

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 24TH JULY 2017

PRESENT: **Councillors:** Chapman (in the Chair), Bulley, Merryweather, Read, Smith P, Smith R, Thomason and Thompson

The Clerk: A Marabese

Others: Ward Councillors Brown and Liddiard. 16 members of the public

The Meeting commenced at 7.45pm

38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The reasons for Councillor Parsons and Councillor Fosketts' absences were accepted.

39. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Bedfordshire Day - The Friends of Bedfordshire Society are holding an annual celebration of the county on 28th November and want as many villages to take part. Council suggested the Clerk find out more about the society and events run and circulate to Council members before a positive decision is made.
- b. Next meeting of the Parish Council on 11th September will be in the new temporary village hall.

40. MEMBERS INTERESTS

- a. There were none notified
- b. There were none notified

41. MINUTES

- a. Moved Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Thompson. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday, 12th June 2017 are an accurate record of the proceeding and that they be signed by the Chairman.
Carried unanimously

At this point (7.50pm) the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to receive reports from our Ward Councillors and to allow members of the public to address the Council in relation to items on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

Ward Councillor Mark Liddiard advised the meeting that:

- Consultation on the draft Local Plan will be open until 29th August 2017 and that comments should be made online. Closest drop in session to Meppershall for anyone to view the plan will be in Arlesey on 26th July 2017.
- CBC new grass cutting contract contact is Jenna Campbell.
- CBC is working with Blue Abyss regarding the potential re-development of the RAF Henlow site and the employment the site would provide.
- CBC will start a gully cleaning exercise in the county in July aimed at preventing flooding.
- The Home to School and College Travel Assistance consultation is still open for comment.
- CBC will be undertaking a review of the three-tier schooling provision focusing on school organisation, planning and how to improve KS4 (GCSE) results. Consultants will be appointed shortly.
- Emergency Planning contacts provided to the Council.

Parishioners made the following comments and asked the following questions:

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- The Clerk is doing a good job and is getting back to parishioners quickly.
- Alternative route for the upcoming Shefford Road closure? Via Chapel Road and Fildyke
- All parishioners should be encouraged to read the draft Local Plan.
- Parking past the village shop and near the cottages is creating a one-way road and problem will get worse due to the Brinkley site re-development. What can the Council propose in order to deal with the issue?
- Clarification sought from Ward Councillors regarding weight given to pre-application planning discussions with CBC Planners. Cllr Brown confirmed that no legal approval can be given during pre-application discussions for anything but feedback is given regarding the application's contents.
- Old Road Meadow playing field. Concern raised regarding rats in river, dog fouling, speeding traffic on Hoo Road and potential drug use in area. Concern also raised regarding location of play equipment and whether this will be permanent or temporary.
- Concerns raised regarding safety at the Brinkley site. Recent issues included perimeter fence falling down and burning of rubbish on site. Cllr Liddiard informed the meeting that since the last parish meeting a Health & Safety Inspector had visited the site once and a Pollution Inspector had visited the site twice.
- When will felling re-start at Nunswood? Cllr Chapman confirmed this would be covered during the main part of this meeting

42. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

a. PLANNING AND HOUSING – Cllr Smith P reported

i. Planning Applications pending

1. CB/17/00738/OUT – 100 High Street – Up to 38 dwellings.

Currently with planning officers - This case has not yet been decided

It was reiterated that this is the second application submitted for this site. The first application (CB/16/01012/OUT) refusal has been appealed to the Planning Inspectorate (see minute 42.a.iii.2).

2. CB/17/02186/LDCE - Arran Park Fishery, Meppershall - Use of land as recreational fishery and siting of 2 No. associated caravans

Currently with planning officers - This case has not yet been decided

3. CB/17/02528/FULL - 52 Fildyke Road - Erection of two detached dwellings

Currently with planning officers - This case has not yet been decided

Note: Cllr Smith P suggested that planning applications appeared to be taking longer than previously, and asked the Ward Councillors if there were resource issues in the staffing of the CBC planning department. Cllr Brown reported that two new planning officers had been recruited and were being inducted so effective staffing levels would be increased.

ii. Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals received

1. CB/17/01041/OUT – Stocken House, 59 Shefford Road – demolition of dwelling and erection of 150 dwellings.

Refused – outside settlement envelope and within open countryside and no legal agreement securing financial contributions to offset infrastructure impact.

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Whilst this has been refused by CBC, Council believes that the developer may appeal the decision with the Planning Inspectorate.

2. CB/17/02143/FULL – Land adjacent to 23 Shefford Road – Six semi-detached chalet style bungalows and associated access, parking and landscaping.

Granted. Council noted that the construction of this site had commenced.

iii. Appeals

1. CB/16/05715/FULL – Woodview Nurseries – Change of use from vacant plant nursery to residential with detached dwelling.

Allowed with conditions

2. CB/16/01012/OUT – 100 High Street – Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of up to 38 dwellings.

Appeal with Planning Inspectorate – representation required by 24th August 2017

Moved Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Planning Working Group prepare a draft response for the Clerk to send to the Planning Inspectorate.

Carried unanimously

iv. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

1. CB/17/02409/FULL – New Close Nurseries – Demolition of existing glasshouses and redevelopment of 13 residential dwellings and all ancillary works.

Moved Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Read. Resolved that no objection be made regarding this application.

Carried unanimously

v. Enforcement / Other Planning Matters

1. CB/EN/17/0221 - The Village Hall, High Street, Meppershall

Closed as traffic management plan now in place

2. CB/EN/17/0277 - The Red House, 86 High Street, Meppershall - Alleged unauthorised development - erection of a climbing frame

Investigation underway

3. CB/EN/17/0326 – Land adjacent to 23 Shefford Road - Alleged breach of pre-commencement conditions attached to planning permission

Investigation underway

Note: Cllr Smith P raised concerns that no sanctions seemed to be put on individuals and organisations by CBC following warranted planning enforcement.

vi. Meppershall Action Group (MAG)

Cllr Thomason reported that a MAG meeting took place on 26th June focussing on key accomplishments, preparation for potential appeals, smaller developments, MAG Forum and how MAG can interact with the Neighbourhood planning group. MAG wishes that the issue of speeding in the village to be brought to the attention of the Council and Cllr Thomason has requested that at the next meeting we request the presence of our PCSO and agenda a discussion regarding shared ownership of speed cameras. A request for the Clerk to circulate the CPRE report on the Local plan was also made.

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vii. Understanding Planning Courses

Moved Cllr Thomason/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that the Clerk book Course 1, to be delivered at the end of September/beginning of October in the temporary Village Hall. Places to be offered to councillors and MAG members first and the remainder of places to parishioners.

Carried unanimously

- viii. The Planning Inspectorate and CBC 5 year housing supply** – Discussion held regarding the Planning Inspectorate comments regarding CBC demonstrating a 'robust 5 year housing land supply in appeal decision regarding Woodview Nurseries. The Clerk advised that CBC Planning team had stated that CBC do meet the 5 year housing supply but that a new calculation method is pending from the Government. Cllr Brown advised that Inspectors comments are their personal opinion and that other Inspectors have agreed that CBC meet the 5 year housing supply requirements.

ix. Engagement with developers

Moved Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Thomason. Resolved that Meppershall Parish Council will not engage with developers prior to the submission of a planning application to CBC.

Carried unanimously

x. Local Plan

Moved Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Bulley. Resolved that Cllr Smith P set up meeting with available councillors to draft comments for Local Plan and provide them to the Clerk for submission.

Carried unanimously

b. FINANCE

- i. Cllr Smith P reported that a Finance Working Group meeting was held on 11th July and that the Clerk is to be commended for trying to catch up with Finance issues. Matters discussed at the meeting were bank reconciliations, VAT return issues (not done since Jan 2016 and data verification required) and Council insurance.
- ii. **Document approval** - Journal entries, bank reconciliation and bank statements all reviewed and approved by Cllr Foscett at Finance Working Group meeting.
- iii. **Grant requests** – None received
- iv. **The Good Councillors Guide to Neighbourhood Planning**

Moved Cllr Bulley/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that the Clerk purchase from BATPC sufficient copies of The Good Councillors Guide to Neighbourhood Planning.

Carried unanimously

c. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

- i. Cllr Smith R reported that he had attended a meeting that focussed on matching highways to development. He noted that S106 monies are now being used to supplement transport projects and that what may not be a viable transport (bus) route now, may be in the future, due to new developments.

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- ii. **Hoo Road safety** – Council requested that the Clerk discuss with CBC Highways what options are available to reduce the speed of traffic and use of the bridle way as a road by vehicles and that clarification be sought regarding whether the newly tarmacked part of the road have been adopted or is it still a bridleway.

d. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

i. Cllr Merryweather reported

- ii. **Grass cutting** – Council requested that the Clerk investigate cost implications of increasing number of cuts to Old Road Meadow from 4 to 6 for 2018 and that this be considered when discussing budget and precept requirement for 2018-2019.
- iii. **Old Road Meadow use as playing area health and safety concerns** – Council requested that the Clerk speak to the local dog warden regarding dog fouling, pest control regarding ditch vermin and the caretaker regarding regular bin bag removal.

e. HEALTH & SAFETY and RISK MANAGEMENT

- i. Cllr Chapman has completed the assessment and will provide a full report at the next meeting. Result of Financial Risk Assessment to be formally adopted by full Council to be deferred to next meeting.

f. COMMUNITY ASSETS

- i. Cllr Smith P reported that Hawthorn Leisure have withdrawn their appeal regarding the Sugarloaf pubs' status as an Asset of Community Value. Cllr Brown reported that HL are in the process of taking court action against CBC for the diminution of the value of the site since CBC granted an ACV.

g. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- i. Cllr Thomason reported that a meeting was held on 22nd June focussing on training session updates, process matters and project plan outline. The group have requested assistance from the Clerk to apply for funding as this will require earmarking funds received and separate reporting.

h. PROCEDURES

i. Powers and Functions of the Parish Council

Moved Cllr Thompson/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that the document be adopted and reviewed annually.

Carried unanimously

- ii. **Reform of Data Protection Legislation May 2018** – Council requested that the Clerk, Cllr Thompson and Cllr Thomason investigate and make recommendations to Council.
- iii. **Village Emergency Plan** – Discussion and decision required on whether a Meppershall Village Emergency Plan is required deferred to next meeting.

43. OTHER MEETINGS

- a. **Community Priority Setting Meeting** – Cllr Chapman to attend meeting at Police HQ in Bedford on 27th August 2017 at 7pm.
- b. **Nunswood** – Cllr Thompson provided a full report to be taken into record. In summation:

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- The first licence application by Polehanger Farms had been granted even though various tree preservation orders had not been included. This was corrected by a second application which was granted, the Forestry Commission accepting that the omission was a clerical error. Works to Nunswood have been carried out in accordance with Forestry Commission supervision.
- The use of equipment to fell trees and the remainder of the works will be carried out in accordance with the issued licence.
- Final works will be carried out later this year.
- Nunswood is a private property and has neither a public right of way through it, nor a permissive path.
- Across Polehanger Farm, public rights of way and permissive paths are maintained by Polehanger Farm for the benefit of parishioners.

44. ALLOTMENTS

- a. Clerk advised that all contracts have now been issued, rents are nearly up-to-date and letters have been sent to allotment holders whose plots are not up to standard. Mr Carne has completed an Allotment Report which has been sent to the Clerk for review.
- b. Environment and Leisure Working Group (with the Clerk and Mr Carne) to make a proposal on allotment rents and general management deferred to subsequent meetings.

45. HOO ROAD RESURFACING

- a. Clerk reported that there are 2 outstanding contributions and the surface water drainage complaint is being monitored by both the Clerk and Chris Nicols of CBC.

46. CLERKS REPORT & MATTER ARISING

- a. Document disposal company sourced who provide a certificate of destruction. Council have requested that prior to releasing documents the Clerk visit the company to confirm where and how documents are disposed.
- b. Council have requested that the Clerk resolve printer issues by calling out an engineer to deal with set up, purchase ink as required and investigate cost of purchasing a new printer with lower running costs for 2018-2019 budget.
- c. Council Insurance is due for renewal in October and quotes are being sourced as recommended by the Finance Working Group.
- d. Current Village Hall notice boards cannot be installed on the temporary Village Hall; therefore, a new notice board and location is required. Council have requested that the Clerk ask permission from CBC Highways to install a new notice board on the grass verge near the current village hall entrance and that in the interim official notices are published on the website and in the village stores (if permission given). Quotations for a new notice board have been obtained but will require a quote for installation.
Moved Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that a new notice board costing no more than £875.00 + VAT (not including installation) be purchased.
Carried unanimously
- e. New road names for the Village Hall Development will be Walnut Tree Way (main road in development), Harriots Field and Banland Croft.
- f. Installation is imminent of the Swing at Old Road Meadow playing field. The Clerk is investigating alternative quotations for goal posts/fencing and separate installation that reduce the overall cost of the project.

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- g. Coneygate ditch fencing has been repaired.
- h. Cllr Read has agreed that the Old Methodist Church building stones with names on are stored temporarily at her home until Council decides what to do with them.
- i. The Chairman requested that a discussion regarding the Clerks pension contributions be carried out in private following authorisation of the payment of money.

47. ORDERS FOR THE PAYMENT OF MONEY

Moved Cllr Thompson/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that payments requested be approved and authorised including payments required between meetings to SLCC and HMRC.

Carried unanimously

Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
BACS16	HMRC	NI/Tax due Q1 2017/18	£60.68	YES
TOTAL			£60.68	
Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
300499	SLCC	Subscription - debitted from account 28/04/17	£121.00	Yes
		Payment authorised 12/12/06 but not posted to Rialtas		
TOTAL			£121.00	
Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
SVCHG0617	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge - debitted 30/06/17 (statement 080)	£18.00	Yes
BACS17	K Crofts	Basic net monthly wage - August	£180.00	
BACS18	A Marabese	Basic net monthly wage - August	£772.69	
BACS19	Meppershall Village Hall	Meeting room hire - April, May & June	£120.00	
BACS20	P Carne	Allotment Maintenance - June	£146.25	
BACS21	John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	June Grass Cutting	£1,639.45	
BACS22	John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	May Grass Cutting	£890.95	
300541	K Crofts	Additional hours salary (April, May, June)	£49.50	
BACS23	A Marabese	Expenses (June & July)	£154.83	
TOTAL			£3,971.67	

48. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.30pm

Where no signature exists in this electronic version, a hard copy version is available for inspection from the Clerk.
