procurement process. Clerk to book next annual inspection of old equipment.

*LH**Clerk*

22/049

Planning Applications

22/00200/FUL Paddocks East Of Witcham House Headleys Lane
Change of use to paddocks, erection of stables and associated works.
L Holdaway had declared a personal interest.

Resolved that the Council had concerns regarding:

- a) Size and location of proposed development. Large block, stabling and associated works, located long way from house (2 Market Way)
- b) Insufficient infrastructure, and would have adverse effect on the village
 - i) Impact on water supplies, which is already insufficient in this sector of the village
 - ii) Access issues, not all road is concrete, some is green lane.

If the planning authority is minded to approve this application, the building should be smaller and located adjacent to 2 Market Way to use current access. Use of the site should be solely for personal use of applicant (2 Market Way).

The Parish Council supports the concerns expressed by neighbours, including that the address given in the correspondence referring to Witcham House, Headleys Lane, is misleading in the consultation process, and of informing neighbours since the property is situated on Market Way. Proposed J Lucas, seconded J Bibby

Clerk

Chairman proposed moving the Kings of Witcham and Slade applications to the end of this item and this was agreed.

22/00163/FUL Land South West Ely Model Aircraft Club, Hive Road
Proposed Agricultural barn open fronted to store straw, size 27m x 8.7m.
Resolved that the Parish Council had concerns and felt that any consent must ensure it is used for storage only and nothing else. This is a large structure and some distance from existing buildings. Proposed Chairman, seconded L Holdaway.

9.30pm In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, L Holdaway was asked to take the Chair. The Chairman, M Housden, had declared a personal interest in respect of the following items and did not vote

22/00203/VAR Kings Of Witcham Ltd The Slade Variation of condition 1 (Approved plans) of previously approved 19/00125/VAR for To vary condition 1 (Approved Plans) of decision notice dated 7 June 2018 for the demolition of existing motor vehicle garage and construction of 6No four bed dwellings, 2No 3 bed dwellings, garaging, access road and associated works. Changes to plots 1 and 3 involving changes to glazing and some extension of building on plot 1.

Resolved that the Parish Council had no objection to this variation.
Proposed J Lucas, seconded S Wilkin.

At this point the Chairman left the room.

22/00188/FUL 10A The Slade Change of use of existing timber cabin from garden room to bar associated with caravan and camping site.

Resolved that the Parish Council was concerned

- a) parking provision suggests many vehicles will attend as the site has an open licence – ie for use not just by campers on the site but also available to the general public.
- b) Toilet facility – shower and toilets – inadequate toilet facilities for open licence as using facilities of campers

22/049 **Planning Applications** (cont)
 c) concern about an increase in traffic volumes to site on main road into village, and being within a 40 and 30mph speed limit. Proposed J Lucas, seconded L Holdaway

9.40pm M Housden was called back into the meeting room, and he returned to the Chair.

22/00144/TRE 1 Silver Street T1 Smaller of the two Hornbeam - Reduce by 2m and 2m off the sides. T2 Larger of the two Hornbeam - Reduce in height by 2.5m and 2.5m off the sides. Both trees to raise canopy to 2.5m from ground level and also to remove any small crossing branches, deadwood or stubs. Noted

The following was noted:

21/01776/FUL 24 High Street, Construction of loft extension. Amendment The removal of the proposed side dormer to address Officer comments.

The following EDCD decision was noted:

21/01776/FUL 24 High Street, Construction of loft extension. Approved

22/050 **Cemetery Management**

Exclusion of the Press and Public: It is hereby resolved that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted at agenda item 22/050a) namely Memorials, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded from this meeting and they are herewith instructed to withdraw. Proposed Chairman and agreed.

There were no members of the public present.

9.41pm Chairman closed the meeting to the public

a) Memorials

Update received

Resolved that letter be sent to family. Proposed

L Holdaway, seconded J Lucas and agreed unanimously

9.52pm Chairman re-opened meeting.

b) Clerk advised that documents for a request for interment of ashes in existing plot and erection of new plaque for Garden of Remembrance was still awaited. (Cooperative Funeralcare Chatteris)

Resolved that the Clerk deal with the application if necessary before the next meeting, subject to compliance with Cemetery Rules, and to report back at next meeting.

Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

22/051 **Neighbourhood Plan**

The meeting had been confirmed to all parties for Friday 18 March 2022, 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Apologies received from J Lucas. J Lucas left the meeting.

All

22/052 **Police**

a) There were no issues for reporting to the Police

b) Chairman had circulated monthly speed data. There was no update from village speedwatch scheme regarding setting up speedwatch session. J Bibby advised that she believed the Police had been in the village carrying out checks in recent weeks. Clerk was asked to write to Police for results and to include update in the next newsletter

Clerk

- 22/052 **Police** (cont)
 c) Drifting/racing at Elean Business Park. Update given under District Councillors report noted.
- 22/053 **Street Lights and Highways**
 a) There were no items to bring to the attention of the Highways Authority.
 b) Noted that Sanctuary Housing were dealing with light at Westway Place carpark but action for the complaint raised December 2020 in respect of the middle carpark, opposite 14, appeared to have gone awry. Clerk had been instructed by Sanctuary to resubmit which she had done, supported with earlier correspondence and photos. District and County Councillor L Dupré had also written seeking earliest remedial action as had been previously planned. The old leaning pole and bracket at the bottom car park had still not been removed. *Clerk*
- 22/054 **2022 Annual Parish Meeting – 27 April 2022, 7.30pm**
 Draft agenda agreed so that notice could be published in next newsletter to be circulated by early April. Confirmed there would be no guest speakers on this occasion.
- 22/055 **Correspondence**
 The following correspondence had been circulated and were noted:
 Spring 2022 Litterpick 19 March 2022
 ECDC Waste Bin Collection days - moving to Thursdays for Witcham
 NALC Events, bulletins, newsletters and CEO updates, including Covid-19 advice
 CAPALC newsletters, bulletins, including finance and Covid-19 advice
 CAPALC Clerk and Councillor Training and Bursary scheme
 ECDC University of Northampton – Survey Covid-19 vaccination hesitancy amongst the public
 East Cambs Community Safety Partnership Newsletter
 CCC Winter Campaign – Stay Well (leaflets left at Village Hall)
 Greater Cambridge Partnership Joint Assembly meeting 17.2.22
 IHMC Monthly Incident Reports
 Cambridgeshire ACRE bulletins including Covid-19 advice
 Ouse Washes Section 10 Works, stakeholder update – Middle Level Barrier Bank raising works. Welney works June to September (approx.) – traffic light controls and closures. Also public footpath on the bank was closed at locations from Sutton Gault through to Welney and Welmore Lake Sluice.
 ECDC Newsletter (March)
- 22/056 **Date of next meeting:** 13 April 2022.
 For inclusion on the agenda, all business, including reports, receipts and payments etc, must be delivered to the Clerk at least 7 clear days prior to the meeting. (SO9b)
- Meeting closed at 10.11pm

Schedule of Receipts and Payments

		£	£	£
Receipts:	NIL			
Payments	001971 Cartridgesave	164.42	32.88	197.30
	001972 Clerks salary Mar incl extra hours	617.84)		
	Expenses	148.18)		766.02
	001973 LGPS	198.02		198.02
	001974 Truelink grounds maintenance	62.40	12.48	74.88
	001975 Village Hall hire fees	260.00		260.00
	001976 Cottenham Computers	140.00	28.00	168.00
	d/d ICO	40.00		40.00
	d/d IONOS (Feb) d/d	22.03	4.41	26.44

Signed..... Dated