

Widdington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 7th January, 2021 at 8.00pm

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

In Attendance County Cllr Ray Gooding, 3 members of the public and Amanda Lindsell, Clerk to the Council.

01.21.01 CHAIR'S WELCOME

Chair Orr welcomed those present to the meeting.

01.21.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and noted from District Cllr Neil Hargreaves.

01.21.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Ian Southcott declared a personal interest in agenda item 01.21.10iii and v, as a neighbour of the applicant. Cllr Chris Firmin declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 01.21.10iv as the owner of the property.

01. 21.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public raised the following issues;

- i. Concerns were raised regarding new incessant banging coming from Widdington Recycling. The resident has spoken with the manager of the site who was unable to identify any new machinery that would be making the new unwelcome level of noise, that can be heard from the centre of Widdington. The Parish Council requested support from County Cllr Ray Gooding in ensuring that Essex County Council undertake the required noise monitoring that has not been conducted for two to three years. County Cllr Ray Gooding resolved to pursue the noise monitoring with officers and also offered to set up a further meeting with the Parish Council and Planning Officers. Chair Orr confirmed that the Parish Council would welcome a further meeting, and will be writing to the various authorities, detailing the Parish Council's concerns and the need for the agencies to be fulfilling their responsibilities to ensure that Widdington Recycling are acting appropriately and within the law.
- ii. Widdington Recycling have reported a 40 year old eastern European female missing from the site since 29/11/2020. Local Police are making enquiries in the vicinity.
- iii. Concerns were raised that trees with Tree Preservation Orders are being felled, without appropriate permission in Widdington.
- iv. Three large trees have recently been removed on Hollow Road and it was noted that there several large dead trees on the verges of the roads approaching the village. County Cllr Ray Gooding explained that verges are very often not owned by the Highway Authority, and offered to send the clerk a link to the publically available Essex Highway map, that will definitively show ownership of verges. The Parish Council agreed that once ownership is established, action will be taken to ensure the owners fulfil their responsibilities and clear any areas deemed necessary. Chair Orr expressed the Council's gratitude to John Rhodes for his work keeping the major routes open in recent weeks.

01.21.05 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the December Parish Council Meetings were approved by Councillors as accurate representations and Chair Orr authorised the Clerk to sign the minutes on her behalf.

01.21.06 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

County Cllr Ray Gooding detailed;

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i. Last weekend's public health reports revealed a 55% increase in live cases of Covid-19, in three days. Essex County Council do not have the authority to close schools, and require permission from the Secretary of State. This process was underway when Boris' statement on Monday overtook it.

Nurseries and child minders have not been included in the closures, which appears to be an anomaly, and was a mistake by the government not to explain why this decision was taken. Evidence is that in the first lockdown, incidents of child abuse in these age groups rocketed by 22% in Essex, and this is the reason that nurseries and child minders remain open. Essex County Council is working to support these settings, establishing a testing regime and vaccine process as promptly as possible.

5000 computers will be distributed across Essex in the next few weeks, to help those disadvantaged by a lack of facilities. A process has been put in place where residents can donate redundant laptops (the condition of the laptops is irrespective) for repurposing to youngsters who need them. Interested parties can contact the clerk to organise collection and pass to County Cllr Gooding.

ii. Cllr Southcott queried why no work has commenced on North Hall Road, despite this important access road being closed for six months already. County Cllr Gooding confirmed that the bank has collapsed into the river and the substructure has washed away and is considered unstable. A number of agencies are involved and the Environment Agency have requested that the issue is not just resolved with concrete. As a result the design is still being finalised before going out to tender. It was hoped that the work would be completed in March, but this is not achievable. County Cllr Gooding resolved to circulate updated details early next week.

County Cllr Gooding left the meeting.

01.21.07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

District Cllr Neil Hargreaves's report is attached. (Please see appendix 1)

01.21.08 CLERK'S REPORT

The clerk reported;

i. The further leak outside Bridgetts, Cornells Lane was reported to Affinity Water 04/01/2021, a ring fracture water main has subsequently been repaired, but they believe there is a further fault up Wood End, possibly as a result of the Gigaclear works.

ii. The redundant Wildlife Park sign has been reported for removal to ECC ref 2691580.

iii. Widdington Play Park was reopened in December.

iv. Widdington Recycling have not responded to the letter from WPC, emailed to them 22/12/2020, during office hours, when they were open and answering the telephone.

v. A donation of £275.00 has been received from Widdington Quilting Group, raised from sales of a quilt they made.

vi. A donation of £3000 has been received from sales of the village calendar. Thanks were extended to both donor groups.

vii. Concerns have been raised that a tree with a TPO has potentially been felled at Elmstead, and we have been asked to investigate. This has been raised with Uttlesford District Council's tree officer as they are the authority responsible for Tree Preservation Orders.

01.21.09 FINANCE

i. The Parish Council agreed to make a donation of £200 to the Citizen Advice Bureau.

ii. Cllr Webb confirmed that the Village Hall Committee have submitted an application to the District Councillors ward initiative to assist with the oil tank protection structure.

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

Cheques; 101283 - Gardner Planning - Malt Place planning consultant - £750.00

101284 - Tim Harding - cutting Village Green 2020 - £1250.00

101285 - Widdington Village Hall hire 2019-10 - £188.70

101286 - Clerk's salary December 2020 - £404.78

101287 - Clerk's expenses December 2020 - £61.69

101288 - HMRC - PAYE quarterly payment - £312.00

101289 - CAB - donation - £200.00

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were approved for payment.

- iv. The quotation to cut the village green for 2021 was accepted by the Parish Council.
- v. The 2021/22 budget was agreed at £25,481.
- vi. The 2021/22 precept was agreed at £20,000.

01.21.10 PLANNING

The following responses were agreed for return to Uttlesford District Council regarding planning applications;

- i. UTT/20/3340/HHF - Spring Cottage, Spring Hill, Widdington

Proposed removal of part of hedge to the front, lower of the ground to road level and creation of two car park spaces - No objections.

- ii. UTT/20/3244/NMA - Pond Mead Cottage, High Street, Widdington

Non material amendments to UTT/20/0029/FUL including Amendments to the proposed windows and doors, canopy, vehicular access gate - No objections.

- iii. UTT/20/3121/HHF - The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Widdington

Replacement of five bar timber front gates with solid timber motorised gates and refurbishment including replacement where needed of rear timber gates - The Parish Council objects to this application and requests that more aesthetically inkeeping and similar gates to what is currently in place are used.

- iv. UTT/20/3089/HHF - Bridgetts, Hollow Road, Widdington

Proposed detached double garage with ancillary space above - The Parish Council objects to this application due to the proposed development above the garage and the potential for further conversion that this space provides.

- v. UTT/20/2783/LB - The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Widdington

Replacement of five bar timber front gates with solid timber motorised gates and refurbishment including replacement where needed of rear timber gates - The Parish Council objects to this application and requests that more aesthetically inkeeping and similar gates to what is currently in place are used.

The following planning decisions were noted;

- vi. UTT/20/2978/DOC - Midsummer House, High Street, Widdington

Application to discharge condition 3 (external materials), 5 (hard/soft landscaping) and 10 (gates) attached to UTT/20/1213/FUL - Discharge conditions in full.

- vii. UTT/20/2890/DFO - Meadowcroft, Church Lane, Widdington

Details following outline application UTT/19/2310/OP - details of scale, landscaping and appearance of the development - Approved with conditions.

- viii. UTT/17/0590/DOC - Mole Hall, Mole Hall Lane, Widdington

Application to discharge condition 4 (drawings and method statement) attached to UTT/16/2414/LB dated 18.10.2016 - Discharge conditions in full.

01.21.11 WIDDINGTON RECYCLING

The Council agreed that Widdington Recycling have had ample time to respond to the Council's letter of 22/12/2020. The Council resolved that the clerk would draft and circulate letters to Uttlesford District Council, Essex County Council, our MP Kemi Badenoch, the Environment Agency and the Mineral Planning Authority, raising the individual issues specific to each agency's responsibilities, including the report and requesting support in ensuring that Widdington Recycling are acting appropriately and within the law. County Cllr Gooding will be copied in on all correspondence.

01.21.12 PLAY PARK

It was agreed that the clerk would seek advice from EALC and the Parish Council insurance provider regarding the play park lease.

It was also agreed that the clerk would request transferral of the Stansted Airport Community Trust Grant received by the Village Hall Committee to help fund the new swings in the play park.

01.21.13 SPEED LIMIT

The Council resolved to investigate the possibility of reducing the speed limit through the village. Cllr Southcott agreed to explore options and report back.

01.21.14 LITTER PICK

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The Council agreed that it would not be appropriate to co-ordinate the usual Litter Pick at this time. Cllr Hudson resolved to drop pickers to Councillors houses for families to undertake litter picking at their leisure, but before mid-February.

01.21.15 OTHER BUSINESS

- i. Clerk to review TPOs on Cornells Lane prior to the February meeting.
- ii. Local Heritage List - clerk to review Pudding Stone and sunken lane status elsewhere.

01.21.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 8pm on Thursday 4th February, 2021, on Zoom.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm

DRAFT