

Widdington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 7th November, 2019 at 8.00pm

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

In Attendance 5 members of the public and Amanda Lindsell, Clerk to the Council.

11.19.01 CHAIR'S WELCOME

Chair Maria Orr welcomed those present to the meeting.

11.19.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Margaret Hudson and District Cllrs Anthony Gerard and Neil Hargreaves.

11.19.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Chair Maria Orr declared a personal interest in agenda item 11.19.10iii and 11.19.10xv as a neighbour. Cllr Southcott declared a personal interest in agenda items 11.19.i and ii due to employment.

11.19.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public detailed the £18,550 already pledged by residents to help finance the planning appeal land to the north of Cornells Lane and noted that a newsletter will be despatched this weekend regarding planning application UTT/19/2623/FUL, including a further request for fundraising support. Thanks were expressed to everyone who has donated.

A member of the public raised concerns regarding several dead trees overhanging and protruding onto the highway. It was agreed that the clerk would report the tree fallen by the railway bridge to Essex Highways and that Cllrs Webb and Brookman would ascertain whether the fallen trees by Elmstead and on Springhill originated ditch or highway side to clarify ownership and responsibility.

11.19.05 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the October Parish Council Meeting were approved by Councillors as an accurate representation and signed by Chair Orr.

11.19.06 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

None submitted.

11.19.07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

None submitted.

11.19.08 CLERK'S REPORT

The clerk reported;

1. The defibrillator is now registered on the NHS East of England Ambulance Service website.
2. UDC removed the piles of rubbish left after the latest unauthorised encampment near the entrance to the quarry.
3. Blocked drain outside Staverley reported to EH ref 2638771.
4. 2 large pot holes on Beadle Lane reported to EH ref 2638772.
5. The panel damaged in the telephone box by the engineer removing the equipment has been reported to BT, who say the box is sold as seen and they cannot send out an engineer as the line has been disconnected, that they do not have doors in stock and would have to purchase through a third party, which they will not do for a £1 sale. Their only offer was to null and void the contract if the PC do not wish to proceed with the purchase.

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6. I attended the Rural Information Day 11/10/19 and discussed unauthorised encampments with various agencies, including UDC, Police and Kemi Badenoch's team, although ECTU were not present. Kemi's team were very keen to assert that the travellers cause no issue in UDC - I detailed several local issues they were unaware of, including illegal and anti-social behaviour and Kemi's Parliamentary Assistant suggested that these were not being reported. I also requested an update on available legislation to resolve traveller issues and he has now forwarded the government's latest proposed update to regulations regarding unauthorised encampments, which have been circulated and include;

- stronger powers for the police to respond to unauthorised encampments
- practical and financial support for local authorities to deal with unauthorised encampments
- amendment of sections 61 and 62A of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to increase the period of time in which trespassers directed from land would be unable to return from 3 months to 12 months.
- amendment of section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to enable the police to remove trespassers from land that forms part of the highway.
- amendment of section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to lower the number of vehicles needing to be involved in an unauthorised encampment before police powers can be exercised from 6 to 2.

I asked UDC to clarify why travellers are not pursued for the waste they leave when fly tipping is an offence that leads to prosecution. We argued the point that they cannot identify the individual, I argued that if there are only two, or sometimes only one vehicle, it is not that difficult, and could they not be investigated on subsequent offences/visitations. UDC agreed to seek a response and report back to me.

7. Cllr Juliet Bickerton has not attended any Parish Council meetings for six months, and has not submitted viable apologies for the absence. The Parish Council understands that by operation of law Cllr Bickerton loses her seat and ceases to be a Parish Councillor. My records show that the last meeting Cllr Bickerton attended was 4th April, 2019. UDC have been informed and provided a notice to advertise the vacancy. If 10 local government electors do not request an election by 14/11/19, then the PC will be able to fill the vacancy by co-option following this date.

8. Annual accounts from the Village Hall Committee have again been requested to complete the grant application.

9. The Councillor Training booked for 6pm 28/11/19, topics were agreed as An introduction to local councils (15 minutes), Council processes, agenda, minutes, the public, quorum, and standing orders (45 minutes), Powers and duties (30 minutes), Roles and responsibilities (30 minutes).

10. The maintenance person who took on the play park repairs hopes to get further work complete this week, and has submitted an invoice for £30 for the work completed so far. He admits that the play bus is too much for him and suggests that the PC contract a professional or remove the bus.

11. £17,550 has currently been banked in donations from residents towards funding the current planning appeal (£17,950 total pledged, £13,575 (+vat) already spent of anticipated total £25,000 + expenses + vat).

12. British Red Cross can provide first aid training for up to 15 for £250 + vat.

11.19.09 FINANCE

i. The Council resolved to donate £200.00 to Stop Stansted Expansion.

ii. The Council agreed the renewal of registration as data controller with the Information Commissioner at £40.00.

iii. The Council resolved to renew subscription with Uttlesford Association of Local Councils at £5.00

iv. The clerk presented a statement of accounts and reconciliation to cash books which were agreed and signed. Cheques - 101210 -Gardner Planning (appeal) - £9000.00

101211 - Alison Farmer Associates (appeal) - £4590.00

101212 - Information commissioner - £40.00

101213 - Clerk's salary October - £311.27

101214 - Clerk's expenses October - £118.28

101215 - Railton TPC Ltd (appeal) - £2250.00

101216 - Home Start Essex - £100.00

101217 - Play Park repair - £30.00

101218 - UALC - annual membership - £5.00

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101219 - Stop Stansted Expansion - £200.00

were agreed for payment and signed by Chair Orr.

It was agreed that the clerk would add the new Councillors as signatories to the Parish Council account.

10.19.10 PLANNING

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

i. UTT/19/2648/FUL - Pond Mead, High Street, Widdington

Construction of 1 no. detached dwelling (Revised scheme for plot 4 previously approved under UTT/18/3279/FUL) *Cllr Southcott did not take place in the discussion or vote.*

The Parish Council agreed to object to this application and considers 3 storeys out of keeping, over development of the site and incompatible with the surrounding area (In contravention of ULP Policy GEN 2). The development is not compatible with movement by means other than driving a car and the Council maintains concerns regarding the adequacy of the access (Both in contravention of ULP Policy GEN1). Using the Council's decision tree the Council continues to object to development outside the village envelope, the development of executive homes and development that puts further strain on the already stretched utilities and adds to current traffic and congestions issues, and also notes concerns for the impact on wildlife as great crested newts are reported as sighted close to the boundary. It was agreed to request that the application is called into Committee by District Cllr Hargreaves.

ii. UTT/19/2643/FUL - Pond Mead, High Street, Widdington

Construction of 1 no. detached dwelling and associated works (Revised scheme for plot 3 previously approved under UTT/18/3279/FUL) *Cllr Southcott did not take place in the discussion or vote.*

The Parish Council agreed to object to this application and considers the proposal over development of the site and incompatible with the surrounding area (In contravention of ULP Policy GEN 2). The development is not compatible with movement by means other than driving a car and the Council maintains concerns regarding the adequacy of the access (Both in contravention of ULP Policy GEN1). Using the Council's decision tree the Council continues to object to development outside the village envelope, the development of executive homes and development that puts further strain on the already stretched utilities and adds to current traffic and congestions issues. The Council raises concerns that 18 trees are detailed for removal within this application, some of which have TPOs, and also notes concerns for the impact on wildlife as great crested newts are reported as sighted close to the boundary.

It was agreed to request that the application is called into Committee by District Cllr Hargreaves.

Cllr Southcott rejoined the meeting.

iii. UTT/19/2623/FUL - Land to the north of Cornells Lane, Widdington

Construction of 15 new dwellings, including 6 affordable homes, formation of new vehicular and pedestrian access, associated open space, parking and landscaping. *Chair Orr did not take part in the discussion or vote and Cllr Southcott took the Chair.*

The Parish Council agreed to object to this application and agreed that the objections remain the same as those submitted in relation to UTT/18/0885/FUL. It was agreed that subject to agreement from the planning consultant, the clerk would review the response to UTT/18/0885/FUL and circulate a revised response relevant to the new application for approval prior to submission. It was agreed to request that the application is called into Committee by District Cllr Hargreaves.

Chair Orr rejoined the meeting.

iv. UTT/19/2610/DOC - Thistley Hall, Cornells Lane, Widdington

Application to discharge condition 5 (Biodiversity Enhancement Statement) attached to UTT/19/0454/FUL dated 15.7.19. No comment.

v. UTT/19/2542/CC - ESS/83/19/UTT - Widdington Pit, Hollow Road, Widdington

Essex County Council Application ESS/83/19/UTT - Embankment stability works and incorporation of a surface water treatment system. No objections.

vi. UTT/19/2520/HHF - 3 Bridge Croft, Wood End, Widdington

Removal of existing garage door, part infill of opening and new front door location. No objections.

vii. UTT/19/2447/LB - Old Forge, Wood End, Widdington

Demolition of covered way and erection of single storey rear extension. Relocation of oil storage tank. No objections.

viii. UTT/19/2446/HHF - Old Forge, Wood End, Widdington

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Demolition of covered way and erection of single storey rear extension. Relocation of oil storage tank. No objections.

ix. UTT/19/2439/LB - 5 South Green, High Street, Widdington

Two storey rear extension. The Parish Council do not object to this application, but are concerned regarding access issues and loss of light for the neighbouring property (In contravention of ULP Policy GEN 1 and 5) The Council notes that access to the site is only wheel barrow width, and concerns include impact on access to the village for residents, damage to The Green by delivery vehicles on the narrow street site and lack of storage area for building materials.

x. UTT/19/2438/HHF - 5 South Green, High Street, Widdington

Two storey rear extension. The Parish Council do not object to this application, but are concerned regarding access issues and loss of light for the neighbouring property (In contravention of ULP Policy GEN 1 and 5) The Council notes that access to the site is only wheel barrow width, and concerns include impact on access to the village for residents, damage to The Green by delivery vehicles on the narrow street site and lack of storage area for building materials.

xi. UTT/19/2310/OP - Meadow Croft, Church Lane, Widdington

Outline application with, all matters reserved except for access and layout, for the demolition of existing dwelling and replacement with new dwelling including associated garaging and access arrangements. The Parish Council do not object to this application, but requests that all loading and unloading of materials and equipment is done off road to ensure access is maintained at all times during the construction period. The Council acknowledges that although the proposed dwelling is different in terms of original footprint, the Council is justified to not object to the application as the proposal maintains a single dwelling of similar size on this significant sized plot.

The following planning decisions were noted;

xii. UTT/19/2610/DOC - Thistley Hall, Cornells Lane, Widdington

Application to discharge condition 5 (Biodiversity Enhancement Statement) attached to UTT/19/0454/FUL dated 15.7.19 - Discharge conditions in full.

xiii. UTT/19/1819/DOC - Thistley Hall, Cornells Lane, Widdington

Application to discharge condition 4 (Biodiversity Method Statement) attached to UTT/19/0454/FUL dated 15.7.19 - Discharge conditions in full.

xiv. UTT/19/1664/HHF - Fruit Hill, Cornells Lane, Widdington

New single storey ancillary outbuilding - Approved with conditions.

xv. The clerk noted that there has been no update regarding hearing date for Planning Appeal 3226765, and extended the Council's thanks to residents who have generously donated to the appeal fund, and also to the working party who have co-ordinated the fundraising.

11.19.11 VILLAGE WORKS

Cllr Brookman confirmed that new Christmas Lights will not be required.

11.19.12 VILLAGE SOCIAL EVENT

Following lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the Council would host a Burns Lunch as in previous years, but that in an attempt to save money, only soft drinks would be provided and individuals can bring their own alcohol if they wish. It was also agreed that the Council will join forces with the Village Hall Committee to help provide a whole village event on March 21st, 2020.

11.19.13 WIDDINGTON RECYCLING

i. Cllr Brookman detailed the site meeting at the Widdington Recycling with Cllr Hudson and confirmed that the site continue to work to improve their operation. They currently employ 15 local people and hope that the big lorries should cease coming through the village around Christmas time. It was agreed that Cllr Brookman would request that they provide a report on their works for the Village Magazine

It was resolved that a further site visit would be requested prior to the December PC meeting and that Chair Orr would investigate conditions of licenses with Cty Cllr Ray Gooding and previous Councillors.

11.19.14 HAMEL WAY GARAGES

The Clerk reported that there are currently 17 garages at the Hamel Way car park, of which 4 are owned by Widdington Parish Council (numbers 8, 9, 13 and 19.) To the best of Widdington Parish Council's knowledge, all remaining units are privately owned by the current plot lessee. Widdington Parish Council has the right to purchase the remaining garages when relinquished by private owners at a cost of £100 per garage.

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The Council undertakes to have asbestos surveys carried out on the 4 garages owned by the Council.

11.19.15 PLAY PARK

To prevent the loss of the £3500 Community Project Grant awarded towards the replacement swings, the Council resolved to fund the remaining £1264 from reserves and £1010 from remaining earmarked play park funds to enable the project to proceed, whilst the Village Hall Committee grant application is completed, and hopefully granted.

It was resolved that Cllr Brookman would speak to a local carpenter regarding repairing the play bus, and a member of the public offered to restart fundraising activities for the play park.

11.19.16 EMERGENCY PLAN

It was agreed that the Clerk would share the proposed consent form and privacy notice for the Emergency Plan Committee with EALC to ensure compliance with GDPR when making details publically available as emergency contacts.

It was agreed that first aid training for the volunteers would be confirmed at the December PC meeting.

11.19.17 OTHER BUSINESS

List of contact details on defibrillator to be updated to include current PC members.

11.19.18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be the Parish Council Meeting at 8pm on Thursday 5th December, 2019.

The meeting closed at 10.04pm.

DRAFT