

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2017

PRESENT: **Councillors:** Parson (in the Chair), Bulley, Foskett, Merryweather, Smith P, Smith R, and Thomason
 The Clerk: A Marabese
 Others: Ward Councillors Brown (late arrival) and Liddiard. 14 members of the public.

The Meeting commenced at 7.45pm

73. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Chapman, Read and Thompson.

74. **CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillors were advised of CBC invitation to attend the VCSE Provider Forum on 30th November 9.30am – 12.30pm and Bedfordshire Police invitation to attend the Community Priority Setting meeting on 15th November 7.00pm. No Councillors available to attend.

75. **MEMBERS INTERESTS**

a. Cllr Parsons declared a prejudicial interest in item 77. D. iv.

76. **MINUTES**

Moved Cllr Smith R/Seconded Cllr Bulley. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday, 9th October 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 Liddiard advised the meeting that:

- The Local Plan will be put before the CBC Executive on 9th January and a second consultation will take place from mid-January for 6 weeks. CBC is looking to submit the Local Plan by March 2018.
- The Boundary Commission for England has published proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries. The consultation finishes in mid-November.
- Green waste collections will cease from December to March inclusive but there will be a Christmas tree collection.
- CBC is carrying out a Community Governance Consultation from 1st November to 1st February and is asking parish councils to consider what they would like control over in the future.
- The jet patcher will not be in use over the winter.
- Gully cleaning has taken place in the ward.
- Bedford Hospital and Luton and Dunstable Hospital will be submitting a plan to merge in December.
- BEST Academies are changing their admissions criteria and are in the process of consultation.
- Henlow Academy is to receive £3.4million investment to increase capacity.

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- Meeting with CBC Highways concerning A507 white lines and underpass has not yet been held.

Parishioners made the following comments and asked the following questions:

- Should CBC Highways team inspect roads after utility companies carry out works as some works in Meppershall have left holes in the road?
- Can 'repeater signs' be painted on the road surface at the Shefford Road end of the village to assist with speed reduction?
- The recent number of thefts occurring in the village was highlighted.
- The Council was requested to object to planning application CB/17/04782/FILL – Land adjacent to 15 Shillington Road – item 77. D. iv. on the agenda. A copy of a resident's objection letter sent to CBC was passed to the Clerk.
- Issue of mud on road and vehicles mounting the pavements raised regarding lorries entering and exiting the Brinkley site.
- Appreciation was registered regarding those who had attended Neighbourhood Planning meetings. It was emphasised that there is a challenge regarding current and future proposed developments in the village. Hopefully going forward more people will become involved and residents will see the benefit of the Neighbourhood Plan (and process).

Standing orders were reinstated at 8.20pm

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

77. PLANNING AND HOUSING

a. Planning Applications currently with planning officers

- i. CB/17/00738/OUT – 100 High Street – Up to 38 dwellings.
Revised noise assessment and supporting statement received
- ii. CB/17/02409/FULL - New Close Nurseries, Fildyke Road - Demolition of existing glasshouses and redevelopment with 13 residential dwellings and all ancillary works.
Amendment to application received (10 dwellings, layout, landscaping, drainage)
Moved Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Smith R. Resolved that there is no objection to the amendments to the application. *Carried unanimously*

b. Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals received

- i. CB/17/02186/LDCE - Arran Park Fishery, Meppershall - LDCE for Use of land as recreational fishery and siting of 2 No. associated caravans.
12/10/17 – Refused
- ii. CB/17/02528/FULL - 52 Fildyke Road - Erection of two detached dwellings
12/10/17 – Granted
- iii. CB/17/03454/FULL– Standalone Farm House – Alterations to ground floor elevations and roof of ancillary residential building to enable conversion into two annexes for use incidental to the occupation of Standalone Farmhouse.
2/10/17 – Withdrawn
- iv. CB/17/03977/FULL– 79 Shefford Road – New build 3 bed detached single storey dwelling with integral garage and detached garage.
23/10/17 – Withdrawn
New application CB/17/05090/FULL received.

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Moved Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Smith R. Resolved to object on the grounds of over development of the site. *Carried unanimously*

- v. CB/17/03887/OUT– Stocken House, 59 Shefford Road – Demolition of 59 Shefford Road, and associated buildings and the erection of up to 145 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicle access point from Shefford Road. All matters reserved except for means of access.
26/10/17 – Refused

c. Appeals

- i. CB/16/01012/OUT – 100 High Street – Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of up to 38 dwellings.
Appeal with Planning Inspectorate – Public Enquiry to be held 9th January 2018

d. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

- i. CB/17/04571/VOC – 79A Shefford Road – Removal of condition 3 of planning permission CB/17/01410/FULL – conversion and extension to detached double garage at the rear of the house for purposes of an annexe.
Moved Cllr Smith R / Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that there are no objections to this application. *Carried unanimously*
- ii. CB/17/04537/FULL – Land between 10 & 12 Hoo Road – Erection of 2 three-bedroom detached houses.
Moved Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that there are no objections to this application. *Carried unanimously*
- iii. CB/17/04800/FULL – 6 Rectory Road – Two storey rear and single-story extension.
Moved Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Bulley. Resolved that there are no objections to this application. *Carried unanimously.*
- iv. CB/17/04782/FULL – Land adjacent to 15 Shillington Road – Erection of 8 dwellings, formation of vehicular and pedestrian access with associated landscaping.
Moved Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Thomason. Resolved to object to the application on various grounds. *Carried unanimously*

e. Enforcement / Other Planning Matters

- i. CB/EN/17/0326 – Land adjacent to 23 Shefford Road - Alleged breach of pre-commencement conditions attached to planning permission.
All details submitted, approved and case closed
- ii. CB/EN/17/0498 – 4 High Street – Alleged non-compliance with approval CB/16/04896/FULL regarding unauthorised development in garden shop.
Permitted use of land for storage of plant & materials

f. Meppershall Action Group (MAG)

Cllr Thomason reported that:

- i. A meeting with Nadine Dorries MP is planned for Friday 24th November but a venue for the meeting is proving difficult to find. An agenda has been prepared.
- ii. Next MAG meeting will be on 4th December at 7.45pm in the Village Hall.
- iii. He wished to thank MAG team for their work in objecting to CB/17/03887/OUT– Stocken House which was refused planning permission.

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g. S106 monies

Proposed Cllr Bulley/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that MPC support Ward Councillor Adam Zerny in putting forward a motion to Central Beds Council for its meeting of 16th November that in future there must be greater local involvement in how S106 money is handed out. The motion reads:

"This council understands that Section 106 monies provide an important source of revenue for mitigating the impact of development and enabling schemes to proceed. In order to ensure this funding is focused on the right priorities it is important to ensure that local councillors, parish and unitary, are involved in the process at a point when their input can have material influence.

The council resolves that wherever possible the local parish, and unitary authority member should be consulted by planning officers on what they think should be the priorities for each Section 106 allocation within their ward, and calls on the Chief Executive to put in place measures that will ensure that this happens"

A request by Cllrs Bulley and Smith P was agreed by the Council also that Shefford Ward Councillors present support the motion. *Carried unanimously*

78. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Thomason reported that the team had held two open session for the public in October. Turnout was poor with only fourteen attendees. However, those who attended are engaged. The pre-submission will be completed in the first week of December before preparing the budget. The survey monkey subscription has been put on hold and not renewed yet.

Cllr Parsons advised the meeting that if the village has a Neighbourhood Plan in place then it means that the village has thought about the future and its needs and therefore CBC can deal with planning applications accordingly. The team needs help and support from the village in the coming 18 months and this is a way that allows the village and residents to be proactive rather than re-active.

79. COMMUNITY ASSETS

Cllr Smith P reported that the Sugarloaf PH refurbishment has been deferred as advised by the Landlord.

80. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

a. Cllr Smith R reported:

- i. No date yet for gully cleaning in Meppershall
- ii. On 6th November in the morning CBC Highways, Cllr Brown, Cllr Smith R and the Clerk monitored the traffic and parking situation of the RMF High Street traffic calming and parking scheme. Apart from one car that was clearly speeding, things were quiet with many children approaching on foot, which is what the scheme was designed to encourage. There were 2 SKC violations: one by the school minibus (CBC Highways spoke to the driver), the other a mother dropping off her child very close to 9am. Several taxis drove into the school entrance and had to reverse out. The Council were also made aware of the difficulty of exiting driveways when cars were parked in the marked bay on the opposite side of the road. CBC Highway will monitor the scheme

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on an afternoon, and then again in circa 6 months' time. A PCSO and a CBC traffic warden have patrolled the new restrictions.

- iii. Roadworks closure of note is High Street, between Crackle Hill Road and the Post Office, 4-8 December, full closure to make a sewer connection outside the PO and create the road junction for the Croudace development.

As this closure will cause a large number of issues for the village and the nearest residents and businesses Council have asked the Clerk to obtain an update from CBC and send a briefing to Council. Ward Councillors have been asked to keep the situation under review. (*see post meeting note where it has been confirmed the closure will be in two phases)

b. Clerk to provide update on:

- i. Clerk to provide update from CBC on Hoo Road road safety. Still awaiting a response from CBC
- ii. Cost of speed cameras. Clerk is investigating costs and has asked CBC Highways if any other parishes may be interested in sharing the cost of a speed camera. Awaiting feedback
- iii. Fildyke Road overgrown vegetation at entrance issues. Cllrs Parsons and Foskett to assist in finding a resolution.
- iv. Hoo Road resurfacing and outstanding contributions. Waiting for feedback from CBC before asking for outstanding payments from residents.

81. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

a. Cllr Merryweather and the Clerk reported on:

- i. Allotment future plans and aspirations following meeting of E&L Working Group. The allotments are currently subsidised by the Council – cost per annum circa £550. The working group discussed the necessity to increase occupancy (from 77% to 90%) and income to reduce the deficit. A 5-year improvement strategy also identified potential future aspirations for the allotments (review water supply costs with alternative supplier, tap replacement, investigate Eco toilet costs and funding streams, new gate lock)

Proposed Cllr Merryweather / Seconded Cllr Thomason. Resolved that:

- Rents to be increased in October 2018, with introduction of a Tariff B for non Meppershall Residents applicable from April 2018
- Funds be provided for the promotion of the allotments this financial year (2 x banners circa £80 and flyers for distribution in local area)
- Parish Council become members of the National Allotment Society (£55 cost)
- Funds be provided to replace taps (2017/18) and a new gate lock (2018/2019)

Carried unanimously

- ii. CBC Leisure Strategy and Parish Schedule need to be in place and logged with CBC. The following suggestion for possible projects for the village were made:

- Cantilever swing on playing field behind village hall
- Petanque pitch
- Single tennis court

Each project needs to be fully costed and Council has asked the Clerk to start work on this including investigating alternatives to S106 funding.

- iii. Goal posts for Old Road Meadow

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The working group discussed the products offered and their costs and it was felt that the backing posts and nets were not required. As money for this project has already been authorised by Council the Clerk was asked to acquire quotations for just goal posts, goal nets (to include replacements) and separate installation.

b. Cllr Foskett provided and update on the Village Hall development.

All updates are being posted on the Meppershall.org website. There is currently a statement regarding the demolition of the old village hall which will require a 4-week clearance of the site before the knock down. Councillor Smith R reported that the previous demolition of a barn on the Croudace site had disturbed a barn owl, and therefore care was required. The new village hall should be watertight by Christmas.

Cllrs Thomason and Merryweather left the meeting

82. HEALTH & SAFETY and RISK MANAGEMENT

No progress made yet.

83. PROCEDURES

- a. **Reform of Data Protection Legislation** – In progress
- b. **Village Emergency Plan** – In progress
- c. **Freedom of Information** – In progress
- d. **Press and Media Relations** – In progress
- e. **Records Management** – In progress
- f. **Data protection** – in progress
- g. **Employment Handbook and Policies** - In progress
- h. **Standing Orders** – Draft of amended version with amendments to be circulated.
- i. **Financial Regulations** – Draft of amended version with amendments to be circulated.
- j. **Dispensations** – Discussion deferred to next meeting.

84. OTHER MEETINGS

Cllr Smith R reported that at the meeting (attended also by Cllr Parsons and the Clerk) presentations were given by both Highways England (regarding the outline plans for the strategic road network in Bedfordshire, covering M1, A1, A5, A42. A428) and Network Rail – East West Rail Project (regarding plans to link Oxford with Cambridge). The event also provided some good networking opportunities to work and share resources with other local parishes.

85. CLERKS REPORT & MATTER ARISING

- a. **Understanding Planning Course 1** – Attendee details to be forwarded to Clerk
- b. **Notice board relocation** – temporary notices in Village Stores as CBC investigating issues regarding erection of notice board on High Street. Cllr Brown to intervene and see if response is forthcoming from CBC. Notice board not yet purchased
- c. **Grass cutting update** – Invoice issues now resolved, and credit note received. Old Road Meadow Nature Reserve does not need cutting and can wait for next year now. Proposed Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Foskett. Resolved that the E& L WG set up and monitor the quality of grass cutting. *Carried unanimously*

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- d. **Planning for homes in the right places** – Cllrs Smith P and R were instrumental in drafting the response to the consultation authorised by the Chairman, Cllr Chapman. The Council has agreed that the CBC response was very good, and asked our Ward Councillors to pass this feedback on to those responsible for putting together the letter.
- e. **GNOMES** request for defibrillator training for residents. The Council has in the past organised 2 free training events but Cllr Foscett will contact our supplier to see if there are any further free sessions available or what the cost of new session would be.
- f. **Information request** response for Community Priority Setting Meeting. The Village Plan survey held at the end of 2016 identified 2 priorities for the village which remain the same (speeding and visible policing). Any concerns or comment should continue to go through the Clerk.
- g. **Community Governance Review** – Parish Council response required by 1st February. The Clerk will email details to Councillors for them to read and consider ready for discussion at the December meeting.

86. FINANCE

- a. **Document approval** - Journal entries, bank reconciliation and bank statements were reviewed and authorised by Cllr Foscett, Finance WG Spokesman.
- b. **Audit action plan update** - deferred to next meeting
- c. **Precept & budget 2018/2019** – Councillors to email the Clerk with budget / precept requirements by 4th December.
- d. **Grant request** – Wanderbus. Upon inspection of the grant application the Clerk was asked to clarify with the applicant why they have reserves of £42k? If this sum is required for a new bus, then Council would like a breakdown of the reserves and what it will be used for.
- e. **Orders for the payment of money**

Payment requests received before agenda published			Meeting Date: 13th November 2017	
Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
BACS56	Meppershall Village Hall	Meeting room hire - July & Sept	£60.00	
BACS57	David Foscett	Broome Signs - Village Hall sign (ESCROW)	£140.40	
Payment requests received after agenda published				
300543	Mrs L Parker	Village hall Planters	£70.40	
BACS30	John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Grass cutting July	£1,491.13	
BACS58	K Crofts	October additional salary hours	£31.50	
Note: Approved standing orders / direct debits not included in payments list			TOTAL	£1,793.43
Invoices checked and confirmed 13th November 2017.				

Proposed Cllr Smith P / Seconded Cllr Smith R. Resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised for payment. *Carried unanimously*

87. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10pm

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

* CBC have advised that the road closure will be completed in 2 phases.

Phase 1 – Will be from outside the Post Office to the junction of Fildyke Road, 4 – 8 December.

Phase 2 – will be from junction of Fildyke Road to Crackle Hill, date to be advised.