

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 9TH APRIL 2018

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

The Clerk: A Marabese

Others: Ward Councillor Liddiard. 17 members of the public.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.50pm.

147. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Read and Cllr Brown.

148. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Reminder to Councillors of the need to advise the Clerk regarding the reason for meeting absences and apologies.
- b. CBC Planning have asked that we include planning application CB/18/01044/FULL in this evenings agenda as they are unable to wait until after our May meeting for a response.

149. MEMBERS INTERESTS

- a. Cllr Thomason declared an interest in 151.e.iv.

150. MINUTES

Moved Cllr Smith R/Seconded Cllr Bulley. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday, 12th March 2018 are an accurate record of the proceedings and that they be signed by the Chairman. Carried unanimously.

At this point (7.55pm) 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:

- Waste Consultation – 10 days left to respond (20 April). Currently 13,500 responses. Residents can find basic information regarding the consultation at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/bin-changes
- A £22.5M contribution received from Dept. of Transport to the dualling of the A421 Junc. 13 for M1 to Milton Keynes. Both CBC and MK are committing £2.5M each to the scheme.
- The 'Just Ask' team who provide information, advice and guidance about local social care, health, housing and additional services will be at the Shefford Fete on Sunday 3rd June.
- A Community Led Housing Workshop (a collaborative approach to housing older people and the wider community) is being held on 14th May. It would be beneficial if a Meppershall councillor could attend.
- Cheering Volunteering 2018 will hold its annual awards and celebration evening on 5th June. Nominations are open until 16th April for people of groups for six different awards including 2018 – Sport Volunteer.
- Bedfordshire FA has access to an IOG Regional Pitch Advisor who can advise on the construction and development of a new football pitch. Contact details will be passed to the Clerk.
- A meeting was held last week with Beds Police concerning issues raised regarding the A507. As a result, there will be an increase in the number of unmarked police cars patrolling the

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road and the weekend transport team will try to combat the 'speedy weekend motorcyclists'.

- Ward Councillors have requested a site visit to Shefford Road by the Highways team so that they can view the state of the road surface.
- There will be an increase in the number of local road closures in the coming months as work starts on road improvements, including 'patching'.
- A planning application is expected from developers who have currently requested an Environmental Impact Assessment (CB/18/01057/SCO) for a development of 1600 homes near Beadlow Manor.

Parishioners made the following comments and asked the following questions:

- Can the Council or Ward Councillors trigger any action to reduce mud on the road between Beadlow Manor and the Gravenhurst turning?
- Can anything be done to alleviate the strain put on local doctor's surgeries by new development? *It was noted that current issues at the Shefford Health Centre were due to a lack of doctors.*
- As the speed sensors on Shefford Road have been in place during the Easter holidays, school holidays and over a period when there have been road closures, could the Council request that the length of time that the sensors are in place is extended?
- Can Ward Councillors confirm when the gully cleaning will be completed in the village as some drains are currently blocked, overflowing and require repair.
- Can Cllr Foscett confirm during 154.c. if charges for using the new village hall have been finalised and what support will be given to local groups e.g.: use of scenery for Meppershall Players?
- A planning application in Stevenage was recently refused due to a lack of sustainability (education, health and highways). Does this Council use reasons of sustainability when responding to planning applications? *Yes, they do.*
- Can the Council confirm if the 4 High Street site is permitted to have a bonfire, as it did on Thursday 5th April? *No, it is not, and this should be reported to CBC Planning Enforcement.*
- Can the Council assist in addressing the poor state of roads and footpaths in the village?

Standing orders were reinstated at 8.20pm

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

151. PLANNING AND HOUSING

a. Planning Applications currently with planning officers, noted as follows:

- i. CB/18/00087/FULL – Wind Rush, 4 Shillington Road – Proposed single storey side / rear extension and conversion of garage.
- ii. CB/18/00232/FULL – Tower View Nurseries, 81 Fildyke Road – Demolition of existing bungalow and greenhouses and redevelopment with 10 residential dwellings and all ancillary works.
- iii. CB/18/00536/LDCE – Land r/o 70 Fildyke Road - Lawful Development Certificate Existing: Permanent residential dwelling house.
- iv. CB/18/00685/FULL – 6 Taylors Close - Two storey side extension and interior alterations.

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- v. CB/18/00756/VOC – Land adj. to 23 Shefford Road - Removal of conditions 10 & 11 of Planning Permission CB/17/02143/FULL dated 5/7/17 - Six semi-detached chalet style bungalows and associated access, parking & landscaping.

b. Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals received

- i. CB/17/05345/FULL – Land adjacent to Sandy View, Shefford Road – Erection of detached house. *Granted*
- ii. CB/18/00229/FULL – 10 Brookside – Rear and side single storey extension and alterations to existing garage. *Granted*

c. Appeals

- i. CB/16/01012/OUT – 100 High Street – Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of up to 38 dwellings. *Appeal dismissed.*
- ii. CB/17/03887/OUT – Stocken House, 59 Shefford Road – Demolition of dwelling and erection of 145 dwellings. Planning Inspectorate Inquiry to be held w/c 10th April 2018. Cllr Smith P will be representing the Parish Council and has prepared a speech based upon previous objections letters submitted. Thanks to Cllr Bulley for proofreading and significant improvements.

d. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

- i. CB/18/01044/FULL – 13 Shefford Road, Meppershall, SG17 5LJ – Single storey rear/side extension. *Proposed Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Smith R. Resolved that the Council has no comments regarding this application. Carried unanimously.*

e. Enforcement / Other Planning Matters

- i. CB/EN/18/0071 – The Village Hall - Alleged non-compliance with planning condition 10 attached to planning permission CB/16/01769/FULL - diverted traffic at High Street/Shefford Road, construction vehicles entering Fildyke Road. *Closed - Heavy vehicles are using Fildyke Road because there is a temporary road closure along Shefford Road, and the diversion route is sending the traffic along Fildyke Road.*
- ii. CB/EN/18/0126 – Land adj. to 23 Shefford Road – Alleged breach of pre-commencement conditions attached to planning permission CB/18/00756/VOC – works to trees. *Closed - The planning officer is dealing with details for CB/18/00756/VOC relating to access and parking, and although some hedgerow has been removed within the nesting season the hedge was inspected prior to any works being carried out, and there are no objections to this, and there is no breach of planning control.*

The Clerk is to contact CBC Planning to ask if the hedge on the footpath side is to be re-planted.

- iii. National Planning Policy Framework consultation. No official Parish Council response will be submitted but councillors are encouraged to respond personally if they wish.
- iv. Letter dated 16th March 2018 from Planning Potential requesting a meeting with the Parish Council, ahead of full public consultation with local residents, to brief Councillors on their approach and ensure that Council is informed of the strategy for engaging constructively with the community regarding the Bandland Nursery site, approved in the Pre-submission Local Plan.

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The Clerk advised the Council that as this site is listed in the Pre-submission Local Plan it is likely to be looked upon favourably by CBC Planning and that it would be prudent not to dismiss the opportunity to put forward village wants and needs for s106 funds, especially if this is the only site allocated to Meppershall over the lifespan of the Local Plan. During ensuing discussions, it was agreed that a Village Leisure Strategy ("wish list") is of great importance and that councillors should come to the June meeting with proposals for discussion and inclusion. To widen the net for ideas, the Clerk was asked to prepare a ½ page notice for the Messenger, the Chairman will raise the issue at the Annual Parish meeting and the Neighbourhood Plan team should include in their work. *Proposed Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Clerk write to Planning Potential explaining that a meeting, at this present moment, would not be appropriate as the outcome of a planning appeal with the Planning Inspectorate is pending and the Local Plan is yet to be submitted and responded to. The outcome of these events will have an impact on decisions made by the Parish Council with regards to development within the village. We would however be happy to receive any plans they have on the site for review pending those decisions. Carried 7 in favour, 1 abstention and 1 not able to vote.*

- v. Clerk to report on meeting with Site Manager at 4 High Street, Meppershall.
The Clerk and Site Manager agreed that workers would be asked not to park on footpaths and that the road was to be kept clear of mud from the site. The Site Manager provided his contact details so that any future issues can be communicated quickly. The Clerk has been asked to raise concerns about workers vehicles mounting the footpath in front of the shop when leaving work which is a community safety issue.
- vi. Clerk to report on response to letter sent to BCCG regarding S106 contributions being used to improve the facilities at Lower Stondon Surgery.
Dr. Carragher has advised that a meeting will be held at the end of April to discuss facilities at Lower Stondon Surgery.

f. Meppershall Action Group (MAG)

Cllr Thomason reported that the group met on 26th March to review the Stocken House appeal preparation which will support CBC and complement the Parish Councils presentation. He would like to thank Bob Lovelock for the huge amount of work he has done and also all other MAG members who have helped in the appeal preparations.

152. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Thomason reported that the grant application was submitted this morning and that at the last team meeting the group allocated roles and responsibilities, reviewed the project plan and discussed the Green Infrastructure Plan that will be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

153. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

a. Cllr Smith R reported:

- i. Road closures due in Shefford, Clifton, Henlow and Letchworth. Details can be found on the Parish Council website.

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- ii. The new Thameslink timetable that begins on 20th May is now available on the GTR website www.railplan2020.com/timetables.
- b. The Clerk provided the following updates:
 - i. CBC are yet to respond to the Clerks numerous emails regarding Hoo Road safety. Cllr Liddiard has been asked to assist in getting a response.
 - ii. Fildyke Road overgrown vegetation at entrance issues is still pending
 - iii. An initial email has been sent to residents with outstanding contributions for Hoo Road resurfacing. No response has yet been received.
 - iv. The Clerk has been asked by resident to contact CBC Highways regarding the effectiveness of the raised table at entrance to Walnut Tree Way. CBC Highways have explained that the table has been installed as designed and approved by them and that the scheme will not be reviewed for at least 6 months.
 - v. A request to receive speed and volume of traffic data from pneumatic road tubes installed on the High Street has been made to the CBC Highways team.
 - vi. CBC Highways plans to upgrade and introduce new speed indicators within the village
 - vii. State of Shefford Road – what action should the Clerk take?
Agreed that the Clerk write to Highways regarding the poor state of Shefford Road and ask them what action they plan to take.

154. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

- a. Cllr Merryweather advised that there was nothing to report.
- b. The clerk reported on:
 - i. 2016/17, 2017/18 seasonal vegetation clearance contribution requests from CBC are still to be addressed and a purchase order for 2018/19 has not yet been received.
 - ii. The goal post for installation at Old Road Meadow has been delivered damaged and cannot be installed. The supplier is organising replacements.
 - iii. The 2018/19 grass cutting schedule will be amended slightly after input from the Church and the School. The Clerk was asked to request that the contractors do not leave cut grass on footpaths after the first cut of the season.
- c. Cllr Foskett provided the following Village Hall update:
 - i. Two street light columns have been installed at the entry junction to Walnut Tree Way and should have been connected on 6th April. Connection of street light columns on Walnut Tree Way is dependent upon UK Power Networks.
 - ii. A site visit will be conducted tomorrow, and a report and photos will then be uploaded to the village hall website by the end of this week, however construction is still on schedule.
 - iii. The design of the changing rooms is such that they will be used by both pitch and hall users.
 - iv. All issues concerning use of the new village hall, including costs, should be raised with Trustees of Meppershall Village Hall who will be happy to meet with groups to discuss their needs. Many discussions with current hall users have already occurred. The aim of the Trustees is to keep hall hire a reasonable as possible for local / village organisations.

155. HEALTH & SAFETY and RISK MANAGEMENT

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The Clerk advised that the land search / registry is still outstanding.

156. PROCEDURES

- a. **Village Emergency Plan** – In progress
- b. **Freedom of Information** – In progress
- c. **Press and Media Relations** – In progress
- d. **Records Management** – In progress
- e. **Employment Handbook and Policies** – Cllr Thompson has completed his review however a Lone Workers Policy is to be added. Once added the document will be circulated for comment.
- f. **Local Government Ethical Standard consultation** – No official Parish Council response will be submitted but councillors are encouraged to respond individually if they wish.
- g. **GDPR update** – The Clerk advised that the Council must appoint an independent Data Protection Officer and that a great deal of work is required to complete a Data Asset Audit, policies and amendments to current procedures. The Meppershall Clerk is one of a group of 11 clerks covering 17 parishes in the local area which has approached the Local Council Public Advisory Service concerning their offer to act as DPO for all the councils in the group for a charge of £125.00 per year to each council; this would include a training session to cover document preparation at £250.00 to the group (cost to be split between all councils attending). The Clerk proposes that the Council accept this offer.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved that subject to agreement of a satisfactory form of contract with LCPAS for the provision of DPO services and that the costs are within the 2018/19 Meppershall budget, the Clerk goes ahead with the appointment of the LCPAS as DPO and participates in training. Carried unanimously.

157. OTHER MEETINGS

None to report

158. CLERKS REPORT & MATTER ARISING

- a. **Understanding Planning Course 1** – Training re-scheduled for Wednesday 16th May at Mount Pleasant Golf Club starting at 7:30pm. Attendee numbers are to be confirmed by 13th May.
- b. **Defibrillator training** – Training scheduled for Thursday 31st May at the Village Hall starting at 11:00am. Agreed that the Clerk would create an article for the Messenger and attach a poster next to the defibrillator to promote the event.
- c. **Letter of complaint to Croudace Homes** – Action has been taken by Croudace, but it was agreed that the Council would wait until all actions had been completed before contacting them again.
- d. **Clerks Laptop** – Gravenhurst Parish Council have suggested that the provision of IT equipment, printers etc to the Clerk could be shared between both parishes if ownership of items was agreed in advance and that any GDPR issues were resolved.
Proposed Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that subject to confirming ownership of items and that there would be no issues with GDPR the clerk could move forward with using IT equipment for both Meppershall and Gravenhurst Parish Councils.

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159. FINANCE

- a. **Section 137 Expenditure: Limit for 2018/19** - £7.86 x 1380 = £10,846.80 allowance for Meppershall.
- b. **Document approval** - journal entries, bank reconciliation and bank statements were reviewed and authorised by Cllr Foskett, Finance Spokesman
- c. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return and appointment of External Auditor (Mazars) and Internal Auditor (Auditing Solutions Ltd)**
Proposed Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Foskett. Resolved that Council approve the appointment of Mazars as External Auditor and Auditing Solutions Ltd as Internal Auditors, and that the Finance Working Group monitor the performance of the Internal Auditor. Carried unanimously.
- d. **Grant requests**
None
- e. **Standing Orders and Direct Debits**
Moved Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Thomason. Resolved that the schedule of payments for standing orders and direct debits 2018/19 be approved and authorised for payment for a period of six months. Carried unanimously.
- f. **Orders for the payment of money**

Payment made prior to April meeting in March 2018			Meeting Date: 9th April 2018	
Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
BACS90	Meppershall Village Hall	Parish Council Meetings Jan to Mar 2018	£90.00	
BACS91	Meppershall Village Hall	LCPAS Training 29/01/18	£30.00	
BACS92	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	£18.00	
Note: Approved standing orders/direct debits not included in payments list			TOTAL	£138.00
Payment requests received before agenda published			Meeting Date: 9th April 2018	
Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
BACS97	CPRE	Annual Membership	£36.00	
BACS93	BATPC	Annual Membership	£369.00	
BACS94	Meppershall Messenger	2018/19 Grant (approved minute ref: 101.d.ii)	£500.00	
BACS95	Wanderbus Ltd	2018/19 Grant (approved minute ref: 101.d.i)	£1,000.00	
BACS96	Broxap Ltd	Goal post supply only for Old Road Meadow	£472.80	
Payment requests received after agenda published				
BACS97	D Foskett	Expenses incurred for bollards	£17.99	
Note: Approved standing orders/direct debits not included in payments list			TOTAL	£2,395.79

Moved Cllr Foskett/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised subject to the following actions:

- BACS96 is authorised for payment only after the Clerk is happy with the product delivered.
- BACS97 be added to the payment list

Carried unanimously.

160. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.15pm

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