

Widdington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of a Parish Council Skype Meeting held on Thursday 2nd April, 2020 at 8.10pm

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

In Attendance Amanda Lindsell, Clerk to the Council.

04.20.01 CHAIR`S WELCOME

Chair Maria Orr welcomed those present to the meeting.

04.20.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Jill Brookman, County Cllr Ray Gooding and District Councillor Anthony Gerard.

04.20.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None

04.20.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The clerk detailed concerns raised by the public regarding;

- i. The large number of cement lorries passing through the village to the recycling site, together with heavy equipment. Also loss of bunkers from the recycling site and extension of the site backwards from the bunkers previous location. It was agreed that the clerk would liaise with County Cllr Ray Gooding to raise these concerns and notify the Essex County Council planning department, and request that an ECC representative attends the next site meeting.
- ii. A complaint was received regarding two fallen trees blocking the footpath behind Bishops. It was agreed that the Clerk would request that the landowner clears the footpath as soon as is practicable.

04.20.05 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

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

04.20.06 COUNTY COUNCILLOR`S REPORT

None.

04.20.07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR`S REPORT

No report submitted. The clerk provided a District Councillor update given 01/04/2020 in Great Chesterford.

- i. The Local Plan meeting scheduled 31/03/2020 has been deferred to an unspecified date. Following discussion with the leader of the District Council 31/03/2020, a document is going out for wider consultation, with the intention for a decision to be made by the end of April, once voting by remote meeting has been addressed, with the current climate making no notable change to the predicted outcome.
- ii. UDC are trying to establish remote communications and have several senior members ill or isolating.
- iii. The UDC website landing page gives excellent information and is updated daily;
<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- iv. The business page is particularly good;
<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/covid19-business-grants-fund>
- v. All residents considered to be at risk or vulnerable are being contacted this week with instructions to register with Essex Welfare Services to organise food deliveries.

04.20.08 CLERK`S REPORT

The clerk reported;

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- i. District Cllrs are not able to contribute their New Homes Bonus to assist with the new swings cost as a condition of the £3500 Community Project Grant obtained by the clerk. Cllr Gerard had arranged to transfer his NHB to assist with the Community Get Together arranged in March, but this has been postponed due to Covid-19.
- ii. Asbestos warning signs have been ordered and received and will be put in place next time I am in Widdington.
- iii. Advice requested regarding the safe removal of the asbestos stored in some of the garages, and quotes are awaited for safe removal.

04.20.09 FINANCE

- i. The clerk presented a statement of accounts and reconciliation to cash books which were agreed and signed. Cheques - 101238 - SafetySigns4Less - asbestos signage - £31.14

101239 - Alliance Asbestos Services - asbestos surveys - £957.60

101240 - Clerk's salary March + 2019/20 holiday pay - £917.82

101241 - Clerk's expenses March 2020 - £46.28

101242 - HMRC - PAYE quarterly payments - £506.81

were agreed for payment.

- ii. During the recent Councillor training course given by EALC, it has come to the Council's attention that they have no legal power to make a grant or give a donation to any church due to a prohibition within The Local Government Act 1894. As a result the Parish Council unfortunately has to renege its previous offer of a donation of £200 to St Marys Church as the donation is not legally valid.

04.20.10 PLANNING

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

- i. UTT/20/0711/FUL - Land Adjacent To The Piggery, Cornells Lane, Widdington 4 Bedroom detached dwelling with detached single bay cart lodge and store. (29/04/2020) The Council resolved to maintain their initial objections to the previous application on this site.

- ii. UTT/20/0530/FUL - Ringers, Debden Road, Newport

Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 1 no. replacement dwelling. (08/04/2020) It was agreed that the clerk would clarify whether Widdington or Newport receive precept for this property and whether Newport are reviewing the application. It was also noted that according to the decision tree Widdington Parish Council would not object to this application.

The following planning decisions were noted;

- iii. UTT/20/0498/NMA - Pond Mead, High Street, Widdington

Non Material Amendment to UTT/19/2643/FUL - amendments to design, including changes to fenestration, addition of velux windows and removal of 1 no. chimney and changes to external finishes - Refused.

- iv. UTT/20/0244/DOC - Plot 4, Pond Mead, High Street, Widdington

Discharge of condition 2 (Materials) attached to UTT/19/2648/FUL - Discharged in part.

- v. To consider attendance at the virtual online planning webinar 17/04/2020. It was agreed that the Clerk would book Chair Orr and Cllr Firmin onto the planning webinar.

04.20.11 EMERGENCY POWERS

Following recent advice from the Essex Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils, the Parish Council resolved to;

- i. Cancel all public Parish Council meetings with immediate effect.
- ii. Co-ordinate Parish Council meetings on Skype. The Clerk will publish agendas for these meetings with at least three clear working days notice as required for usual Parish Council meetings. Residents wishing to raise items within the public forum, may contact the clerk in writing, by phone or email, before midday on the day of the meeting. Draft minutes of the meetings will be made available to the public within 48 hours on the Parish Council website the village notice board, Facebook page and circulated on the village email.
- iii. Devolve power to the Clerk to approve and make any payments below £500 in conjunction with the Chair or Vice-Chair.
- iv. Devolve power to the Clerk to approve and make any payments below £1500 with approval via email from three Councillors.
- v. Payments requiring approval above £1500 require approval from all available Councillors, and a minimum

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of four, via simple majority in the usual way, with the Chair's casting vote as necessary.

vi. Decisions requiring prompt action to be made via new email chain, with approval from three Councillors.

viii. Genuinely urgent decisions to be proposed to the Parish Council on email, and ratified by three of members of the Council. Any doubt as to promptness or urgency or whether it can wait until a Skype meeting to be settled by the Chair.

viii. These powers to be in place for a period of three months, subject to review and cancellation at any point by simple majority, and renewal after three months on the same basis.

04.20.12 COUNCIL POLICIES

The Council reviewed the following Council Policies, with the agreed alterations, for final agreement at the next Council meeting.

i. Standing Orders.

ii. Financial Regulations.

iii. Complaints Procedure.

iv. Council Publication Scheme.

v. Data Protection Policy.

vi. Freedom of Information.

vii. Training Policy.

viii. Action Plan.

ix. Equality Policy.

x. Risk Assessment

The Council agreed that the Clerk should prepare a proposal for future review of policies for consideration at the next Council meeting.

04.20.13 OTHER BUSINESS

i. 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 - revised external design and material finish only) (30/04/2020)

ii. Emergency Plan update.

iii. Bridge Meadow update.

iv. Annual Parish Council and Annual Parish Meeting postponed.

v. Another sofa has been dumped at the top of Hollow Road, Clerk to notify UDC.

04.20.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

The meeting closed at 22.28.