

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 10 June 2020 at 7.30 pm
This was a remote* meeting using the Zoom video conferencing platform system

*The Coronavirus Act 2020 s.78 and The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, and Zoom Policy Notice.

Present: M Housden (Chairman), J Bibby, L Holdaway, J Lucas, K Mackender

In attendance Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)
Cllr L Dupre (CCC and ECDC)
Cllr M Inskip (ECDC)

One member of public present

20/108 **Apologies** for absence were received from S Wilkin (IT problems).

20/109 **To receive any declarations of interest**

Councillors to declare any pecuniary interests in any items on the agenda - none

Councillors to declare any personal interests in any items on the agenda - none

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 – J Bibby Item, 20/115, 20/00577/OUT. She did not wish to speak.

20/110 **Dispensations**

To note any new Dispensations granted: Nil

20/111 **Public Participation**

Chair of Village Hall was present regarding agenda item 20/116 – website and carpark. She explained that it was thought beneficial for the future of the Village Hall to use a website and gave a brief explanation of ideas. Options for linking websites or co-partnering with Council were suggested. She was advised that the Council was organising to have a discussion with the webmaster for future planning of the new Parish Council website that had been set up a couple of years previously. Questions regarding carpark had been resolved.

Chair of Village Hall thanked the Council for being able to come along to explain and Chair thanked her for attending. She left at 7.55pm

20/112 **Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2020 were confirmed as a true record and would be signed by the Chairman when the Council next meets in person. The agenda of the meeting of 13 May, 2020 would also be signed when the Council next meets in person as confirmation of the business transacted at the meeting. Proposed J Bibby, seconded L Holdaway and agreed.

20/113 **Matters arising from previous minutes**

20/106 *Staff matters* Clerk advised that she had commenced work on the risk assessment in relation to coronavirus for future meetings, management of play equipment and assets, and was liaising with Chairman

*Clerk/
Chairman*

20/114 **Reports from District and County Councillors**

The reports, previously circulated, were received. In response to question raised by J Lucas regarding the District Council Report in respect of housing development, District Councillor Inskip explained about the District Council now reinstating its 'five year land supply' in respect of the Local Plan.

20/115 **Planning Applications**

20/00577/OUT 15 Martins Lane, outline application (all matters reserved except access) for the erection of one bungalow with a new access from Martins Lane.

Resolved that the Council noted this new application brought the proposed new building into line with other buildings, was a single storey dwelling and scaled in proportion to other buildings for the street scene. The Council had concerns regarding the proposed access, which is on a corner; the additional vehicles that might be expected would be coming on and off the site very close to the bend. Proposed K Mackender, seconded J Lucas.

Clerk

8.05pm The meeting adjourned for a few minutes as it was the end of the Zoom session and time for a VDU break. County Councillor and District Councillor left the meeting 8.05pm

8.09pm The meeting resumed with Chairman, J Bibby, L Holdaway, J Lucas, K Mackender and Clerk present.

20/00110/DISA The Coach House, Mepal Road To discharge conditions 3 (Walls, Roof, Windows & Doors), 6 (Contamination), 8 (Foul & Surface Water Drainage); 9 (Boundary Treatments), 10 (Details of Replacement Trees) and 12 (Biodiversity) on Decision 13.3.2020 for erection of dwelling, outbuilding and garage on land benefiting from extant outline permission (LPA ref: 18/01698/OUT).

Resolved the Council had no comment to make. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Bibby and unanimously agreed.

Clerk

20/116 **Village Hall**

Car park – Parish Council land boundary and Village Hall land boundary had been confirmed. Management was briefly discussed.

Resolved that Clerk to open dialogue with Village Hall Committee Chairman regarding Licence to formalise management of the car park area. Proposed J Lucas, seconded Chairman.

Clerk

Request regarding website was discussed.

Resolved that the Clerk would contact webmaster to arrange for catch-up on progress and future development of the website. Proposed K Mackender, seconded L Holdaway

Clerk

20/117 **Finance**

a) Receipts and payments schedule for June had been previously circulated. Cheques and supporting documents had been placed with J Bibby and Chairman for checking before the meeting (coronavirus protection measures were being complied with).

Resolved to approve the receipts and payments for June 2020. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Bibby.

Clerk

b) Annual Return Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2020 had been previously circulated and examined by Councillors.

c) Annual Return Section 2 Statement of Accounts 2020 had been previously circulated and examined by Councillors. The year-end accounts with reconciliations had been approved earlier, Minute 20/081 d). Explanation of variances statement and listing of earmarked reserves had also been received and examined.

d) Certificate of Exemption had been previously circulated.

Clerk advised that due to coronavirus restrictions the Internal Auditor would not be making site visits this year and that Clerks were required to send documents electronically with further follow-up using video-conferencing (email of 28 April previously circulated). She had prepared documents and was awaiting a date and further instructions but was following up. Normally the current year's annual audit would be carried out before the Council signed off the AGAR documents.

Clerk gave a report on the accounts and it was noted that following adjustments during the 2019/20 financial year, the general reserves were now slightly higher than normal and suggested virement to earmarked reserves for forthcoming committed projects.

Resolved to vire £3000 to play equipment refurbishment and £500 to the red telephone kiosk refurbishment. Proposed J Lucas, seconded Chairman.

Clerk

- 20/117 **Finance (cont)**
 This still left a good general reserve and would enable further virement to the earmarked reserves for the desired Cemetery extension when required.
Resolved that the signing off of the AGAR Sections 1 and 2, and Certificate of Exemption would be deferred until the Internal Audit report had been completed . Proposed L Holdaway, seconded J Bibby.
 Clerk to contact Internal Auditor to make arrangements so that his report was completed by beginning of July for signing off at 8 July meeting. *Clerk*
- 20/118 **Review of Policies**
 Clerk had reviewed and drafted some policies, previously circulated.
Resolved that the Council adopt the Co-option of Councillors Policy 2020. Proposed Chairman, seconded J Lucas. *Clerk*
Resolved that the Council accept the LGSS Personal Data Retention Policy Expectations letter and adopt the Participating Employer Personal Data Retention Policy in accordance with the template provided. Proposed J Bibby, seconded L Holdaway. *Clerk*
- 20/119 **Recreation Ground**
 Chairman reported on complaints he had received and investigated regarding use of recreation ground and entry into the enclosed children’s play area, including litter problems. Nothing to note on weekly inspection checks.
 He confirmed explicit signs remained in situ advising people to comply with Government restrictions in respect of reducing the infection of Covid-19. He understood some details had been reported to the Police by residents in an effort to ensure compliance with Government restrictions and advice. Arrangements were needed to do village inspection. *Cllrs*
- The annual inspection of play equipment had been booked, although the public should still not be accessing and using any of this equipment yet. Open spaces were open. subject to maximum of 6 people and ensure 2m social distancing requirements, and in accordance with current Government instruction.
- Litter**
 In addition to a number of complaints about litter on the recreation ground, the Chairman also reported that concern had been expressed about an area at the end of the concrete road in The Slade
- 8.48pm The meeting adjourned for a few minutes as it was the end of the Zoom session and time for a short VDU break.
- 8.51pm The meeting resumed with Chairman, J Bibby, L Holdaway, J Lucas, K Mackender and Clerk present.
- Resolved** that the Council should write to the owners/agents of the field asking that the area be tidied and rubbish removed. *Clerk*
- J Lucas reported that dog owners were allowing their pets to foul the public right of way at the junction of High Street, leading to Back Lane without clearing it up. Clerk was instructed to inform ECDC. It was confirmed that the path had been cut back, presumably by the County Council contractors, as normal. J Lucas advised that a rose bush branch had blown over and was causing a nuisance to passers-by, which she would report on the CCC website. *Clerk*
JL
- 20/120 **Website**
 Clerk advised that payment for renewal of the domain, £10 plus VAT would take place on 11 June and the webmaster recommended SSL Certificate £25, which was accepted. Clerk had distributed to all councillors the latest information about WACG 2.1, including NALC guidance document released this week, and reminded them of the necessity for the Council’s website to be easily accessible and contain agendas, minute, accounts, assets etc in accordance with the Transparency regulations and latest data *Cllrs*

20/120 **Website** (cont)
protection compliance. As previously she sought assistance with this piece of work due to pressures of other work. (Reference Minute 20/116 for further discussion with webmaster)

20/121 **Litter**
Nothing further to discuss, see Minute 20/119

20/122 **Correspondence**
The following were received and noted:
CCC Roadworks and Events
NALC Chief Executive Bulletins and Newsletters
ECDC/CCC hubs/NALC/Age UK Coronavirus Covid-19 updates
CCC Innovate & Cultivate Fund - new funding round and advice session
Environment Agency Ouse Washes newsletter
CAPALC Drop in sessions
Calor Rural Community Fund
ICO newsletter

20/123 **Street Lights and Highways**
J Lucas would check to ensure the new street light at the bottom carpark of Westway Place (by the hedge and field) was working and that the old pole and bracket had finally been removed and update the Clerk accordingly.
Chairman advised that the emergency services were having problems identifying the numbers for the blocks of terraced houses at Westway Place as the house number sign had disappeared. Clerk to ensure Sanctuary Housing and/or ECDC were aware and would deal with.

JL

Clerk

20/124 **Public Rights of Way**
a) Noted that some of the gates were open for use by farmers accessing fields. No reports on whether ruts etc had been repaired
b) Noted that landowner had advised that a veteran tree on her land at Bury Road had been cut back as part of drove clearance by someone. She was taking this up with CCC.

20/125 **Items for the next agenda and to note date of next meeting: 8 July 2020**
Signing off of Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20
Website
Play Area refurbishment questionnaire
Annual Report of Council (for circulation to village)(draft reports to be submitted to Clerk by 1 July

The meeting closed at 9.12pm
Review any actions – none other than as already discussed.

June Schedule of Receipts and Payments

		£	£	£
Receipts	Nil			
Payments	001856 Truelink	272.60	54.52	327.12
	001857 Cancelled			
	001858/9 Admin costs	806.20		806.20
	001860 HMRC	272.41		272.41

Signed

Dated.....