

Widdington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of a Parish Council Skype Meeting held on Thursday 7th May, 2020 at 8.00pm

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

In Attendance District Cllr Neil Hargreaves and Amanda Lindsell, Clerk to the Council.

05.20.01 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr Orr was nominated as Chair.

Proposed; Cllr Firmin Seconded; Cllr Southcott.

There were no other nominations.

Cllr Orr was unanimously elected Chair and resolved to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman as soon as practicable, which will also be countersigned by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council.

05.20.02 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR;

Cllr Hudson was nominated as Vice-Chair.

Proposed; Cllr Firmin. Seconded; Cllr Orr

There were no other nominations.

Cllr Hudson was unanimously elected Vice Chair.

05.20.03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Jill Brookman and Cty Cllr Ray Gooding.

05.20.04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None

05.20.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The clerk detailed concerns raised by the public regarding;

i. Concerns that some of the residents leasing garages in Hamel Way are not paying the additional premium to use garages for general storage, rather than parking a vehicle. Chair Orr and Cllr Southcott declared an interest and did not participate in the discussion. It was resolved that the clerk would draft and circulate a letter to leasees reminding them of the different fees for garage hire.

ii. District Cllr Hargreaves recommended Zoom as easier and more productive to organise meetings with. The Clerk noted that Wendens Ambo Parish Council are signing up to the reduced cost Zoom Pro Plan and Councillors agreed that they would be interested in sharing the plan costs.

A member of the public joined the meeting.

05.20.05 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cty Cllr Gooding was unable to join the meeting, but submitted a report detailing;

i. The work of ECC during the pandemic, whilst accommodating social distancing requirements.

ii. Challenging focus on roles in social care and particularly care homes, where the pressures have been significant.

iii. A significant increase in referrals to family support units, with schools working hard to maintain contact with families classed as vulnerable, although there is evidence that there are emerging problems within households not previously registered as in need of additional support.

iv. Essex Youth Services have conducted more than 2500 contacts with young people remotely and by other interventions and have put in place initiatives that young people can take up whilst they are otherwise constrained, including a virtual Duke of Edinburgh scheme.

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v. Many public transport systems are currently running at 1% of normal traffic, ECC have maintained their statutory payments to the operators but there are concerns that some companies may not survive the persistent drop in revenue.

vi. Cty Cllr Gooding confirmed that he has arranged for ECC Officers to carry out a site inspection at Widdington Recycling and will ensure the Parish Council are kept advised of progress in any necessary enforcement.

05.20.07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

District Cllr Neil Hargreaves noted;

i. UDC have voted to withdraw the Local Plan 30/04/2020, which will result in the housing numbers substantially increasing, unless a plan can be drawn up justifying lower numbers. The scale of the proposed development is not deliverable with the restraints of the railway, M11 and river, and would be comparable to building two more Saffron Waldens on top of what already exists.

ii. Government grants of £20m have been made available for hospitality businesses, currently £15.5m has been awarded, but a number of businesses haven't currently applied for the £25k or £10k cash grants. The only condition to the grant is that the business rates were being paid 11/03/2020.

05.20.08 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the 27th April Parish Council Meeting were approved by Councillors as an accurate representation and Chair Orr authorised the Clerk to sign the minutes on her behalf.

05.20.09 CLERK'S REPORT

The clerk reported;

i. Geoff Gardner agreed to draft a response by 07/05/2020 to UTT/20/0860/FUL on behalf of WPC at a fee of £1500 plus expenses. No further quotations were available due to the time restrictions.

ii. 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 regarding the frequency of the large vehicles, particularly during lockdown when children are mostly not at school and are walking and cycling with their families as part of keeping active, and requesting an update on the anticipated date that the large vehicles will cease access through the village.

iii. Cty Cllr Gooding has confirmed that the ECC Enforcement team are willing and able to attend the site, and have been provided with a current list of concerns and issues. It was resolved that Chair Orr will ask that the Council are notified of the date of the inspection.

iv. Letter despatched to garage leasee requesting the asbestos stored within the garage is safely disposed of.

v. Garage rental invoices despatched.

vi. UDC waste team have confirmed that the dog waste bin outside Willow Cottage will be replaced when restrictions are lifted.

vii. The Community Grant Fund grant for the swings has still not been received, Clerk to pursue.

05.20.10 FINANCE

i. The Council agreed to continue the affiliation with EALC and NALC and payment of the annual fees of respectively.

ii. The clerk presented a statement of accounts and reconciliation to cash books which were agreed and approved for signature.

Cheques; 101243 - EALC/NALC Affiliation 2020/21 - £151.36

101244 - Clerk's salary April 2020 - £471.48

101245 - Clerk's expenses April 2020 - £114.24

which were agreed for payment.

iii. It was agreed that the Council are required to complete the Annual Governance and Accountability return 2019/20 Part 3 and send to the external auditor for a limited assurance review.

iv. The Council resolved to appoint Yvonne Morton to carry out the internal audit of the Council accounts and to work to identify another internal auditor for 2020/21 as per EALC advice.

v. The Clerk read through and Councillors approved the statements within the Section 1 Annual Governance

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Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20, which was then signed by the Clerk and will be signed by Chair Orr as soon as is practicable.

vi. The Council approved the annual accounts, and approved the Section 2 Accounting Statements 2019/20, which were signed by the Clerk and will also be signed by Chair Orr as soon as practicable.

vii. The Council noted the completion of the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Exempt Authority) to be displayed from 13th June 2020, and making available the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and associated documents on application to the clerk, between 17/06/20 and 26/07/20.

05.20.11 PLANNING

The Council accepted the quotation from Geoff Gardner and resolved to review the draft response and forward comments to the Clerk by midday 10/05/2020.

District Cllr Neil Hargreaves resolved to call UTT/20/0860/FUL into Planning Committee.

05.20.12 OTHER BUSINESS

- i. Consideration of renewal of allotment lease.
- ii. Widdington Recycling site visit update.
- iii. Phone link to future Parish Council meetings.

05.20.13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 8pm on Thursday 4th June, 2020.

The meeting closed at 21.10

DRAFT