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# **Wikhambrook Parish Council**

## **Estates Committee Minutes**

Of an ordinary meeting of the Estates Committee held on

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019

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**Present:** Cllrs J Barton, P Couzens, K Merritt, J Norton

**Attending:** Lay Members: M Jolland, R Medley, R Merry  
Clerk Hilary Workman

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19.12.01 **Noted:**

There were no apologies for absence.

19.12.02 **Noted:**

There were no Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items and no additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

**19.12.03 Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October were signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

19.12.04 **Open Session:** 7:33pm

**Noted:**

That when public comment or question was invited on any Agenda item, there was none.

**Session closed**

19.12.05 **Noted:**

The following correspondence received at the meeting not dealt with as an agenda item or in the Clerk's report:

5.1 Suffolk CC – Roadside Nature Reserves – the meeting asked the Clerk to arrange for this to be published to the Parish Website.

19.12.06 **Noted:** Decisions of the Parish Council at its October and November meetings:

6.1 **October**

6.1.1 **Reported** no issues arising from annual external audit report

6.1.2 **Resolved** that the Parish Council authorise the Clerk to apply for grant funding towards the cost of new play equipment at Bury Road.

6.1.3 **Resolved** to authorise an upgrade to Windows 10 and storage media for the laptop used for VAS data at a cost of £150, or authorise the purchase of a new laptop which would result in the same or improved standard on the original proposal up to a value of £350 plus VAT after any part exchange discount applied.

6.1.4 **Appointed** Cllr Sandy Thwaite to the Working Group looking at options for resolving access and congestion issues in the vicinity of Wickhambrook Primary Academy (Cllr Sandy Thwaite).

6.1.5 **Considered** whether some form of shelter adjacent to the Memorial Hall would be possible and asked the Clerk to chase progress on this through the developers, West Suffolk and Suffolk County Council.

**Signed:** *John Barton*

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## 6.2 **November**

- 6.2.1 **Thanked** Cllr & Mrs Merritt, and Mary Jolland for their support of both the formal opening of the Memorial Garden and the recent litter pick.
- 6.2.2 **Resolved** to authorise costs up to £3000 plus VAT for works to Parish Trees following the interim report from Acacia Trees.
- 6.2.3 **Determined** to trial a new schedule of Ordinary Meetings in 2020, reducing from 11 down to 7 in the following months – January, February, April, May, July, September, November on the last Thursday of those months.
- 6.2.4 **Reported** that work on the Play fort at Cemetery Road was due to commence on 9<sup>th</sup> November, and thanked Mr Roger Merry for all the work he had done to make this possible.

### 19.12.07 **Noted:**

Reports to this meeting from Portfolio Holders or other agencies as summarised below:

- 7.1 An oral report from Cllr Couzens noting that new supplies for the defibrillators would need to be ordered for 2020.
- 7.2 An oral report from Mary Jolland, Environment & Sustainability officer, who reported that:
  1. In preparation for the Memorial Garden Planting on 10<sup>th</sup> November 19 dead yews had been removed and infilled with yews from the ends, a litter pick and some leaf removal had been carried out and the Wasp nest had been checked and a helpful frost before event had controlled said pest.
  2. Village children attending war memorial Remembrance on Sunday 11th November planted 250 bulbs on the perimeter of the garden. See attachment for plan and key to planting.
  3. School children postponed Monday attendance to the Tuesday 12th due to the weather, when another 250 crocus bulbs were planted.
  4. The remaining 350+ bulbs were planted on the Wednesday 13th November by Lay member Jolland. A planting plan had been sent to the Clerk for the records.
  5. Thanks to Councillor Merritt and Mrs Merritt for the supply and serving of Refreshments on Sunday 10th November.
  6. A successful litter pick 17th November 2019 was attended by 13 adults, 4 children. 15 bags of rubbish and 2 reflective road posts and a car tyre collected. Refreshments kindly provided by Councillor Merritt and Mrs Merritt. Many thanks to all concerned.
- 7.3 An oral report from Mr Roger Medley, Footpaths officer who advised that:
  1. Although farmers had cut sides and tops of hedges bounding footpaths and bye-ways, cutting of hedges on the footpath side was not being carried out and this was restricting access on a number of footpaths (e.g. Old Green Lane) and it was difficult to get either landowners or SCC to take responsibility for this work. The meeting asked the Clerk to submit a further request to SCC for this work to be undertaken in respect of Old Green Lane.
  2. The hedge between Cloak Lane to Wollards Corner towards Malting End on the B1063 was overhanging the road. This was resulting in high sided vehicles veering into the centre of the road, posing a risk to other road users. The Clerk was asked to write to the landowner, Mr G Simister of Bank House and ask that this hedge be cut back.

**Signed:** *John Barton*

**Date:** *5<sup>th</sup> March 2020*

3. Hedge from Coltsfoot Green to Meeting Green – a number of requests for this to be cut back have been submitted over the past year, but no action yet by SCC Highways. The meeting asked the Clerk to follow this up with SCC again as there was concern it was becoming dangerous to pedestrian and other road users.
  4. The footpath on Mr G Simister’s land from Coltsfoot Green beyond the large drain pipe had not been cut – this had not been included in the 2019 cutting schedule, but would be added to the 2020 cutting schedule.
  5. It was noted that the footpath from Australia Farm had again become very muddy, and the landowner had been contacted.
- 7.4 An oral report from Mr Roger Medley, Tree Warden, summarised below:
1. He and Cllr Merritt had attended the recent interim survey of Parish Trees undertaken by Acacia Trees and had been very impressed with the inspector’s advice, particularly with reference to:
    - a. Leaving ivy where possible to encourage bio-diversity
    - b. Identifying Parish Trees near power lines which may in future require attention;
    - c. Grass cuttings being left at the base of a trees 80 and 81 at Attleton Green required clearing to avoid risk of damage to the trees due to reduced oxygenation; and
    - d. Confirmation that the trees identified as an issue at Genesis Green were in fact the responsibility of SCC (and not Parish Trees, being between the road verge and the ditch). The meeting asked the Clerk to submit a further report to SCC asking that work to the trees be carried out.
- 7.5 An oral report from Mr R Merry, responsible for Youth Facilities advised that:
1. St Edmundsbury report on Play Parks had been received – some minor equipment works had been identified, and an ongoing issue with graffiti in the skate park, which also required clearance of fallen leaves. The meeting thanked Mr Merry and Mrs Jolland for offering to organise a working party to clear the leaves.
  2. The works to the Play Fort at Cemetery Road were due to commence on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December.
  3. A new swing seat had been fitted at Bury Road and the new gate closer had been identified in the St Edmundsbury report as being too stiff on opening. This had been noted and work to adjust it was scheduled, although the speed of closing met the requirements of 4- 8 seconds.
- 7.6 A written report (*previously circulated*) from Cllr Merritt, with portfolio for Six Acres.

**Signed:** John Barton

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020

- 7.7 An oral report from Cllr Norton, with portfolio for Cemetery, Churchyard and Greens, summarised below:
1. A few gravestones in the Cemetery had tilted but were firm. The meeting asked that Cllr Norton send pictures of any gravestones he considered unsound to the Clerk to follow up with the families. If work to re-set was not then undertaken, steps could be taken to lay the stones flat.
  2. Three benches in the Memorial Garden had been given a good clean in advance of Remembrance Sunday
  3. The Footpath sign adjacent to the cemetery had not been re-instated by SCC, the meeting asked the Clerk to report again.
  4. It had been noted that the oldest part of the cemetery was starting to look very untidy. The meeting asked the Clerk to obtain a quote for hedges, trees and undergrowth in this area to be trimmed back and cleared away.
  5. Coltsfoot Green was looking very nice following the work undertaken by D King.
  6. The new bench at Genesis Green looked good. There were still a few dead branches which needed trimming back from the tree adjacent to the bench. The meeting asked the Clerk to contact the tree surgeon for a quote to undertake this work.

19.12.08 **Noted:** The Clerk's report and actions agreed by the meeting:

- 8.1 that an interim inspection of the Parish Trees by Acacia Trees had been completed, with Mr Medley and Cllr Merritt in attendance. A schedule of work had been advised and authorisation for costs up to £3000 plus VAT approved at the November meeting of the Parish Council, with additional estimates tabled and circulated as **WPC19.12.01** and

**Resolved:**

**That authorisation for completion of the works identified in report WPC19.12.01 having been approved (Min. 19.11.08.4 refers), the Estates Committee delegate the Clerk to instruct the works to be undertaken in accordance with the proposed schedule advised by Acacia Trees.**

- 8.2 of a proposal to clean War Memorial in advance of VE2020 on 8<sup>th</sup> May tabled and circulated as **WPCEC19.12.01** and

**Resolved:**

**To authorise up to £500 plus VAT for cleaning of the War Memorial in advance of VE2020 and delegate the Clerk to instruct the work.**

- 8.3 that the following issue had been logged with SCC Highways

**Your report reference number is:** 00256094

**WASH LANE, WICKHAMBROOK**

**Date reported:** 14/10/2019

A response had been received from SCC on 16<sup>th</sup> October advising that it proposed to take no action at that time.

**Signed:** *John Barton*

**Date:** *5<sup>th</sup> March 2020*

- 19.12.09 **Noted:**  
Councillors considered a report on future Estates Committee cycle dates in response to request from Committee Members (**WPCEC19.11.02** *previously circulated*) and agreed to trial a reduction in meetings from six to five in during 2020, keeping to the first Thursday in the month for meetings on **March 5<sup>th</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>, August 6<sup>th</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>** and **December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020**.
- 19.12.10 **Noted:**  
An oral update by the Clerk on the replacement of the old village notice board at Shop Hill noting that actions from the previous meeting were outstanding.
- 19.12.11 **Noted:**  
An oral update by the Clerk on progress towards the purchase of an additional piece of play equipment for children between 8 and 12 at the Bury Road Pocket Park, noting that a possible grant had been identified with a closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 which the Clerk would apply for.
- 19.12.12 **Noted:**  
An oral update by the Clerk on progress towards the establishment of a book swap in the old BT Phone Box, noting that a number of actions from the previous meeting were outstanding and a suggestion from the meeting that leaflets and information about village activities (e.g. village walks) and services could also be displayed in the phone box.
- 19.12.13 **Noted:**  
Future dates for Litter Picks in 2020 agreed by the meeting.  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April (Great British Spring Clean between 20<sup>th</sup> March & 13<sup>th</sup> April)  
Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May (in advance of VE Day 2020 on 8<sup>th</sup> May)  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July (day after Carnival)  
Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November (in advance of Remembrance Sunday)
- 19.12.14 **Noted:**  
A review of Cemetery's fees and charges (**WPCED19.11.03**, *previously circulated*) was considered and the meeting agreed to support the proposed changes to be reported to the next meeting of the Parish Council (16<sup>th</sup> January 2020). The meeting considered whether identifying any additional land for the Cemetery would be feasible and asked the Clerk to report back at a future meeting.

**Signed:** John Barton

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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19.12.15 **Noted:**

That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited, the following:

1. The meeting considered a number of options to reduce the occurrence of owners not clearing up after their pets on the Recreation Ground and Six Acres, including non-operative CCTV cameras, and luminescent signs. The meeting asked the Clerk to investigate the cost of luminescent signs.

19.12.16 **Noted:**

That the scheduled date for the next meeting was Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

19.12.16 **Noted:**

The meeting closed at 8:33pm.

**Signed:** *John Barton*

**Date:** *5<sup>th</sup> March 2020*