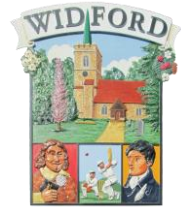


# Widford Parish Council

Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting  
Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall



**PRESENT:** Cllr Jill Buck, Chairman (JB); Cllr Carol Blackett (CB); Cllr Babs Edwards (BE);  
Cllr Paul Riddle (PR)

5 members of the public; Cllr Eric Buckmaster (arrived at 9.15pm)

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

**ACTION**

## 20.001 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: Cllr Michael Ripsher (unwell) - apology accepted
2. Others: PCSO Leon de Bruyn; Mr & Mrs Scott; Cllr Buckmaster that he will arrive late

## 20.002 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 Babs Edwards, Cllr Carol Blackett and Cllr Michael Ripsher have dispensations in respect of planning item 20.006.3.2 due to their properties being adjacent to the proposed development.

### 2. Dispensation requests: None received.

## 20.003 Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019

It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 5th November 2019 were a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**JB/Clerk**

## 20.004 Police report

In the absence of PCSO Leon de Bruyn, the Chairman read the following report that he had sent:

*I have looked over the Crime reports for the area between 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and there are no crime details for me to report on.*

*I would, however like to introduce to you a new communication platform that Herts police are trialling called Echo.*

*ECHO is an easy way for anybody, at any time to tell us what they think we should be focusing on as a police force The information is sent to a central dashboard that all officers, Sergeants, Inspectors and Senior Chiefs can see.*

*This means that we can start to utilise our resources based on what the community is telling us and that means we can focus more on what matters most to you.*

*From this feedback we will be able to set new quarterly Priorities.*

*These details are on the Herts Police website and I would be happy to deliver some leaflets to you, if you wish.*

*PCSO Leon De Bruyn, 9 January 2020*

**JB**

The Chairman added that cars are being parked dangerously outside Sylvesters, Benningfield Road, and Northview Cottages. She said she would write to report.

## 20.005 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman announced that, with regret and for family reasons, she would be stepping down from the Parish Council following this meeting. All present said her work for the Parish Council over many years was very much appreciated and that she would be greatly missed.

The Clerk said he had just received a letter from Cllr Paul Riddle saying that he would be stepping down from the Council at the end of March. These two announcements posed some practical issue to be resolved. First of all, Cllr Jill Buck's immediate resignation reduced the number of bank signatories to two, which would further reduce to one signatory after March. Cheques require

two signatures and he therefore asked the current signatories to arrange for other councillors to be added to the mandate as soon as possible. Cllr Paul Riddle agreed to arrange that.

PR/  
BE/JB

The Clerk further pointed out that Cllr Paul Riddle, as Vice-Chair, will automatically chair the March meeting. Following that, the Parish Council will have to elect a new Chair for the ensuing year at the May Annual Council Meeting. Unless 10 electors call for elections to fill the vacancies, the Parish Council must co-opt as soon as is practicable. If the vacancies are not quickly filled, the Council could easily find itself inquorate. It will have to be decided who will chair the Annual Meeting of the Parish in April.

Clerk

Cllr Paul Riddle said he is willing to continue managing the website unless and until someone takes it over. The payroll responsibility was discussed and it was agreed that it would be best practice for a payroll company to take over that duty from the beginning of the new financial year. The Clerk to find a resource.

Clerk

## 20.006 Planning

### 1. New Applications:

**3/19/2586/FUL Ashvale Livery Stables:** Demolish existing building and erect replacement stable and barn. It was **RESOLVED to make no objections**

Clerk

**3/19/1483/FUL Land adj to 3A Benningfield Road APPEAL 19/00171 REFUSE**  
It was **RESOLVED to make no make no further comments**

### 2. Decision Notices. The following were noted:

**3/19/1922/LBC Church Barns:** Change of use to B1 and residential. **GRANTED**

**3/19/1920/VAR Church Barns:** Variation to Condition 3 change of use. **GRANTED**

**3/19/1902/FUL The Old orchard, Abbots Lane:** Two-bed bungalow. **REFUSED**

**3/19/0213/FUL The Pavilion, Bell Lane: Ref19/00117/REFUSE** **APPEAL DECISION AWAITED**

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

1. Late planning applications: NONE

2. Adams Farm & Priory Farm proposed development: Nothing reported

## 20.007 Finance

1. Report of the Council's finances as at 31 December was received (Appendix A)

Finance Summary from 31 October to 31 December	£
Opening bank balance 31 October	28,222.78
Plus: income to 31 December	12.00
Minus: expenditure to 31 December	2,569.02
Minus late presented cheques 1232, 1240, 1243, 1244	260.00
<b>Balance available to Council at 30 October (cashbook balance)</b>	<b>25,405.76</b>
Plus unrepresented cheque 1255	273.40
<b>Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement at 31 December</b>	<b>25,679.16</b>

Reconciliation of the Accounts to the bank statements was noted and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED that the Accounts Statement be accepted.**

Clerk

The Clerk noted that there had been further fraud attempts against the Council's bank account resulting in two amounts of £6 being taken. These were reported to The Action Fraud Team and the money was subsequently reinstated by the bank.

2. Cllr Carol Blackett, as a non-signatory member, signed the accounts sheet and bank statement to verify reconciliation.

### 3. Budget vs performance to 30 October 2019

The Clerk provided a detailed statement of the budget vs actual financial position to 31<sup>st</sup> December and a projection of the balance at year-end, 31<sup>st</sup> March. Performance was exceeding the budget expectations by approximately £10k, principally due to the unanticipated New Homes Bonus grant and the non-expenditure of the election reserve and the allotments water supply reserve. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the financial statement.**

Clerk

It was agreed to explore opening a Deposit Account at the bank in order to earn some interest.

PR/  
BE/JB

**4. Budget and Precept 2020-21**

1. Alternative water supply for the allotment garden. *It was **RESOLVED to use Mr Brett's plan for one year and then re-assess its long-term viability.*** Cllr Babs Edwards is talking to a water engineer who is assessing the safety and other practical issues to ensure the system is workable.

2. Upon the above outcome, the decision to take out a PWLB Loan was therefore deferred for a year.

The Clerk provided the Parish Council with possible budget options. It was **RESOLVED, subject to EHC confirming the Litter Picking Grant for 2020-21, that the Litter picker's payment should be increased to £125 per month.**

It was also **RESOLVED to increase the Closed Churchyard maintenance payment to £1,250 for the year, paid on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, July, September, and November.**

After further due consideration the budget for 2020-21 was agreed and it was **RESOLVED to set the precept at £14,500.**

**5. Precept form**

The precept form was duly signed by the Chairman, the Clerk, and two councillors.

Clerk

**6. List of payments.** It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the payments as listed:**

Clerk

*All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence*

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq
22/11	J English	Litterpick November	116.00	S/O
25/11	Clerk	Salary November	360.00	1251
9/12	Clerk reimburse	SLCC subscription (1/4 <sup>th</sup> )	64.25	1252
9/12	Clerk reimburse	Broxap Dog and Litter bins	288.00	1253
9/12	Clerk	Salary December - advance	360.00	1254
9/12	HMRC	PAYE 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Oct-December	273.40	1255
9/12	David Jarrett	Trimming FP18 hedge	96.00	1256
9/12	David Jarrett	Allotment grass cutting x 5	250.00	1257
22/12	J English	Litterpick December	116.00	S/O
14/1	Clerk	Salary December - balance	14.20	1258
14/1	Clerk	Expenses Nov/December	42.65	1259
14/1	Clerk reimburse	Namesco website hosting (2 yrs)	285.33	1260
14/1	Mrs C Parrott	Closed Churchyard path clearance	190.00	1261
14/1	P Riddle reimburse	Renewal namebright.com	6.50	1262
<b>Recoverable VAT included</b>			<b>153.23</b>	

The cheques were signed at the end of the meeting.

Clerk

**7. Bank mandate changes:** Changes to be made as discussed earlier under 20.005.

PR/  
BE/JB

**20.008 Correspondence**

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

- Citizens Advice East Herts: Thank you for donation

*Cllr Eric Buckmaster arrived at 9.10pm*

**20.009 Village Reports**

**1. Village Hall and archive**

- No report given.

**2. Playing Field**

- No report given

**3. Allotments**

**Alternative water supply solution:** Discussed and agreed under agenda item 20.117.4.1

BE

**4. Closed Churchyard:**

Weed control and clean-up along the church entrance footpath has been completed.

**20.010 Highways, Public Rights of Way, and other Parish matters**

**1. Highways and footways**

**1. Parish SID:** Nothing to report, but it was agreed to leave as an agenda item.

**2. Bus shelter repair:** It has been suggested that a parishioner may be able to help.

JB

**3. Leverage Lane/Hunsdon Road scheme:** Nothing to report - still with the developer.

**2. Footpaths and Public Rights of Way**

**1. FP6 Reinstatement:** No update

- **FP18 hedge by the allotments:** It was noted that this has now been trimmed

**3. Other parish matters and concerns**

No other matters raised.

A new litter bin by the bus stop and a new dog bin for the playing field have been ordered and will be installed this month.

Clerk

**20.011 Reports by County and District Councillor**

CLlr Eric Buckmaster briefly reviewed his County and District report for January.

**20.012 Urgent matters** received too late for inclusion on this agenda: None raised

The Meeting was not suspended for parishioners' comments

**20.013 Items for future agendas**

To explore outsourcing the payroll – for consideration at the March meeting.

Bank mandate changes – March meeting

Clerk  
PR

**20.014 Dates of next meetings – all in the Village Hall**

**1. Ordinary Parish Council Meeting:** Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at 7.30pm

**2. The Calendar of Meetings for 2020 was agreed**

**3. Annual Meeting of the Parish (not a Council meeting):** Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm

PR/Clerk  
Clerk  
Clerk

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.55pm.

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