

**Minutes of the Whaddon Parish Council virtual meeting held on the  
12th October 2020 at 8pm.**

Present:	Chairman	L Ginger
	Councillors	A Birch, N Strudwick, W Elbourn, D Townsend & J Hart.
	Parish Clerk	A Bridges
	Members of the Public	None
	County Councillor	Cllr S van de Ven

- 1.0 Apologies for Absence** – District Councillor J Hales gave his apologies.
- 2.0 Receiving Declarations of Interest from Councillors on items on the agenda** – none.
- 3.0 Approval of minutes – to resolve that the minutes from the Parish Council meeting of August 10<sup>th</sup> 2020 were a correct record** – Resolved: the minutes were approved and will be signed at a later date.
- 4.0 Parish Councillor co-option** – Resolved: to co-opt to the vacant position. The Parish Council welcomed Deborah Townsend who joined the meeting immediately.
- 5.0 Reports from Clerk and Councillors – to receive verbal updates about progress on resolutions and actions from previous Parish Council meetings:**
- Cllr Strudwick advised the meeting that there was no further news from County Broadband.
  - Cllr Townsend agreed to explore the Innovation Fund further and report back to the council.
  - The Chair met with the previous handyman to discuss renovating the Meldreth Road telephone kiosk and is awaiting feedback for this.
  - The Meldreth Road bus shelter is finished and all agreed that it is a vast improvement. The handyman was thanked for taking on this task with such positive results.
  - A written update had been given from South Cambs on the improvements to Ridgway Close parking. Work is proceeding but has been slowed by the Coronavirus situation.
  - Cllr Hart stated she will finish the necessary paperwork with Barclays to become a cheque signatory and the Chair will then explore an online account for the Parish Council.
  - Cllr Elbourn explained that he has four possible contacts to re-do the rails around the recreation ground and is gathering quotes. It was agreed that these will be organised by the clerk with sealed quotes. Estimates are currently around £6,000. The meeting then discussed

the possibility of having gates at the top of the recreation ground to stop people driving on the grass and a decision will be made on this at a later date.

- The Parish Plan was discussed next and it was agreed volunteers were needed both from the Parish Council and village to start early next year. It was agreed that this will really help focus future projects in the Parish Council. Action: advert for volunteers to be sent to residents.
- The clerk confirmed that there is a large number of files that needed to be stored and moved to Cambridge County Council archives. The storage cabinet could then be offered to someone in the village who could make use of it.

#### **14.0 Grass cutting contract (moved to next item as P Haselden from the Whaddon Cricket Club joined the meeting):**

- The Chair explained that the grass cutting contract was a three-year contract and the current contractor has held this for about 11 years. The main areas that need to be cut are the public footpaths, the recreational ground and the verges. The recreational ground is cut much more frequently (20 times a year). It was agreed by all that the contract should go to those proving the best quality service and not necessarily the cheapest. It was also agreed that the first cut of the recreation ground needs to be earlier than mid-April and it is often left later than this. The meeting concluded that there needs to be some flexibility by the contractor as to when they can cut the grass.
- It was also highlighted that the contractor would have to be mindful of wildlife and leave some areas to grow naturally at certain times of the year.
- Cllr Hart felt that the grass on the verge by the recreation ground has been left to grow too long, and weeds have grown onto the recreation ground. Cllr Townsend also highlighted that the grass is often very long at the bend at the top of Bridge Street. The Chair suggested that a grass cutting sub-committee should be set up, which was agreed. Resolved: grass cutting sub-committee will be: L Ginger, P Haselden (Cricket Club), J Hart and W Elbourn. Action: to get tenders for the grass cutting for November meeting. P Haselden left the meeting.

#### **6.0 Reports from District Councillors:**

- Cllr Susan Van de Ven began by discussing the Rail User Group who are continuing to push for the half hourly service to Meldreth, despite Covid affecting public transport. They are also focused on improving accessibility at Meldreth railway station.
- Changes to Cambs. local Bus 127 will give a service through to Baldock and Letchworth. A new joint tender with Herts. will be let to begin Spring 2021.
- Cllr van de Ven spoke of The Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme which gives broadband top ups for those with a poor connection to broadband. Cllr Strudwick reminded all that County Broadband are intending to apply for the vouchers to help fund their scheme in the villages in which they install..

- The 2020 Planning for the Future White Paper was then discussed. The Chair had submitted comments on behalf of the council and these included concerns that the reduced proportion of affordable homes would have a detrimental effect on the local area.
- Cllr van de Ven reminded the meeting that the Call for Sites is very much part of the first stage of the production of a new local plan for South Cambs and that less than 10% of sites were used when put forward for development in the last instance. The proposed route of the East West Rail in Cambourne will mean a great increase of housing in that area.
- Cllr van de Ven next spoke of assistance offered by Cambridge Water for those who are having difficulty paying their bill.
- SCDC are offering applications for small community grants to Parish Councils and community groups who identify residents affected by Covid.
- Cllr Van de Ven also spoke about possible self-isolation payments from SCDC, for those who lose an income. Details on this are on the SCDC website.
- South Cambridgeshire Hall was reopened briefly but has had to shut again due to the new Covid restrictions. There is provision for those who cannot go online to have one to one support.
- Cllr van de Ven spoke of the Meldreth Community Screen bank who are looking for old computers and laptops to ensure pupils have adequate equipment to work at home.
- Cllr Strudwick offered the use of the PC's Zoom account for the local Rail User group, which was accepted by Cllr van de Ven.

#### **7.0 Public Participation – none.**

**8.0 Covid-19 Issues –** The meeting agreed that PC support is available for those who are self-isolating and who may need prescriptions or assistance to buy shopping, for example. The South Cambridgeshire area remains a comparatively low rate area, but the Chair reminded us that this can change quickly. Cllr Townsend suggested we also put this in the newsletter again and this was agreed.

#### **9.0 Correspondence and complaints:**

- Email from Ridgeway Close enquiring about the street light removal (August 17<sup>th</sup>)
- Email from Ridgeway Close resident asking when parking bays will be marked out (August 21<sup>st</sup>)
- Email from Ridgeway Close resident asking for a designated parking slot (1<sup>st</sup> September)
- Email from Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, stating they will publish the responses received to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Conversation consultation in early 2020 on September 16<sup>th</sup> (9<sup>th</sup> September).
- Email enquiring when the next grass cut will be in the village (8<sup>th</sup> September).
- Email from Cllr Van de Ven with details of the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership First Annual General Meeting on September 22, 2-4PM.

- Details of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan webinars (Greater Cambridge Shared Planning 16<sup>th</sup> September).
- Invite from Cambridgeshire ACRE for the Cambridgeshire Local Councils' Conference, which is taking place online on Friday 23 October 2020 (25<sup>th</sup> September)
- Parish Council and Community Group update on Covid-19 information (SCDC 25<sup>th</sup> September).
- Email from Antony Browne MP for an East-West Rail online forum for Parish Councils starting 15/10/20 (9/10/20).

**10.0 Planning Updates** – Cllr Strudwick asked if another Parish Councillor could join the Planning Committee and Cllr Birch offered to fill this role. Action: agreed to co-opt Cllr Birch for the next meeting

**11.0 Finance:** Approval of payments to be signed today:

- Staff wages and expenses – September (and backdated national pay increase) £453.46. October wage - £399.71
  - Handyman salary - £260
  - Chair's allowance - £50
  - Councillor training - £75
  - Finance training with CAPALC - £30
  - GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 renewal fee - £40
- Cheques approved to avoid late payment:
- SLCC – membership fee £109
  - Bank reconciliation approval - Cllr Birch to take on the quarterly bank reconciliation.

**12.0 LHI Bid** – Cllr Strudwick confirmed that this was now submitted with support from Cllr Ven de Van. Bassingbourn Parish Council had agreed to financially support the bid with £1,000. The previous application was rewritten slightly and Cllr Strudwick stressed that the MOD were unable to financially contribute anything, although have again given their written support. Cllr van de Ven confirmed that the committee will meet in the new year.

**13.0 Clerk's lap top** – it was agreed by the Parish Councillors that the lap top needed to be assessed at by an independent IT company to improve its effectiveness. A shredder was approved for the clerk.

**15.0 Village Hall and Recreation Trust** –

Cllr Birch stated the AGM was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September. The changes brought about by the Rule of Six meant that the Village Hall Letting documents had been updated again. Dog training and cricket team were now using the hall and a new Pilates class had started, which runs until end of December. Cllr Birch felt that people remain reluctant to come back, partly due to the new procedures, as well as Covid 19 fears. The meeting then discussed a possibility for a social gathering for older people and how to

support them through this time. It was agreed that a social event could be explored, with limited numbers.

Cllr van de Ven spoke of the activities available at Melbourn Hub which can be accessed by residents.

**16.0 Village Upkeep and Maintenance – none**

**17.0 Items for the next meeting –none**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40pm

**Date of next meeting – November 9th 12<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 8pm.**