

# Widdington Parish Council

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## **Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 at 8.00pm**

**Present** Chair Maria Orr, Vice-Chair Ian Southcott, Cllr Maggs Webb, Cllr Chris Firmin, Cllr Lynn Harris, Cllr Steve Smith

**In Attendance** 5 members of the public and Katrina Levy, Clerk to the Council.

### **02.22.01 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

Chair Maria Orr welcomed those present to the meeting.

### **02.22.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from District Cllr Neil Hargreaves and District Cllr Judy Emanuel.

### **02.22.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

None.

### **02.22.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Spring Hill – discarded water tank, block of concrete – Clerk will check whether already reported and report if not for removal. Member of public has offered to dismantle and take away if there is no other solution. Village residents have made a start on removing the wood at the Beadle Lane junction. It would make a big difference to the flooding if ditch there is dug out. He has offered to work for WPC clearing it. Cllr Webb – has offered to help with traffic control as they move round the corner. Council agreed this was a safety concern so needs tackling and agreed to pay for days work to clear ditch.

### **02.22.05 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

None submitted.

### **02.22.06 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

District Councillor Neil Hargreaves reported (emailed report, main points highlighted by Chair Orr) - ongoing work at UDC, includes climate change work and revamping the planning dept., there is an interim head of planning and a lead officer appointed to run the improvement processes. The proposal is for council tax to rise by £5 a year on band D properties. For comparison the UDC £5 rise is 3.09%, the Police and Fire increase 4.79% or £10 a year, and Essex 4.49% or £60 a year.

Council house rents are proposed to increase by 4.9%, which is in line with government policy of Consumer Price Index + 1%, and this has been agreed by the Tenants Forum. It will take the average rent to £107 a week. Council house finances are kept entirely separate from the rest of the council General Fund, and are required to be self-financing. The total rental income is forecast at £16.8m and expenditure at £13.4m, which, with a small draw on reserves, leaves £3.6m going to the capital budget for new houses.

UDC has an external funding requirement of about £16.8m a year, but council tax is only £6.4m. We retain a small percentage of the business rates, and for the coming year there is a one-year settlement of New Homes Bonus and some other government finance. However, the largest component of council income, comes from our highly successful commercial investment portfolio. This is now worth about £40 million more than the properties cost, and in 2022/23 it is forecast to bring in, net of interest, just under £9m.

UDC five-year Medium Term Financial Strategy, just published as part of the budget papers has an updated commercial strategy which, if agreed, will cut the required reduction to £2.6m pa. This is still a challenge but as noted in an earlier press release 'in the past we've shown we are good at finding solutions and we will adapt and continue to innovate so that we can continue to meet the needs of our residents'.

### **02.22.07 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

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The minutes of the January Parish Council Meeting and the January 17<sup>th</sup> EGM Parish Council meeting were approved by Councillors as an accurate representation and Chair Orr signed the minutes.

## 02.22.08 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported;

1. Defibrillator and new box has been delivered to local resident, ongoing organisation of date with electrician for installation
2. UTT/21/3481/FUL – expert in visual impact and transport/highways were contracted to submit reports to object to this planning application. The reports have been submitted to Uttlesford Planning department prior to deadline.
3. Answer from Ray Gooding reference North Hall Road closure and ongoing works, unfortunately very little clarity on how long disruption will continue.
4. Training of new clerk ongoing.
5. Documents submitted to Uttlesford District Council for co-option of new councillors, register of member interests forwarded to the new councillors for their completion. These have now been submitted to UDC.
6. Uttlesford District council informed of Cllr. Brookman's resignation
7. Emergency plan update completed and distribution of up-to-date details to all relevant volunteers.

## 02.22.09 PLANNING

To consider making representation to the [Uttlesford District Council](#) in response to planning applications:

ii. [UTT/22/0133/HHF](#)– Broad Leys, Cornells Lane, Widdington, CB11 3SP

Proposed relocation and replacement of oil tank – No objection raised by Council.

To note the following [Uttlesford District Council](#) planning decisions:

ii. [UTT/22/0108/DOC](#) - Orchard Cottage, Wood End, Widdington, CB11 3SN

Application to discharge condition 3 (biodiversity enhancement) attached to [UTT/21/0992/HHF](#) – [Approved](#).

iii. [UTT/21/3568/CLP](#) - Foxhall Cottage, Cornells Lane, Widdington, CB11 3SP

Alterations to kitchen and utility room windows, and side door. – [Approved](#).

iv. [UTT/21/2477/FUL](#) - Mole Hall, Hall Lane, Widdington, CB11 3SS

Proposed grain store - [Approved](#).

vii. [UTT/20/1409/FUL](#) - Bridge Meadows, Widdington Road, Widdington, CB11 3SU

Proposed change of use from paddock land to a mixed use incorporating environmental, educational and therapeutic activities and stationing of mobile wagon, bell tent. Retrospective planning permission for the erection of yurt, stationing of mobile wagon on the site, erection of shed and compostable toilets. – [Approved](#).

## 02.22.10 FINANCE

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

Invoices; Clerk's salary (Amanda Lindsell) January 2022 - £365.86

Clerk's salary (Katrina Levy) January 2022 - £297.04

Clerk's expenses (Amanda Lindsell) January 2022 - £47.48

Clerk's expenses (Katrina Levy) January 2022 - £41.59

They were approved for payment.

## 02.22.11 WIDDINGTON RECYCLING

25<sup>th</sup> February new meeting date, clerk to confirm date & time Chair Orr or Vice Chair Southcott so one can attend. Clerk to contact Tom McCarthy to ask why it was deferred from January meeting?

## 02.22. 12. PARISH COUNCIL LIASON MEETING

Cllr. Webb update following attendance at the meeting with UDC CEO Peter Holt – all local WPC attended, questions flooded. S. All local parish councils frustrated with Highways (Lee Scott – suggested as contact). CEO Holt to organise meeting with transport director, local highway panel not done anything for 1 year. UDC

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accounts not signed off, currently being investigated by CPS. Local plan is necessary June 2022 first draft, and to be finalised in 2023 – Council requested Clerk request copy of the minutes and determine whether more dates are scheduled.

## **02.22.13 QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE VILLAGE EVENT -2<sup>nd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> June**

Proposed committee meeting date Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> February, village hall, committee in place. See if pub field free, village photograph. Cllr Harris to message member of public who has also expressed interest in helping.

Budget - £3000 maximum – Agreed.

Beacon – Saturday 2145 – there is an official time/date for whole country – member of public has beacon plan & collect wood from farm. Cllr Smith to check country wide plan – will be included in the Jubilee committee's responsibilities.

## **02.22.14 TRAINING**

For new clerk and Cllr Harris and Cllr Smith and possible new cllr – All agreed.

## **02.22.15 OTHER BUSINESS**

Byway TRO – public and councillors would like TRO's to continue if possible.– Clerk to establish what Widdington Parish Council needs to action as originally instigated by Debden.

America Brook – the concrete blocks have been returned.

Defibrillator Code will be given to all councillors – Cllrs. contact information to be put next to new defibrillator.

## **02.22.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 8pm on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022, in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 21:02