

Widford Parish Council

Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom
under Coronavirus legislation



PRESENT: Cllr Mike Allen (MA) Chair; Cllr Babs Edwards (BE); Cllr Michael Ripsher (MPR);
Cllr Mark Rome (MR); Cllr Ian Collins (IC)

Cllr Eric Buckmaster

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.28pm

ACTION

21.047 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: None (all present)
2. Others: Susie Brickwood, Gilda Deterding

21.048 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

1. Interests

Cllr Babs Edwards: as noted on the agenda, a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Playing Field matters, her husband being Treasurer of the PFMC. Cllr Mike Allen noted an interest as a trustee of the Playing Field Committee. Both Cllr Edwards and Cllr Allen have dispensations in respect of these interests.

2. Dispensation requests: None

21.049 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2021 were a true and accurate record.

MA/Clerk

21.050 Police report

1. In PCSO Leon De Bruyn's absence, the Clerk read the following report he had submitted:

Crime report for the month of April 2021.

Crimes reported:

- *EXPOSURE – a male has been seen exiting his vehicle before exposing himself in front of 2 members of the public before driving off. Police enquiries are currently still ongoing.*
- *ATTEMPTED BURGLARY - a residential home has had the front window of the house smashed by a projectile causing significant damage to the window and frame. Unfortunately, the suspects have not been identified.*

We have also had no reports of any of the priorities raised at the LPP meeting in March (i.e speeding and Agricultural plant thefts) which is also positive.

This does not mean to say that we will not be responding to the LPP priorities and plan to carry out some mobile police speed checks in the hot spot areas.

PCSO Leon De Bruyn 6389, Police Community Support

2. Noted: that officers covering the parish are PC Rob Wenham, PC Jack Culverhouse, and PCSO Leon De Bruyn
3. Noted: the Parish What's App Group and DriveSafe Scheme

21.051 Chairman's announcements

The Chair referred to his report made at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Electors earlier in the evening. Further to that, it has been reported that a parishioner was injured at the stile on FP1. The Chairman said he had discussed this with Nicholas Maddex and is recommending that a bollard replace the stile.

MA

The allotments have been re-energised with the new water system working very efficiently.

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21.052 Reports by County and District Councillor Eric Buckmaster

Cllr Buckmaster repeated a brief overview of his full report that was presented to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate earlier in the evening. (That report is reproduced in full in the Minutes of that Meeting).

Cllr Buckmaster did ask that his contact details be included in the Parish magazine – the Chair to ask the Editor to do so.

MA

He reported that there have been four prosecutions for fly-tipping and noted that leaving bags outside charity shops is a fly-tipping offence.

He noted that he is opposed to the quarry development and that the Gilston master plan is proceeding; the Hunsdon & Gilston Neighbourhood Plan will carry weight in the planning process.

Cllr Buckmaster's Annual Review is reproduced in full in the Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Parish electorate that was held earlier in the evening.

Cllr Buckmaster left the Meeting at 7.44pm and the Chair thanked him for his ongoing support and input.

21.053 Planning

1. New Applications:

3/21/0858/HH 3A Benningfield Road: Side, rear and front extensions.

RESOLVED: No objections

Clerk

3/21/0982/HH Linwood, Hunsdon Road: Front and rear extensions.

RESOLVED: No objections

Clerk

With regard to the possible development of a house on Levenage Lane, it was agreed that Cllr Ian Collins would check out the situation.

IC

2. Decision Notices. The following were noted:

3/20/2128/HH Ashbourne Manor: Garage extension.

GRANTED

3/21/0325/HH Phoenix Farm, Howletts Rd: Rear orangery extension

GRANTED

3/21/0354/VAR Land off Ware Rd, Abbotts Lane: Variation to 3/18/1957/FUL *Awaited*

3/21/0040/FUL Land adj to Wayside

Decision awaited

3/20/2616/HH The Old Rectory: Replacement extension.

Decision awaited

3/20/2617/LBC The Old Rectory: Replacement extension.

Decision awaited

3. Other planning matters, including items received too late for the agenda

1. Late planning applications

None

2. Automatic Planning Tracker feature for website: **RESOLVED: To accept the website company's offer and trial it for one year.**

Clerk

21.054 Finance

1. Report of the Council's accounts at year end. 31st March 2021

Finance Summary

	£
Opening bank balance 1 March	34,923.77
Plus: income to 31 March	0.00
Minus: expenditure to 31 March	737.15
Minus late presented payments	<u>0.00</u>
Balance available to Council at 31 March (cashbook balance)	34,186.62
Plus unrepresented cheques/payments	<u>0.00</u>
Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement at 31 March	<u>34,186.62</u>

RESOLVED: that the Accounts Statement to year end, 31st March 2021 be approved.

2. Bank reconciliation

RESOLVED: to agree the bank reconciliation as presented.

3. Performance vs budget to year end, 31st March 2021

The Clerk's detailed report on the financial performance vs budget to 31st March was

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received. There was no untoward expenditure during the year, the net expenditure being £15,132 against the net budget of £18,214; Income included an unanticipated New Homes Bonus of £9,333, the net income being £ 25,714 plus £349 VAT reclaim, totalling £26,063 against the total net budget of £16,725.

RESOLVED: that the financial performance report to year end, 31st March 2021 be accepted as presented.

4. List of payments for approval

RESOLVED: to approve the list of payments as presented by the Clerk:

Clerk

All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence.

23/4	Widford Playing Field	Grant payment	1,000.00	
23/4	David Newton	Erect new notice board	85.00	
26/4	HAPTC	Annual subscription	332.34	
26/4	Zurich Municipal	Annual insurance	389.73	
26/4	J T Handyman	Bus shelter repair	41.50	
27/4	Jo English	Litterpicking 1 of 12 £125	125.00	
26/4	Accountancy Services	Internal Audit 2020-21	90.00	
26/4	Clerk	Salary April	400.37	
26/4	HMRC	PAYE April	100.00	
26/4	Clerk	Expenses April-May	17.75	
26/4	Communicorp	Subs Local Council Update	100.00	
1/5	Caroline Parrott	Closed Churchyard 1 of 4	310.00	
1/5	Mr J Turner	Benningfield Green cutting 1 of 3	100.00	
1/5	Cllr B Edwards reimburse	DPM for allotment weed control	£100 TBC	approx
		Recoverable VAT included	Nil	

5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21

1. Noted: that for 2020/21 the Parish Council does not meet the criteria for an exempt authority.

2. Internal Audit Report (page 3)

The signed Internal Auditor's report was received and noted.

Clerk

3. Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement (p.4).

RESOLVED: to approve as presented, Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement.

Clerk

4. The Clerk and the presiding Chairman to sign Section 1 (p.4).

The Clerk and the presiding Chairman agreed to sign Section 1.

Clerk/MA

5. Section 2 Accounting Statements (p.5)

The Accounting Statements were considered as signed and presented by the RFO.

6. Approval of Section 2 Accounting Statements (p.5) as signed by the RFO.

RESOLVED: to approve Section 2 Accounting Statements (p.5) as signed and presented by the RFO.

Clerk

7. Presiding Chairman to agree to sign Section 2 (p.5).

The presiding Chairman agreed to sign Section 2 (p.5).

MA/Clerk

8. Setting the 30-working day period for the Exercise of Public Rights

RESOLVED: to set the 30-working day period for the Exercise of Public Rights as Monday 14 June – Friday 23 July 2021.

Clerk

21.055 Correspondence: The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:

- Cllr Eric Buckmaster: Ware Road Works Information Bulletin (21.057.2.4)
- PCSO Leon De Bruyn: Parish What's App group and DriveSafe scheme (21.050.3)
- PCSO Leon De Bruyn: Appeal for speeding report in the village (21.057.5)
- HGGT: Harlow & Gilston Garden Town – notice of Stakeholder Webinar Events
- TEEC: Automatic Planning Tracker feature for website (21.053.3.2)
- Parishioner: Injury sustained on the stile on FP1 (21.051)

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21.056 Village Reports

1. Village Hall and archive. Cllr Mark Rome is looking at the archive possibilities. It was noted that there is a VHMC meeting on 10th May.

MA
MPR

2. Playing Field: Play Area. It was noted that the £1,000 grant to the PFMC has been paid.

3. Allotments. Cllr Babs Edwards reported that DPM has been purchased from a builder's merchant to meet the allotment tenants' preferred option for an environmentally friendly solution to hopefully eradicate the invasive Mare's Tail weed that has appeared at the bottom of the allotments. This will take some time (possibly a year or two) before the effectiveness is known. The Chair recommended taking before and after photos as a record of the action taken.

BE

4. Closed Churchyard. There was nothing to report other than that the routine maintenance programme by Caroline Parrott is underway.

Clerk

21.057 Highways, Public Rights of Way, and other Parish matters

1. Footpaths and PRoW.

The Clerk reported that the handrail to the FP17 steps that exit the Closed Churchyard to the North have been fixed by Nicholas Maddex' PRoW team.

Clerk

The FP1 stile incident was dealt with in the Chairman's comments earlier in the meeting.

2. Highways and footways

1. Bus shelter repair: All done – thanks extended to Cllr Babs Edwards for the useful handyman contact.

BE

2. Verges, gutters and overgrown footways: It was agreed to start walking round and doing a general clean up. The community could get involved but there are safety limitations on what can be done. The Chair said he would follow up with Eric Buckmaster. Cllr Mark Rome said he would check with Ware in Bloom to see what they are able to do.

ALL

3. Noted: An Expression of Interest was submitted on 31 March to the P&CC for a Road Safety Fund grant.

IC

4. Noted: The Ware Road Works Information Bulletin that was submitted by Cllr Eric Buckmaster.

5. Noted: The Police (PCSO Leon De Bruyn) have requested that speeding incidents be reported to them, with date and time of any incident.

3. Other parish matters and concerns

1. The Clerk reported that since the Coronavirus Act 2020 expires on 7th May, it will no longer be legal for the Parish Council to hold virtual meetings via Zoom after that date. There are concerns about the implications of this and NALC and local authorities are challenging it in the High Court. The Clerk will keep the Parish Council informed on developments.

Clerk

21.058 Benningfield Green

1. New notice board

This has now been installed on the Green.

2. Grass cutting contract 2021

This has been agreed under the same terms as last year. The Chair to get Mr Turner to sign the contract.

Clerk

21.059 Neighbourhood Plan

It was agreed to defer further discussion to the July Council meeting.

MA/Clerk

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21.060 Urgent matters received too late for inclusion on this agenda: None raised.

Public Comments: None present

21.061 Items for future agendas: None raised

21.062 Date of next Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 6th July 2021 at 7.30pm: Venue to be confirmed **Clerk/MA**
subject to prevailing Covid-19 legislation.

Cllr Michael Ripsher apologised in advance that he will be away and therefore unable to attend the July meeting.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.33pm.

Signed.....Dated.....

DRAFT