

Wickhambrook Parish Council

Minutes

Of an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on **Thursday 25th March 2021**

Present: Cllrs J Barton, P Couzens, J Claydon (part), K Merritt, M Lavelle (part), S Thwaite & T Turner

Attending: Parish Clerk Hilary Workman, SC Cllr Mary Evans, WS Cllr Mike Chester
Julie Salisbury & Charlotte McAllister (Strategic Housing, WSC),
Ann-Marie Howell, Marie Smith (Planning Policy, WSC)

2 Member of the Public

This meeting was conducted remotely via zoom.

21.03.01 Noted:

Apologies for absence – Although not reported at the meeting, Cllr Norton had submitted his apologies in advance of the meeting.

21.03.02 Noted: That when invited, there were

- 2.1 No Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items
- 2.2 No declarations of lobbying for planning matters on the agenda their nature, including gifts of hospitality exceeding £25
- 2.3 No requests for dispensations
- 2.4 No additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

21.03.03 Resolved

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 25th February 2021, be agreed as a true record.

The meeting resolved to consider items **21.03.05** & **21.03.06** at this point, as speakers were only available until 8:00pm.

21.03.04 Noted: Public Forum – (**Open Session**). 8:00pm

That when comment or question on any Agenda item or matter of concern from those members of the public present was invited, there was none.

21.03.05 Noted:

Cllr Barton welcomed to the meeting Julie Salisbury from the Strategic Housing Team at West Suffolk Council, who answered Cllrs questions with respect to Rural Exception Sites (RES), as summarised below:

- If the Housing Needs Survey established a housing need in Wickhambrook, Community Action Suffolk (CAS) and the Strategic Housing Team at West Suffolk would work with the parish to identify land in order to bring a RES forward.
- There are two options for developing a site:
 - Having a housing association on board; or
 - Community Led Housing

The main starting point would be to identify a landowner who would be willing to sell land (to a housing association) to develop an RES.
- If using a housing association, the parish council could choose the housing association at a meeting where a number of HA's made their presentations, subject to their capacity and any funding arrangements that they may have
- Having chosen a housing association, they would develop the site
- The land identified would need to abut the settlement boundary in Wickhambrook, and would normally be sold at a lower price than general development land. This is usually at agricultural land value.

Signed: *Paul Couzens*

Dated: 11/05/2021

- Rural Exception Sites are for development outside the settlement boundary, where planning permission is not normally granted. Any sites that are allocated within the West Suffolk Local Plan and brought forward for housing will secure 30% for West Suffolk affordable housing (not restricted to people local to Wickhambrook). Local connection restrictions are only secured on exception sites.
- Dependant on the housing need identified, developments tend to be from four units up to 12 units. The largest development in West Suffolk so far has been for thirty nine units in Beck Row.

Cllrs considered the advice above, together with the further information with respect to the Parish Council's request to Community Action Suffolk to initiate a Housing Needs Survey previously circulated as **WPC.21.03.01**), and

Resolved

- 5.1 That Wickhambrook Parish Council confirm its aspiration to work with CAS and West Suffolk Strategic Housing and Planning Services to identify and bring forward a Rural Exception site if evidence of a housing need for such a site is identified from the Housing Needs Survey which it has commissioned; and**
- 5.2 That the parish clerk, in consultation with the Housing Needs Survey Working Group, be delegated authority to sign the agreement with Community Action Suffolk.**

Cllr Barton thanked Julie Salisbury and Charlotte McAllister for attending the meeting.

20.03.06 Noted:

Cllr Barton welcomed to the meeting Ann-Marie Howell and Marie Smith from the Planning Policy Team at West Suffolk Council, who answered Cllrs questions with respect to developing Neighbourhood Plans, as summarised below:

- A Neighbourhood Plan is prepared by a parish council. The first step is to designate a Neighbourhood Area, which is usually the parish boundary, unless the parish council wants to work with a neighbouring parish
- Having designated an area, a working group is brought together, which normally comprises members of the council and members of the community to start preparing a plan.
- A plan can take between two and three years to prepare and are a pro-growth tool. It is not a way of restricting development.
- A plan does not have to have allocated sites, it can just have policies which include:
 - design issues
 - affordable housing
 - green space

and the types of policies to be included would be a matter for early discussion in the community. Some parishes put a questionnaire out to assess the appetite for producing a neighbourhood plan

- If there is support for developing a plan, then there should be a more formal meeting with West Suffolk to discuss the finer detail of it (process, costs, grant funding & consultants).
- West Suffolk Council can provide limited support, for example:
 - mapping data
 - housing needs
 - employment

It would then be a matter of touching base in terms of project planning and aligning as much as possible with the work that WS is doing in terms of planning policy.

Signed: *Paul Couzens*

Dated: *11/05/2021*

- It does represent a large time and money commitment to produce a plan. The Government produced a white paper looking at changes to the planning system last summer, and the future of planning policy should be reported on later this year. In terms of Neighbourhood Planning, there has been nothing to suggest that NP's might change, they are still very much on the government agenda, together with local plans. It is unlikely that any work developing a Neighbourhood Plan would be wasted in terms of changes to national planning policy.
- There are a range of models for working with West Suffolk, some parishes work more closely with them, others work mainly with their consultant.
- West Suffolk can provide a parish with a Housing number (need, for all housing, including market housing) if the parish is looking to identify allocated sites. It is produced using a standard methodology and would give a specific number for the parish to work to, in terms of identifying sites for development.
- The Housing Needs Survey, looking at affordable housing for the parish, would feed into development of the NP too, and be useful for identifying not only local need, but types of tenure, size of housing units etc.
- West Suffolk Council could attend a public to provide information about the Neighbourhood Planning process.

CLlr Claydon advised that as he had an interest in land, he would not participate in the discussion or vote on the proposal.

CLlrs considered the advice above, together with the further information about Neighbourhood Planning previously circulated as **WPC.21.03.02** and

6.1 Resolved

The Parish Council agree to:

- 6.1.1 arrange a public meeting (when COVID regulations permit this) to present information to residents of the parish about Neighbourhood Planning, and authorise the cost of such a meeting, including hire of meeting room, refreshments, publicity and the time of a Neighbourhood Plan planning consultant, at a cost of not more than £500 from the Neighbourhood Plan Earmarked Reserves; and**
- 6.2 in the event that residents of the parish agree at that meeting that they wish to establish a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish, appoint two councillors to the steering group.**

CLlr Barton thanked Ann-Marie Howell and Marie Smith for joining the meeting.

21.03.07 Noted:

Correspondence to this meeting (*previously circulated*) not dealt with as an Agenda item or in the Clerk's report, summarised below:

- 7.1 NALC – Chief Executive's Bulletin
- 7.2 West Suffolk Council
- Message from Leader – John Griffiths
 - Co-production – Apprentice Project
 - Anglia Revenues Partnership – confirmation no NNDR on Cemetery
- 7.3 West Suffolk Council – affordable housing at The Meadows, which advised that under the S106 agreement, the following dwellings had been secured:

Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership
2 x 2 bed houses	1 x 2 bed house
2 x 1 bed bungalows	1 x 1 bed bungalow

The Meadow's development would be allocated on a priority needs basis, therefore highly likely to go to applicants in Bands A or B with a local connection to West Suffolk.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Dated: 11/05/2021

21.03.08 Noted:

Cllrs received a report from Suffolk County Councillor Mary Evans (previously circulated) who further advised that:

- Although it had not yet been possible to secure a meeting with David Chenery (Engineer at Suffolk County Council) with respect to engineered solutions to reduce traffic speeds in Wickhambrook sought by the Road Safety Working Group, it was hoped that this should take place after the May elections (Suffolk County Council was now in purdah)
- A change to locality funding for Highways projects was being introduced where by Councillors would receive their full allocation for Highways projects at the start of each four year period. Unspent funds at the end of each four year period would be ringfenced and County Councillors could then bid for access to this funding for local projects with a lot of support and of strategic importance. As a result, there would be more funds available.
- The speed surveys planned for Wickham Street and Stradishall, which have been funded by Cllr Evans wouldn't now be taking place until lockdown eases and traffic returns to more normal levels. The new County Councillor would be able to bid into a larger pot for funding these surveys.
- There are a large number of COVID testing sites in Suffolk.

Cllr Barton thanked Cllr Evans for all her support and work on behalf of Wickhambrook Parish Council as a District and County Councillor, and wished her well for the future.

Cllr Barton welcomed District Cllr Mike Chester (who would be standing in for Cllr Evans until a new candidate elected), who introduced himself as a councillor with local connections to Wickhambrook. In response to his question about the parish council's response to West Suffolk's Issues and Options consultation, the clerk advised that Wickhambrook PC had taken account of the over eighty submissions from local residents in formulating its response to the three consultation questionnaires, and agreed to forward a copy of the report to Cllr Chester for his information.

21.03.09 Noted:

Reports and requests to this meeting from Portfolio holders as summarised below:

- 9.1 **Highways:** **Cllr Barton**
 7.1.1 VAS Machine Reports
 21.03.08 – Bunters Road SE Direction
 21.03.14 – B1063 Nr School – Stradishall Bound
 21.03.16 – Ashfield Green – Hargrave Bound
 Recent re-work of the speeding issues in the village – Mary has registered our interest but will confirm by completing the application form. According to criteria the parish hits all the targets. Mary will copy clerk in with the application form.
- 9.2 **Emergency Plan** **Cllr Lavelle**
 Draft, now a new person in post – will progress
- 9.3 **Road Safety, Access & Congestion Working Group** **Cllr Thwaite**
 Get notes from Sandy re most recent meeting of working party. Has updated them, and also liaised with Sandy wood at MSC – she will put on their next agenda to discuss – waiting to hear on school competition results.

21.03.10 Noted:

Report to this meeting from the Clerk and actions, as summarised below:

- 10.1 That CAS had been instructed for the parish council's insurance for the 2021/22 financial year (new premium £794.62). CAS had advised that the premium could be reduced further by committing to a 3 year undertaking (£754.89). The meeting asked the clerk to request a 3 year undertaking from CAS.
- 10.2 That the owner of land to the rear of the cemetery had confirmed that they did own the access onto the Coltsfoot Green C664 road and were considering their options.
- 10.2 A review of the mobile phone contract for the clerk previously circulated as [WPC.21.03.03](#). The meeting

Signed: Paul Couzens

Dated: 11/05/2021

Resolved

To move the mobile phone plan to Three, to include Samsung Galaxy A12, unlimited calls & texts & 5GB data £15.83 plus VAT per month (plus any out of plan costs), plus a SIM only plan for unlimited calls & texts & 2gb data for existing handset at £2.50 plus VAT per month (plus any out of plan costs).

10.5 That the proposed site for a combined dog bin at the end of FP25, as agreed at Estates Committee on 4th March (**WPC.EC.21.03.01** and Min. Ref **EC.21.03.** refer) had not proved viable. The meeting considered an alternative location as tabled in report **WPC.21.03.04 (previously circulated)** and identified the existing dog waste bin at Coltsfoot Close as their first preference, failing that, to site the bin at position B on the plan below:

10.6 That in accordance with recent guidance from SALC and 2020 Practitioners Guidelines, draft Reserves and Internal Control policies had been tabled and circulated **as WPC.21.03.05)** and

10.6.1 Resolved

To adopt the draft reserves & internal control policies attached at Appendices A & B to [WPC.21.03.05](#) and make provision for any necessary actions arising from adoption of those policies.

21.03.11 Noted:

11.1 The following income received

SUMMARY OF PAYMENT RECEIVED		AMOUNT
11.1.1	Wickhambrook Outdoor Bowls Club	£11.00
11.1.2	HMRC VTR Q3 Refund	£1062.36

11.2 The summary of payments to be made as listed below:

SUMMARY OF PAYMENT TO BE AUTHORISED		AMOUNT
11.2.1	Anglian Water #8507044 12/02/2021	£11.97
11.2.2	Mdsign – renewal of Domain Name #1746	£24.00
11.2.3	Refund to Clerk – replacement sign at Skate Park	£103.48
11.2.4	Suffolk Association of Local Councils – Clerk Training #24272	£30.00
11.2.5	Refund to Clerk- Adobe Subscription #	£30.34
11.2.6	Signomatic – replacement sign for Skatepark #1170040 n.b. this was a duplicate of item 11.2.3 added in error	£103.58

11.3 Resolved

That the payments to be made, listed above at 11.2 be authorised

11.4 The following payments previously authorised.

PAYMENT TYPE	SUMMARY OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORISED PAYMENT	AMOUNT
11.4.1	DD E.ON Chapel of Rest #H10C28130E 12/02/2021 (Min 19.02.11.4 refers)	£13.62
11.4.2	BACS Hilary Workman – Clerk Salary –Period 11 (Min. 20.04.8.2 refers)	£601.78
11.4.3	BACS HMRC – Tax & NI Liability Period 11 (Min. 20.04.8.2 refers)	£155.09
11.4.4	BACS Refund to Parish Clerk of Microsoft Business Essentials Subscription 07/01/21 – 06/02/21 #E0100D67LS (Min. 19.06.20.2 refers)	£45.60
11.4.5	DD Smart Pension Period 11 (February) (Min 20.04.8.2 refers)	£19.55
11.4.6	BACS Places4People #323 (Min.21.01.06.2 refers)	£96.00
11.4.7	BACS Vertas Grounds Maintenance Q4 #SIN070920 (Min 20.04.8.2 refers)	£520.39

11.5 The current account balances and reconciliation to 28th February 2021, and the Chairman's confirmation that they are supported by relevant bank balances.

11.6 Approved a summary of direct debits on the Unity Trust Current Account for the 2021.22 financial year, as set out below:

PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT	DUE DATE
SMART PENSION	Clerk Pension	Variable - apx £19 per month	11 th of month
E.ON	Chapel of Rest Electricity	Variable - apx £12 per month	15 th of month
E.E.	Clerk Mobile Phone	Variable - apx £36 per month	23 rd of month
UNITY TRUST	Bank Service Charge	Quarterly – £18.00	31 st of Month

11.7 Considered a schedule of due payments on a regular basis for the financial year 2021.22 (previously circulated as [WPC.21.03.06](#)) and take action as appropriate.

Resolved

To authorise the schedule of due payments arising on a regular basis, as identified in report [WPC.21.03.06](#) for the financial year 2021.22.

20.03.12 **Noted:**

12.1 The meeting considered the Financial Risk Assessment previously circulated in report [WPC.21.03.07](#) for approval and

Resolved

That this Council receives and approves the Risk Assessments (circulated & tabled as [WPC21.03.07](#)) as being a proper assessment of the risks facing the Council and that they demonstrate that appropriate management of those risks is in place and that the Chairman of this Meeting should sign the Financial Risk Assessment thereby tabled as properly reflecting the assessment of the Council's financial risk.

Clr Barton duly signed the Financial Risk Assessment.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Dated: 11/05/2021

- 12.2 The proposal below having been withdrawn, the meeting noted a summary of spend on earmarked reserves and the position against budget (previously circulated as [WPC.21.03.08](#)) which replaced the report on proposed virements to earmarked reserves.

Proposal Withdrawn

To authorise virement of unspent funds in the 2020.21 financial year to earmarked reserves, as identified in Appendix A to report WPC.21.03.08 in accordance with the Reserves policy.

20.01.13 Noted:

- 13.1 The meeting considered requests for financial support by Wickhambrook Parish Council (previously circulated as report [WPC21.03.09](#)) from two organisations and

13.2 Resolved

To authorise donations under S.137 to a maximum of £100 to the charitable organisations identified by Councillors from report [WPC21.03.09](#).

The amounts being £50 each to Fresh Start, New Beginnings & Suffolk Accident Rescue Service (SARS).

21.03.14 Noted:

The meeting considered the planning application(s) listed below as notified by West Suffolk Council for comment.

- 14.1 **DC/21/0361/FUL** - Planning application
a. part change of use of existing ancillary garage/annex to holiday let b. single storey extension to rear of outbuilding and insertion of roof lights

Butlers Hall Attleton Green Wickhambrook CB8 8YB

No objections

- 14.3 **Resolved**

That the Clerk make known the Council's comments on planning applications above to the Corporate Manager, Growth & Sustainable Planning at West Suffolk Council.

21.03.15 Noted:

That no Planning results have been notified by West Suffolk Council since the previous meeting.

21.03.16 Noted:

The following Planning matters for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda.

- 16.1 The following application not circulated by West Suffolk Council to Wickhambrook Parish Council

16.1.1 **DC/21/0412/AG1** - Determination in respect of permitted agricultural
Twights Farm Baxters Green Wickhambrook CB8 8UY

21.03.17 Noted:

Decisions and actions taken at Estates Committee on 4th March 2021.

Resolved

To authorise the cost of backfilling the steps from Six Acres down onto FP25 and installing a handrail, at not more than £804 plus VAT. D Corkhill for Suffolk Public Rights of Way

Resolved

To approve a further £580 plus VAT to complete works to levelling graves in the cemetery in the next financial year. D R King & Son

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. R H Landscaping.

Noted:

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).

21.03.18

Noted:

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

19.1 Recent agendas had been very full, which had resulted in longer than usual meetings.

The meeting noted that external speakers understandably were not always able to join meetings or remain beyond 8:00pm. Having considered this, the meeting agreed that they wished to commence future meetings of the parish council at 7:00pm.

21.03.19

Noted;

That the scheduled date for the next meeting is Thursday 6th May beginning at (the revised time of) 7:00pm – Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85778442303?pwd=SCtNbVBkakhTitSYjRNMXduNORzdz09>

Meeting ID: 857 7844 2303

Passcode: 291565

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21.03.21

Noted:

Close of meeting 21:08pm

Signed: Paul Couzens

Dated: 11/05/2021