

## WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 11 March 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

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**Present:** M Housden (Chairman), J Bibby, L Holdaway, J Lucas, S Wilkin

*In attendance* Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)  
Cllr M Inskip (ECDC)

6 members of public present

20/049 **New Councillor**, S Wilkin, was welcomed to her first meeting and the Clerk confirmed the Acceptance of Co-option to the Council and the Declaration of Financial and Other Interests forms had been completed.

*Clerk*

Chairman welcomed the members of the public to the meeting.

20/050 **Apologies** for absence were received from K Mackender and County/District Councillor L Duprè

20/051 **To receive any declarations of interest**

Councillors to declare any pecuniary interests in any items on the agenda.

Councillors to declare any personal interests in any items on the agenda – L Holdaway Planning 21 High Street, (Neighbour) and M Housden Planning 10 The Slade (Neighbour) *Both said they would leave the meeting for their respective items*

Councillors to declare any prejudicial interests in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chairman if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation.

20/052 **Dispensations:**

To note any new Dispensations granted: Nil

20/053 **Public Participation**

Chairman opened the meeting to the public.

The members of the public expressed their concerns regarding the planning applications for 10 The Slade and land west of Witcham House on the basis both were outside the Parish Plan, upon which most of the villagers had indicated they did not want development outside the village envelope. There were concerns about sustainability, loss of habitat, increase in traffic and there were known problems with water supply pressure at Back Lane even before the new ones that were being built at 21 High Street were known. Residents at Headleys Lane revealed that the existing developments in this section of the village were already causing serious problems at the construction stage because the lanes were too narrow for large vehicles and plant, and indeed properties had been damaged. Excessive mud and disruption to the area and habitat. Noted that only one neighbour had been included as a consultee by the District Council in respect of the development at Back Lane. Great concern at the loss of habitat and rural feel around Headleys Lane/Back Lane that this latest proposal would bring if it were successful. One resident expressed concern at the amount of disappearing hedgerow across the county. One resident stated that when the planning application at the rear of 9 High Street had been put forward the District Councillor had indicated that he would put forward extension of the conservation area and asked if this had been done. District Councillor M Inskip undertook to check this out. Also noted that the development at Back Lane would involve crossing County Council land but Councillors advised that this was always common practice to allow access across verges to private property. Clerk advised that in the past access across public rights of way, such as the Drovers including Back Lane, had not caused concern or objections by the County Council's Public Rights of Way office.

All members of the public asked that the Parish Council support local resident's concerns in responding to the planning authority on these applications.

7.55pm – 2 members of the public left

Chairman closed the meeting to the public and resumed business on the agenda

7.57pm – 1 member of the public left

- 20/054 **Minutes**  
Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2020 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, and agendas of same date signed by Chairman as confirmation of the business transacted at that meeting. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Lucas. S Wilkin abstained as not Councillor at last meeting.
- 20/055 **Matters arising from previous minutes** (for information only)  
*20/032/20/019 Mobile Flashing Speed Signs.* Clerk advised that on closer review of the proposed sites it would be beneficial to amend locations. Chairman reported on revised sites which would therefore need purchase of one extra bracket. Unanimously agreed Clerk should order extra bracket and get locations agreed with relevant parties for revised sites. Proposed J Bibby, seconded L Holdaway. *Clerk*  
*20/042 Street Lights and Highways – Westway Place, bottom car park.* Clerk advised that she had been to check twice and chased up but as of Tuesday afternoon the old bracket and pole had still not been removed. She was unsure if the new light was working because she had only been over in daylight hours. *Clerk*
- 20/056 **Reports from District and County Council representatives** (previously circulated)  
Chair asked if Councillors had any questions for the District Councillor.  
Question raised about CIL monies and District Councillor Inskip confirmed that the village had CIL money for village projects and the District Council held some to benefit the local district. Haddenham Parish Council's suggestion of a roundabout at Witcham Toll would therefore be District Council CIL money and not parish.  
  
District Councillor Inskip confirmed that the ground had been cleared of tree and scrub at the site for the new Co-op to be built on the land at the entrance to Sutton, and the building started. A further £250k was earmarked for cycleway at this section of the village. The work just completed on the section at the end of last year/early this year had also cost £250k.
- 20/057 **Planning Applications**  
The Chairman had declared an interest and wished to leave the meeting room while the planning application for 10 The Slade was discussed. In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, a Chairman to take the meeting for this agenda item was required. J Lucas kindly volunteered.  
**Resolved** that J Lucas be nominated as Chair of the meeting in respect of the planning application for  
  
10 The Slade. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded J Bibby  
Chairman left the room.  
J Lucas in the Chair.  
  
20/00302/OUT South of 10 The Slade Witcham Cambridgeshire single dwelling  
Noted the ECDC letter stated single storey dwelling but the application stated single two-storey dwelling.  
Noted Parish Council had expressed concerns about drainage and water supply inadequacies, although subsequently Anglian Water had attended a Council meeting to explain how issues were dealt with and gave some reassurance. It was also outside the development envelope as defined in the last ECDC Local Plan, and layout and density were of concern.  
8.23pm J Lucas, opened the meeting to allow the members of the public to speak again.  
Questions raised about sustainability and District Councillor Inskip advised that this was defined under the National Planning Policy Framework. Since the proposals for development of the Kings of Witcham site (8 dwellings) there had been further applications for over 20 dwellings within the parish – most of which were outside the development envelope. A significant increase on the original number of dwellings in the parish (180). One resident said most of the homes were large and not affordable for young people with young families. This was having an impact on the number of young children in the village; apparently only two children were using the bus to attend Mepal and Witcham Primary School.  
20/057 J Lucas, closed the meeting to the public.  
**Resolved** that the Council had concerns regarding drainage, water supply, outside the development envelope, layout and density, and sought outright refusal of permission. Proposed J Lucas, seconded S Wilkin. *Clerk*  
  
8.29pm – M Housden returned to the meeting and took the Chair, and L Holdaway left the meeting.

**Planning Applications (cont)**

20/00295/OUT Land West of Witcham House Farm Back Lane 2 dwellings and garages  
Development of this piece of land in the most still preserved rural section of the village gave rise to concerns as expressed in respect of the development further down Back Lane (Drove) at the rear of 9 High Street. The consented development by the planning authority to the erection of 5 large houses on the land adjacent 21 High Street (between High Street and Headleys Lane) had already harmed this beautiful and characteristic rural area of the village in the eyes of many residents and the newest proposals would further make this once distinctly rural area into what would look like a new housing estate. It would be visually intrusive in this sensitive edge of the settlement through encroaching urbanisation and therefore contrary to District Council's policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan and conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework provisions as it would exacerbate failing to secure visually attractive development to improve overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character and history. Response points to planning authority drafted.

**Resolved** that the Council had concerns about the proposed development and sought outright refusal of permission, as evidenced on drafted points for submission to the planning authority. Proposed J Lucas, seconded J Bibby.

*Clerk*

16/01567/DISA Pond Farm 21 High Street - Discharge of Conditions: 3 (Details of walls, roof and doors), 6 (Landscaping Scheme), 7 (Protection, during construction, of Boundary Hedges), 8 (Details pertaining to wall facing onto High Street), 9 (Surface Water and foul water Disposal Scheme), 10 (Traffic Management Plan), 12 (Archaeology), 17 (Details of the Window and Door Openings) and 19 (Details pertaining to the protection and retention of the existing boundary wall between 19 and 21 High Street) on Decision 7.2.17 for Residential development for three houses plus garages and change of use of existing agricultural barn along with new vehicular accesses to 21 High Street and plot 2

**Resolved** that the Council was concerned regarding insufficient details for Conditions being discharged by the Planning Authority, particularly following recent problems that had arisen regarding unauthorised removal of old wall along High Street and contractors' vehicles. Clerk to respond using notes provided. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Bibby.

*Clerk*

20.52 L Holdaway returned to the meeting. 1 member of the public and the District Councillor left the meeting

The following ECDC decisions were noted:

19/01617/OUT 15 Martins Lane Development 6 new dwellings and new access – Refused

20/00036/FUL 4 Martins Lane First Floor rear extension -Approved

In addition the Clerk reported that she had also received notice of consent for

19/01699/FUL Land North of 21 High Street Residential development for two houses, garages and change of use of existing agricultural barn to residential dwelling.

20/00017/TRE 5 The Slade T1 Twisted/contorted Willow – Re-pollard to previous points

20/058 **2020 Best Kept Garden Competition**

Councillors discussed arrangements for this year's competition. J Lucas asked if someone could take her role as one of the members showing the judges round this year. J Bibby confirmed she would be available for one or two sessions.

8.58pm J Lucas left the meeting as she was feeling unwell.

**Resolved** that J Bibby contact proposed judge for competition which would take place in June. New classes to be proposed so as to engage wider range of gardens, eg children border/container, traditional/modern. Clerk to investigate extending existing or purchase new Best Overall Shield. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded Chairman.

*JB  
Clerk*20/059 **Finance**

- a) Review of budget, quarterly accounts and reconciliations to 31 December 2020, including estimated forecast to 31.3.20, previously circulated  
**Resolved** accept the quarterly accounts and reconciliations to 31 December 2020 subject to signing off of quarterly bank statements at next meeting, and to note the budget report and estimated forecast to 31 March 2020. Proposed L Holdaway, seconded J Bibby.
- b) Receipts and payments for March 2020, previously circulated had been checked by J Bibby and confirmed as correct. Noted that there were some further outstanding cheques to be paid before year end and these would be dealt with and recorded at the next meeting as per estimates included on the payments schedule.

20/059	<p><b>Finance (cont)</b>  <b>Resolved</b> to approve the receipts and payments as listed at the end of these Minutes and to note final cheques for the year end at the next meeting. Proposed J Bibby, seconded Chairman.</p> <p>9.05pm 2 members of the public left the meeting  Additional hours worked by the Clerk to be reviewed at next meeting.  <b>Resolved</b> Clerk's home and telephone/internet etc expenses payment be lifted to £4 per week (within HMRC allowance) from October 2019. Proposed by L Holdaway, seconded Chairman.</p> <p>c) 2019/20 Fixed Asset Register  <b>Resolved</b> that the 2019/20 Fixed Asset register, previously circulated, be approved as correct. Proposed J Bibby, seconded Chairman.</p> <p>d) 2019/20 Risk Assessment Report  <b>Resolved</b> that the 2019/20 Risk Assessment Report, previously circulated, be accepted and approved as correct. Proposed Chairman, seconded L Holdaway</p> <p>e) To consider and approve renewal CAPALC membership subscription  <b>Resolved</b> that the Council renew the CAPALC membership subscriptions due 30 April 2020.</p> <p>f) LGPS 2019 Draft Valuation Pension Results  <b>Resolved</b> that the Council accept the LGPS 2019 Draft Valuation Pension Results, and contributions for next three years, previously circulated. Proposed by L Holdaway, seconded J Bibby.</p>	<p>068/.....</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20/060	<p><b>Cemetery Management</b>  The draft cemetery fee document, previously circulated, was reviewed and amended. Clerk advised that she had not had sufficient time left to be able to complete the review of the guidelines but would do so for the next meeting.  <b>Resolved</b> to approve the cemetery fees as amended in the meeting. Effective date 1 April 2020. Proposed Chairman, seconded L Holdaway.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20/061	<p><b>2020 Annual Parish Meeting</b>  Arrangements discussed and agreed to launch project for new play equipment at the meeting. Clerk asked Councillors to submit any reports for inclusion in the Annual Report to her as soon as possible. Date of meeting to be confirmed.</p>	<p>Cllrs</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20/062	<p><b>CIL: Witcham Toll</b>  Expressions of Interest for projects for inclusion on the District Council's CIL Infrastructure List.  Suggestion by Haddenham Parish Council, and supported by other nearby Councils, for joint venture to request District CIL funding for roundabout at Witcham toll, previously circulated.  <b>Resolved</b> that Councillors would attend joint meeting with Haddenham and surrounding villages to discuss this matter further. Proposed by Chairman, seconded L Holdaway</p>	<p>Cllrs</p>
20/063	<p><b>Consultations</b>  The following were discussed, all previously circulated.</p> <p>a) Change to the age range of Mepal and Witcham Church of England School.  <b>Resolved</b> that the Council supported changing the age range for children and Mepal and Witcham school.</p> <p>b) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - County Planning, Minerals and Waste <u>Enforcement</u> Plan – no comment</p> <p>c) ECDC Consultation on the Draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)- Natural Environment and Custom and Self-Build Housing – no comment</p> <p>d) Health and Wellbeing Strategy Consultation – Launch – Councillors may do personal on-line survey</p> <p>e) ECDC Bus Services and Cycling and Walking Routes Consultation. S Wilkin said ECDC were being asked to include equestrian too. It was understood questionnaires were currently being posted to every householder in the District and that Witcham residents would be dropping off their completed questionnaires at the White Horse PH.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllrs</p>
20/064	<p><b>Clerks Report</b>  In addition to items covered under matters arising, Clerk reported that the Council would need to review access to the web and take any necessary action to comply with the Web Content Access Guidelines 2.1 AA Regulations which became effective from September 2020. (See item 20/071). Due to volume of work and time constraints, Clerk asked for help with this and also to review policies (due for May) including GDPR. Noted by Councillors.</p>	<p>Cllrs</p>

- 20/065 **Fordham - Dog Controls**  
Correspondence from Fordham Parish Council regarding proposals for ECDC to make a District wide blanket Public Spaces Protection Order for keeping dogs on leads and dealing with anti-social behaviour had been previously circulated. Dog Fouling PSPO already existed.  
**Resolved** that Witcham Parish Council supported the proposal for a District wide Public Spaces Protection Order for dogs to be kept on leads and dealing with anti-social behaviour. Proposed Chairman, seconded S Wilkin. *Clerk*
- 20/066 **Recreation Ground**
- a) Chairman advised that someone had moved the goalposts again. He would get signs to post up reminding people that the equipment may only be moved by Councillors or the Cricket Club before/after their matches. Otherwise nothing to report on weekly inspections of play equipment. *Chairman*
  - b) Application for use of recreation ground for 2020 Pea Shoot would be available for next meeting as final arrangements for stalls/events and subsequent risk assessments were yet to be completed. *Village HallCtee*
  - c) Village inspection – Clerk reminded Councillors that this was outstanding and asked for volunteers. Chairman put his name forward. Others required. Proposed be done on a Saturday morning. *Cllrs*
  - d) L Holdaway had drafted resident survey questions regarding new play equipment. Content and style, eg separate one for youngsters, discussed. Amended draft to be considered at April meeting with aim of launching proposals at Annual Parish Meeting in May. *LH*
- 20/067 **Correspondence**  
The following correspondence, previously circulated, were received and noted as follows  
Coronavirus advice – NHS/Government/CAPALC/NALC. Further advice awaited regarding cancellation of meetings etc  
CAPALC New Councillor Training on 14 March or 4 July 2020. Neither SW or LH were available on Saturdays.  
Citizens Advice - Rural Cambridgeshire (CARC) Letter and Statement – ECDC in-house Homelessness service (Parish Council had responded last month prior to ECDC statement)  
Ouse Washes and Flood Risk Drop In at Welney on 18 March 2020. JL unable to attend, await reports  
NALC Study Tour 2020/21 - No representative to attend  
NALC Spring Conference 2020 – No representative to attend  
NALC Chief Executive Bulletin  
NALC Newsletter  
Help NALC in its ground-breaking research on dementia – no response  
NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Ely South Integrated Neighbourhood follow up to the 15 January 2020 meeting- follow on – Dementia Friend, training  
CCC Becoming a supporter of the Partnership against scams – no response  
CCC Highway Events – March  
CCC Changes to Local Bus Services – Busway and other villages  
CCC Highways Roadworks and Events – 31 March 2020 traffic lights Witcham Road, Mepal  
CCC Traffic Management Course - 17th April – not required  
CCC Cambridgeshire Matters Newsletter  
CCC IHMC February Incident Report  
ECDC Parish Newsletter Feb 2020  
ECDC Relevant East Cambridgeshire Policies (Planning)  
ECDC Parish Conference – East Cambs New Care and Repair Service leaflet  
ECDC Parish Council Conference feedback  
VE 75 year anniversary – village events
- 20/068 **Street Lights and Highways**
- a) Street Signs 8 – 13 Westway Place (Sanctuary Housing) still outstanding at 10 March 2020 *Clerk*
  - b) Elean Business – reports of antisocial behaviour – further event 6 March 2020 after 11.30pm. Not known if residents reported to Police. Clerk to check with L Duprè *Clerk*
  - c) 2021/22 Local Highway Improvement (LHI) Applications – no projects requested
- 20/069 **Community Police** – no issues to report
- 20/070 **Meetings attended by Councillors** - none

20/071 **WCAG 2.1 AA Regulations**

Details had been previously circulated and further information was awaited. Clerk instructed to ask the webmaster to attend the next council meeting so that this could be discussed further.

Clerk

20/072 **Items for the Next Agenda and Date of Next Meeting: 15 April 2020**

Review actions – not done

No items requested other than referred to above.

Meeting closed at 10.05pm

**March Schedule of Receipts and Payments**

			£	£	£
Receipt	Nil				
Payments	001836	J Wells Reimbursement What's On copying Dec/Jan & Feb editions (2)	24.00		24.00
		Witcham Village Hall hire/meetings 2019/20	290.00		290.00
	001837	Truelink groundworks (Feb)	61.20	12.24	73.44
	001838	Reimbursement J Wells Whats On copying March edition	12.00		12.00
	d/d/	1&1 Ionos Ltd	32.97	6.59	39.56
	d/d	ICO (incl £5 discount)	35.00		35.00

Payments to be made before year end in respect of salary, HMRC and CCC LGSS (as per normal average monthly payments and Reimbursement of expenses).

Signed ..... Dated.....