

Widdington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of a Parish Council Skype Meeting held on Thursday 4th June, 2020 at 8.00pm

Present Chair Maria Orr, Cllr Jill Brookman, Cllr Chris Firmin, Margaret Hudson, Cllr Ian Southcott and Cllr Maggs Webb.

In Attendance District Cllr Neil Hargreaves, 2 members of the public and Amanda Lindsell, Clerk to the Council.

06.20.01 CHAIR'S WELCOME

Chair Orr welcomed those present to the meeting.

06.20.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

06.20.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Hudson declared a personal interest in agenda item 06.20.14 as an allotment holder.

06.20.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public shared their plans to demolish Midsummer House on the High Street and erect two detached dwellings, with the intention of residing in one dwelling upon completion.

The applicants noted that;

- i. The site sits very much lower down than the properties on the Pond Mead site.
- ii. The garages are not intended as future dwellings, but for storage.
- iii. The proposed view and access on to the road is very good and a huge improvement to the current access.

06.20.05 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the May Parish Council Meeting were approved by Councillors as an accurate representation and Chair Orr authorised the Clerk to sign the minutes on her behalf.

06.20.06 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Chair Orr read out County Cllr Gooding's report detailing;

- i. Essex County Council's work ensuring all schools are briefed and assisted as they reopen to reception, year 1 and year 6 children.
- ii. Concerns over the massive diminution of passenger uptake of public transport and plans to enable social distancing, including double decker buses with capacity for 80, only accepting 17 passengers, which will have consequences for those wishing to join once the bus is full.

06.20.07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

District Cllr Neil Hargreaves confirmed that;

- i. Work has started on the new Local Plan and the key requirements for a successful plan have been circulated to all members. UDC have again hired the two officers from the East of England Local Government Association Talent Bank who reviewed the Inspector's letters and will recommend how to restart the plan building process. Although currently sitting on the plan working group District Cllr Hargreaves noted that he may come off due to commitments with the Neighbourhood Plan and also currently being the only ward District Councillor.
- ii. As two Thaxted Councillors left the Libdems to form an Independent group, the political mix at UDC is currently; R4U 23, Libdems 5, Conservative 4, Chesterford Independents 2, Greens 2, Thaxted ward Independents 2, and 1 vacancy. The new UDC chair is Cllr Martin Foley, who is one of the two newly

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independent Thaxted councillors. And the new deputy chair is Saffron Walden R4U Cllr Arthur Coote, recently recovered from coronavirus.

iii. The council has received a phone call from Amanda Solloway MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to congratulate the Council for the speed in which they have administered the grant schemes available to local businesses.

06.20.08 CLERK'S REPORT

The clerk reported;

- i. Damaged bridge on footpath 11 reported to Essex Highways ref 2664448, and promptly repaired.
- ii. Fly tipped mattress dumped on byway Waldegraves to Newport, reported to UDC 13/05/2020
- iii. The Community Grant Fund £3500 grant for the swings has now been received.
- iv. VAT refund of £5868.70 received.
- v. £112.17 received in allotment rent to date.
- vi. £485 received in car park rent to date.
- vii. Letter despatched to garage leasees who only pay to store a car in the garages, reminding them that there is a further fee payable to use the garages for general storage.
- viii. The offer advertised by NALC offering 50% off Zoom packages for Parish Councils was incorrect, the monthly fee is £11.99. Wendens Ambo have committed to a years subscription and are keen for other parishes to share the package with them.
- ix. No response has been received from Widdington Recycling regarding the Clerk's email (01/05/2020) reiterating the previous request that the council are notified when large vehicles are anticipated, noting the concerns raised by residents, and requesting an update on the anticipated date that the large vehicles will cease access through the village.
- x. No response has been received regarding the asbestos being stored in one of the rental garages.
- xi. The Post Office have notified the Council of their intention to provide a weekly mobile service on Tuesdays 12:30-13:30 in the Village Hall car park. The Village Hall Committee have given permission for the car park to be used.
- xii. Gardner Planning have advised of the submission of additional documents to UDC regarding UTT/20/0860/FUL, and has provided a further objection to be submitted on the Parish Council's behalf. It was agreed to submit the further objection, upon confirmation that any further costs would not exceed £100.

06.20.09 FINANCE

- i. The Council noted receipt of the Internal Audit report.
- ii. The Council noted the return of the following documents by email to the External Auditor;
 - a. Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2.
 - b. Bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020.
 - c. Explanation of variances in the accounting statements.
 - d. Notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights.
 - e. Annual Internal Audit Report.
- iii. The Council noted the publication of the following documents on the Parish Council website, in compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015;
 - a. Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited.
 - b. Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2019/20, approved and signed.
 - c. Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2019/20, approved and signed.
 - d. Annual Internal Audit Report.
- iv. It was resolved to sign up to Zoom Pro-Plan, on a shared account with Wendens Ambo Parish Council, and to ensure that meetings are security password protected.
- v. The clerk presented a statement of accounts and reconciliation to cash books which were agreed and approved for signature. Cheques; 101246 - BHIB Ltd- annual insurance renewal - £581.86
 - 101247 - Y Morton - Internal Audit - £35.00
 - 101248 - EALC - Councillor Training - £390.24
 - 101249 - Geoff Gardner - Malt Place objection - £1500.00
 - 101250 - A Lindsell - Clerk's May salary - £417.56
 - 101251 - A Lindsell - Clerk May expenses - £41.15 were agreed for payment.

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06.20.10 PLANNING

The Parish Council agreed to submit the following comments to Uttlesford District Council relating to planning;

i. UTT/20/1213/FUL - Midsummer House, High Street, Widdington

Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and erection of 2 detached dwellings including one new access, parking and garaging. It was agreed that the Parish Council object to this application as in line with the decision tree, the Parish Council do not support applications outside the village envelope, development of executive homes, development of garden plots and applications which have an adverse impact on the rural nature of the parish. Concerns were also raised regarding the potential for further development to four dwellings and inaccuracies in supporting statements of the application.

The Parish Council noted the following planning decisions;

ii. UTT/20/0763/FUL - Pond Mead, High Street, Widdington

Construction of 1 no. detached dwelling and associated works (Revised scheme for plot 3 previously approved under UTT/19/2643/FUL) - Approved.

iii. UTT/19/1245/FUL - Bridge Meadows, Widdington Road, Widdington

Change of use from paddock land to a mixed use incorporating environmental, educational and therapeutic activities and stationing of mobile wagon. Retrospective permission for the erection of yurt and the stationing of mobile wagon on the site and erection of shed - Refused.

06.20.11 WIDDINGTON RECYCLING

County Cllr Ray Gooding joined the meeting on speakerphone

County Cllr Gooding confirmed Tom MCarthy as Officer in Charge and Suzanne Armstrong as Enforcement Officer at Essex County Council, and noted that they are precluded from enforcement during lockdown, although they have made contact with the owner of Widdington Recycling and intend to conduct a site visit as soon as permitted. The Parish Council raised concerns that the building has been constructed without planning consent, with the original application being submitted over a year ago, consultation ended in January 2020 and the website says that a report is being prepared.

Concerns were raised regarding enforcement of the legal weight limit through the village. County Cllr Gooding recommended recording events where possible and noted the difficulty in reporting offences as they are governed by the Weights and Measures Officers, not the Police.

County Cllr Gooding resolved to organise a virtual meeting in the next week with planning officers from ECC, Parish Council representatives and the Widdington Recycling operator.

It was agreed that if the meeting does not go ahead, the clerk would draft a letter to the head of the Planning Department, Chair of Planning, Officer in Charge and County Cllr Gooding to request an update on the planning decision and site visit as soon as possible and raise concerns regarding the application, lighting and traffic issues.

06.20.12 HAMEL WAY GARAGES

The Council resolved to arrange disposal of the asbestos stored in garage 9 to enable the garage to be leased again. Cllr Firmin resolved to liaise with the leasee who currently has asbestos stored within his garage.

06.20.13 EMERGENCY PLAN

Chair Orr expressed the Parish Council's grateful thanks for the fantastic community effort initiated through the Emergency Plan, ensuring that all Widdington residents have been looked after during the pandemic.

Particular thanks are extended to Cllr Jill Brookman and the Emergency Plan team.

Cllr Brookman noted the Neighbourhood Watch team as integral in the great communication and community support that has been established.

06.20.14 ALLOTMENT LEASE

The Council agreed that they are happy to extend the Allotment Lease.

06.20.15 OTHER BUSINESS

02/06/2020 ROSPA inspection, report anticipated.

06.20.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 8pm on Thursday 2nd July, 2020, on Zoom.

The meeting closed at 21.46