

**Wickhambrook Parish Council**  
**Estates Committee Minutes**

Of an ordinary meeting of the Estates Committee held on  
**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

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**Present:** Cllrs J Barton, P Couzens, K Merritt and J Norton,  
Lay Members, R Medley, R Merry and M Jolland

**Attending:** Clerk Hilary Workman, Cllr Tracey Turner

21.03.01 **Noted:**

There were no apologies for absence to be noted or approved.

21.03.02 **Noted:**

That there were no Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items nor any additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

**21.03.03 Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, as tabled, be agreed as a true record.**

21.03.04 **Noted: (open session – 19:33pm)**

That when public comment or question invited on any Agenda items were invited, there were none

21.03.05 **Noted:**

The following no correspondence received to this meeting not dealt with as an Agenda item or in the Clerk's report.

- 5.1 Local Resident:- requesting an update on the development of a dog exercise/training area – The meeting agreed that there was no change in their view that there should be no further areas fenced off on Six Acres, but noted that should it be possible to purchase land to the rear of the cemetery at some point in the future, use of part of this land as a dog training/exercise area could be considered prior to it being brought into use for other purposes.
- 5.2 Local Resident:- The resident had been asked to cut back their Leylandii trees at Farley Green. The meeting noted that this had not been a request generated by Wickhambrook Parish Council or its estates committee, but asked the clerk to check whether it might have originated from the neighbouring parishes of Stradishall or Cowlinge.
- 5.3 Lay Member:- A request that the verges on Cemetery Road adjacent to The Meadows be repaired as they are very churned up and have sustained damage over the winter arising from heavy vehicles turning into and out of the Meadows Development. The clerk advised that she had contacted Logan Homes who acknowledged that the verges required remedial work, and proposed to undertake this following completion of the heavy plant phase of the development. The meeting also noted that the ends of the footpaths required completion and asked the clerk to follow up with SCC Highways, Logan Homes having already undertaken the work that they were responsible for in respect of the footpaths, and made clear that the remainder was the responsibility of the county council. The meeting also noted that the Cemetery Road surface was quite badly damaged and required repair/resurfacing.&

21.03.06 **Noted:** Decisions of the Parish Council at its January meetings:

**Resolved:**

- That Council appoints Messrs Heelis and Lodge as Internal Auditors for the financial year 2021/2022;

**Signed:** *Paul Couzens*

**Dated:** 03/06/2021

- The Parish Council authorise the cost for a specialist consultant to attend the next meeting of the parish council to provide further initial advice on the process and commitment the parish council would be undertaking in developing a Neighbourhood Plan at £80.00 plus VAT.
- That Wickhambrook Parish Council approve the proposed budget (Option A, WPC EO.20.01.03);
- That Wickhambrook Parish Council directs West Suffolk District Council to pay the sum of £35,610.00, being the Parish Council's total precept requirement for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021;

**Agreed:**

- The meeting appointed the following three Cllrs to the Housing Needs Working Group: Cllrs Barton, Merritt & Thwaite;
- that it wished to pursue the purchase of the land to the rear of the cemetery (plot),
- that its preferred use for the land purchase was for the extension of the cemetery, possible allotment lands and/or community orchard and possible pet cemetery, but not for housing development;
- that a likely timescale on which it wishes to proceed to preparing an application for borrowing approval and the necessary consultation with residents of the parish would be aiming for approval by DCLG in early autumn, and the first principal and interest payment to fall in the 2022/23 financial year;
- Additional resource and cost implications for completing this work which could be funded from existing general reserves would be reflected in the budget proposal under agenda item EO.21.01.09;
- That the parish council did not wish to purchase a new domain name.

21.03.07

**Noted:**

Councillors received and discussed reports to this meeting from Portfolio Holders or other agencies

- 7.1 **Parish Assets - defibrillator** **Cllr Couzens**  
An oral report advising that the batteries were fully charged, no issues arising from the checks, and the heating had been turned up on it during the cold weather.
- 7.2 **Environment & Sustainability** (*previously circulated*) **Mrs M Jolland**  
**Resolved**  
**To authorise the purchase of autumn flowering bulbs for planting in the memorial garden and cemetery at a cost of £100 plus VAT. From the memorial budget.**  
Which would be planted by volunteers, either individually or as part of a volunteer day once groups were allowed to meet again.
- 7.3 **Footpaths officer** (*previously circulated*) **Mr R. Medley**  
Who further:  
  - extended his support to Mary's for request for ditches to be cleared out, having recently spent several hours clearing out grips at the Coltsfoot Bridge. Reported that he had received two enquiries from parishioners who would like to help with footpaths – on this occasion he had had to decline, as work clearing the edges of the footpaths was ceasing due to the nesting season, but would like to extend opportunities for volunteering to support the cemetery, footpaths and tree inspections.
- 7.4 **Tree Warden's report** (*previously circulated*) **Mr R. Medley**  
Who further advised that that he was still concerned at the lack of progress on cutting back hedges (particularly the one between Coltsfoot Green & Meeting Green. The clerk reported that this had been chased again with SCC

**Signed:** Paul Couzens

**Dated:** 03/06/2021

Highways who now had information on the landowner and that the verges at this point had been included in the grounds contract which might improve matters slightly. Mr Medley noted that there is a hedge between the ditch and the road at this point, and that therefore the hedge might after all be the responsibility of SCC Highways.

Mr Merry noted that the hedge from Cloak Lane had been trimmed back, and the meeting asked the Clerk to follow up on the hedge coming out onto the B1063 from Stradishall between Bank House and Coak Lane, and to chase SCC Highways Engineers to request a site visit.

- 7.5 **Youth Facilities** (previously *circulated*) **Mr R Merry**
- 7.5.1 Main Playground
- 7.5.2 Teen Project and Games Area
- 7.5.3 Zip Wire
- Who further advised that:
- Following the most recent St Edmundsbury reports he had– dealt with anything outstanding (loose fixings)
  - Zip wire service has been completed, the wire is much tighter and providing a better ride, with many positive comments.
  - Still an issue with dog poo in the bins in play area. The clerk noted that the proposed alterations to the bin configuration should resolve this.
  - Skate park entrance notice needs replacement
  - On inspecting the woodwork bounding the games area (as advised by West Suffolk) there is rot at the base – it has been advised as low risk. The meeting asked the clerk to arrange for this to be checked and if need be plan for replacement.
- 7.5.4 Bury Road Playground (previously *circulated*) **Mr K Grimes**
- 7.6 **Six Acres** (previously *circulated*) **Cllr K Merritt**
- Who further reported that:
- the area below the tennis courts was waterlogged
  - Six Acres had been well used during the most recent lock down.
  - Roger Medley had done a good job cutting back the trees at the bottom of Six Acres adjacent to FP25
- 7.7 **Cemetery and Churchyard Safety Reports** **Cllr J Norton**
- An oral report advising that:
- The wooden gates at the war memorial entrance were out for repair and refurbishment
  - The memorial garden looked good and that he would check the benches for any required work
- 7.8 **Village Greens Report** **Cllr J Norton**
- An oral report noting that
- it was lovely to see so many people out on the Greens
  - there was a large branch on the ground at Genesis Green which required clearing
  - He had received conflicting reports from local residents at Coltsfoot Green with respect to the new handrail installed, but having checked it, he considered it to be an appropriate height
  - there were some low hanging branches over the pond at Attleton Green.

**21.03.08 Noted:**

A report from the Parish Clerk advising

8.1 The following actions from the previous meeting (**Min. Ref 20.12.04**):

- SCC Reporting Tools for Highways and Public Rights of Way have been added to the Parish Website.
- the issue of flooding has been raised again with County Councillor Mary Evans and a joint response requested from Highways, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency to address key flooding issues identified
- formal letters had sent to the two properties identified requesting that the hedges be cut back from the footpath

8.2 An update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.21.03.01**)

**Item 2** - The meeting agreed that it wished to proceed with the scheme to upgrade the scheme to improve drainage on FP25 at the Coltsfoot Green end (first 50 metres), upgrading using road planings, at a likely total cost of £1600 plus VAT were Suffolk County Council Public Rights of Way team not able to co-fund it (the current proposal being that the parish council bear the capital cost, and PROW the labour).

**8.2.1 Resolved**

**To authorise the cost of backfilling the steps from Six Acres down onto FP25 and installing a hand-rail, at not more than £804 plus VAT.**

**The meeting asked the clerk to instruct Dave Corkhill (Suffolk PROW) at a cost of £450 plus VAT.**

Mr Merry suggested that more decorative railings be installed at the War Memorial entrance to the cemetery. The meeting asked the clerk to investigate and report back to the next meeting.

**Item 10** – the meeting agreed the proposed changes to sites for the new bins.

**8.2.2 Resolved**

**To approve a further £580 plus VAT to complete works to levelling graves in the cemetery in the next financial year.**

## 8.3 That she was working to develop a volunteering scheme and handbook for approval by the parish council for the establishment of an Estates Volunteering Group, to be reported back to the next meeting.

The clerk further noted that she had received the Service Level Agreement for play inspections to be undertaken by West Suffolk.

**21.03.09 Noted:**

9.1 Councillors considered quotes submitted in respect of grounds contracts for the next financial year (2020/2021) **WPC.EC.21.03.02** (*previously circulated*) and, being assured that the quotes were as near as possible like for like, based on the mapped areas included in the reports, determined to appoint RH Landscaping for the next financial year.

9.2 **Resolved**

**That the Clerk draw up contracts for groundworks for the financial year 2021/22 as determined by the meeting following their consideration of quotes for the areas identified in WPC.EC.21.03.02.**

**21.03.10 Noted:**

Councillors considered proposals for projects in the next financial year (previously circulated as report **WPC.EC.21.03.04**) and asked the clerk to progress the work identified as far as possible within existing hours and budgetary constraints, and seek to clarify any queries with respect to land registration of Six Acres with Cllr Claydon.

**Signed:** Paul Couzens

**Dated:** 03/06/2021

21.03.11 **Noted:**

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

The clerk advised that she had received two quotes from D R King for:

- Work to drainage culvert on coltsfoot green (£1200 plus VAT)
- Quote for clearing pond on coltsfoot green (£890 plus VAT)

And would seek additional quotes to bring back to the next meeting.

21.03.12 **Noted:**

The scheduled date for the next meeting was Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 at 7:30pm either:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84843536276?pwd=NE5tNWlVdVVRVXNmTElUW1JcnZlZz09>

Meeting ID: 848 4353 6276

Passcode: 483632

One tap mobile

Dial In

+44 203 481 5240 United Kingdom, +44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

+44 203 051 2874 United Kingdom, +44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

Or at Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre (room to be advised) if COVID-19 regulations permit.

21.03.13 **Noted:** Close of meeting. 20:55pm

**Signed:** Paul Couzens

**Dated:** 03/06/2021