

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

Minutes

Of a meeting of the Estates Committee held on

Thursday 6th July 2023

Present: Cllrs P Couzens, M Lavelle, T Turner, Mr R Medley

Attending: Clerk Hilary Workman

23.07.01 **Noted:** Apologies for absence to be noted or approved:

- Mary Jolland – personal commitment - approved
- Mr John Norton – retired from Committee – Cllrs noted with sadness Mr Norton's decision to retire and extended their thanks for all his work on both the Estates Committee and formerly as a Councillor.

23.07.02 **Noted:** That when Members' Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registerable Interests in subsequent Agenda items and any additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests were invited, there were none.

23.07.03 Resolved:
That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 6th April 2023, as tabled, be agreed as a true record

23.07.04 Public Forum – (**Open Session**)¹. 19:01 closed
There being no members of the public present when comments or questions on any Agenda item or matters of concern were invited, the session was closed.

23.07.05 **Noted:** That there was no correspondence received to this meeting not dealt with as an Agenda item or in the Clerk's report

23.07.06 **Noted:** decisions of the Parish Council at its April and May (Annual) meetings:
April

7.2	Resolved: To authorise subscription to the Community Land Trust Network at a cost of £85.00
9.6	Resolved: i) To authorise expenditure for print toner in the current financial year at a cost of not more than £600 plus VAT. ii) To authorise the cost of a call out charge plus up to 2 hours work at a time when needed to resolve IT issues on the parish laptops, to a maximum of £150 plus VAT for the current financial year.
12	Resolved That this Council receives and approves the Financial Risk Assessment (circulated & tabled as WPC.23.04.05) as being a proper assessment of the financial risks facing the Council and that it demonstrates 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.
13	Resolved To approve transfer of funds equivalent to the underspends from revenue budget (highlighted in yellow on Appendix A) into the relevant Earmarked Reserves indicated in Appendix B of report WPC.23.04.06 and note net changes to earmarked reserves.
14	Resolved To approve transfer of funds from Earmarked Reserves to revenue budget lines as indicated in Table 1 of report WPC.23.04.07 and note net changes to earmarked reserves.
18	Resolved To authorise a grant contribution of an amount agreed towards the cost of First Aid & Medical Cover for the Wickhambrook Summer Fete (Local Government Act 1972, s.145(2)).
19	Resolved To authorise the purchase of items to support local organisations engaging with local residents at a cost of not more than £350 plus VAT.

¹ The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Dated: 28/09/2023

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

20	Approval of the annual pay award and noted change of the minimum leave entitlement in accordance with the terms of contract
May – AMPC	Resolved
8.2	That this Council adopts the reviewed Council documents listed above for publication.
8.4	That this Council adopts the draft policies set out at Appendix W –Z of WPC.23.05.02.
15	The meeting confirmed approved dates for meetings to the next Annual Meeting in 2024, to be held in The Pavilion, Memorial Social Centre, Wickhambrook unless otherwise advised
20.3	Resolved The parish council confirms Option 2 as the proposal AECOM continues to work on for inclusion into the Neighbourhood Plan
20.4	Resolved The parish council authorise a contribution of up to £500 (plus VAT if applicable) towards the upgrade of Footpath 25 and approve a drawdown of £500 from Earmarked Reserves (Highways) to the Highways revenue line for this purpose.
23	Resolved The Clerk transfer back £9900.70 from Current Account to Instant Savings account, so that Instant Savings account represents Earmarked Reserves and more interest is earned.
24	.1 Resolved That this Council acknowledges receipt of the Internal Audit Report on the year ending 31.03.23, as commissioned from Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC), (Min. 23.01.11.1 refers) and circulated and tabled as Appendix A of WPC.23.05.07, noting that the Council continued to maintain effective governance arrangements including a robust framework of financial administration and internal controls and the following recommendations made which require action on the part of either the Council or the Council's Responsible Finance Officer: <i>Council should look toward adopting further documentation to support its GDPR responsibilities. These could include General Privacy Notice, Subject Access Request Policy (SAR), Handling Data etc.</i>
	.2 Resolved That this Council receives and approves the Risk Assessments (circulated & tabled as Appendix C of WPC.23.05.07) 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.
	.3 Resolved That, as per the Annual Governance and Accountability Return under the Account and Audit Regulations 2015, this Council approves the accounts for the 12 months ended 31.03.23, (circulated and tabled as Appendix D of WPC.23.05.07) and authorises the Chairman and the Responsible Finance Officer to sign them as approved.
	.4 Resolved That this Council approves the Annual Governance Statement, (circulated and tabled as Section 1 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor, at Appendix E of WPC.23.05.07) as demonstrating a sound system of internal control including the preparation of the accounting statement at section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31.03.23 and that the Council Chairman and the Parish Clerk be authorised to sign a Statement of Confirmation of such approval.
	.5 Resolved That this Council approves the Accounting Statement, (circulated and tabled as Section 2 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor, at Appendix F of WPC.23.05.07) as being a fair presentation of the Council's financial position and of its income and expenditure for the year ended 31.03.23 and that the Council Chairman be authorised to sign a Statement of Confirmation of such approval
28	Resolved To appoint a contractor to undertake ad hoc work within the parish at a cost of not more than £1500 plus VAT for the financial year 2023.24.

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

23.07.07 **Noted:**

The meeting received and discussed reports to this meeting from Portfolio Holders or other agencies summarised below:

- 7.1 **Parish Assets** (defibrillator) **Cllr Couzens**
An oral report that both AED's had been checked and that a further sticker was required for the AED at the Firestation.
- 7.2 **Environment & Sustainability** **Mrs M Jolland**
The clerk reported that a Litter pick was planned for late July.
- 7.3 **Footpaths officer report** (*circulated*) **Mr R. Medley**
Mr Medley further advised that many Footpaths had not yet been cut. This had been reported but to date there had been no response (the PROW Officer being on paternity leave).
Cllrs also reported that:
- There was an overgrown bush on the footpath behind doctors surgery; and
 - The Laurel hedge at Coltsfoot Green had extended more than halfway across the ditch
 - The footpath from Commerce House to the Old Post Office was restricted due to a hedge overgrowing
- The meeting asked the clerk to write to property owners asking that they trim back overgrowth to improve access on the footpaths.
- 7.4 **Tree Warden's report** (*circulated*) **Mr R. Medley**
The clerk confirmed that the interim inspection had been completed by Acacia Tree Surgery, and although some work had been identified, it was less than in previous years.
- 7.5 **Youth Facilities** (*circulated*) **Portfolio Vacant**
7.5.1 Main Playground
7.5.2 Teen Project and Games Area
7.5.3 Zip Wire
7.5.4 Bury Road Playground (*circulated*) **Mr K Grimes**
Councillor Lavelle kindly offered to undertake inspections at Cemetery Road.
- 7.6 **Six Acres** **Portfolio Vacant**
Councillor Lavelle kindly offered to undertake inspections at Six Acres.
- 7.7 **Cemetery and Churchyard** **Portfolio Vacant**
Councillor Couzens kindly offered to undertake inspections of the Cemetery and Churchyard.
- 7.8 **Village Greens** **Portfolio Vacant**
Mr Medley kindly offered to undertake inspections of the Greens.
The meeting asked the clerk to make inspection reports available as google forms to complete on phones or handheld devices.

23.07.08 **Noted:** Clerk's report

- 8.1 The meeting considered an update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.23.07.01**) and
- 8.1.i Resolved**
The estates committee authorise the purchase of a replacement grit bin (following any necessary approval from Suffolk County Council) at a cost of not more than £150 plus VAT. Doctors corner
- 8.1.ii Resolved**
The committee authorise purchase of chestnut paling fence and posts for protection of the natural hedge to be re-established between the cemetery and cemetery road at a cost of not more than £365 plus VAT.

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

8.1.iii Resolved

The committee authorise purchase of gate, fixings and paling fence and posts for the fence line between the cemetery and Footpath 24 at a cost of not more than £150 plus VAT.

8.1.iv Resolved

The Estates Committee authorise the cost of purchasing a memorial plaque and stake dedicating the Cherry Trees planted at the cemetery to the memory of the late HM Queen Elizabeth II at a cost of not more than £50.00 plus VAT.

- 8.2 That applications for wayleave had been made, and a further payment (Attleton & Coltsfoot Green) had been paid by Eastern Power Networks in the sum of £521.73.
- 8.3 That Abbey Memorials had been instructed to undertake memorial testing in the cemetery (commencing 5th July), which had now been completed (only 13 memorials being staked and banded to make safe for future work).
- 8.4 That the signage for Quiet Lanes proposed by Suffolk County Council Highways had now been installed and the project completed, with thanks to Cllr Lavelle and volunteers.
- 8.5 That a wooden Senior Goal End with Basketball hoop has been installed to bring the old MUGA space back into use (a new sign being fitted on 6th July).
- 8.6 That a solicitor from Excelaw has been instructed to draw up an agreement between the parish council and Parochial Church Council to transfer the Memorial Clock as an asset to the parish council.
- 8.7 That there were four vacancies for councillors following the parish elections in May, and a further vacancy for a lay member of the Estates Committee following the resignation of John Norton from the Estates Committee.
- 8.8 That the annual interim Tree inspection had been completed by Acacia Trees, with works (Cat B) to 12 trees having been identified.

23.07.09 Noted:

The meeting considered a proposal to drain and clear the pond at Coltsfoot Green (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.23.07.02**) and asking the clerk to instruct Clearwater Pond and Lake Management to undertake the work as set out in their quote

Resolved

To authorise the cost of clearing and draining the pond at Coltsfoot Green at not more than £1400 plus VAT.

23.07.10 Noted:

The meeting considered a proposal to replace the parish notice board at Shop Hill (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.23.07.03**) and

Resolved

To authorise the cost of purchasing a new parish notice board for Shop Hill at a cost of not more than £1300 plus VAT.

23.07.11 Noted:

The meeting considered a proposal to install 6 replacement posts to the east of the Tennis Courts (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.23.07.04**) and, asking the clerk to schedule the work as part of one of the parish days

Resolved

To authorise the cost of purchasing wooden posts (with attachable solar lights) for Six Acres at a cost of not more than £375.00 plus VAT.

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

23.07.12 **Noted:**

The meeting considered a review of the grounds specification for the next financial year 2024/25 (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.22.09.05**) and asked the clerk to include the following additions:

- Collection of arisings from the cemetery on the first cut following delayed cuts in the spring (to protect wild flowers); and
- Collection of arisings from Recreation Ground and Six Acres on the cut immediately preceding the Fete and Flower show each year.

23.07.13 **Noted:**

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

- Disposal of cast iron memorials stored in Chapel of Rest. The meeting was keen that the memorials not be disposed of and instead, the parish council work with the primary academy to invite designs for a more lasting memorial (for example, a fence, seat or arch).
- Repairs to path to Chapel of Rest – The meeting asked the clerk to obtain quotes for a type one gravel base with sidings to be included in the budget for the next financial year.
- Some movement in masonry in porch area of Chapel of Rest
- Work to trees in cemetery to allow more light

23.07.14 **Noted:**

To note the scheduled date for the next meeting being 28th September 2023 at 6:00pm in the Pavilion, Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre

23.07.15 **Noted:** Close of meeting. 19:43