

Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Parish Councillors

Mrs A Mickelsen (Chairman)
 I D Wardrop (Vice-Chairman)
 H M Bass
 P J Bates
 Mrs J Elliston
 I S F MacGregor
 R Mundell
 S J Nicholas
 J Williams



Winner Best Kept Village 2009, 2015
 3rd Place Essex Village of the Year 2015
www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org

Parish Clerk

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MINUTES of Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 1 st May 2018 at 8.43pm in the Village Hall's Boardroom	
Item	Subject
18A/01	<p>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</p> <p>In the chair: Cllr Mickelsen Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Elliston, MacGregor, Mundell, Nicholas, Wardrop and Williams; the Clerk. District and County Cllr Durham and five members of the public were present.</p>
18A/02	<p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held 2nd May 2017 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p>
18A/03	<p>Chairman's Remarks and Annual Summary</p> <p>The Chairman began by welcoming all present and thanking Councillors, the Clerk and the Tree Warden for their hard work throughout the year. The resignation of Mr Paul Edwards from the Council at the beginning of the council year was fortunately offset by the co-option of Cllr Judy Elliston in January.</p> <p>The Chairman highlighted the continued high level of planning application-related activity; the largest being the 52 houses in Church Road which was finally rejected on appeal, thanks to input from parishioners and the Parish Council and Maldon District Council's Local Development Plan being approved. The Chairman thanked Cllr MacGregor and the Planning Committee for their involvement, and the Neighbourhood Plan team led by Cllr Williams.</p> <p>Noting the record turn-out for the annual litter pick, the Chairman thanked residents and their families, non-residents, councillors and the Tennis Club for their support. The Chairman expressed hope that the new dog waste bin and paint-spraying of abandoned dog mess would reduce the incidence and nuisance of dog fouling. Cllr Mickelsen was happy to report that Neighbourhood Watch was operative again in the village and thanked Sian Bewick for taking on the responsibility.</p> <p>The much-needed resurfacing of Footpath 1 from Mope Lane to the golf course by Essex County Council (ECC) was followed by the Parish Council re-joining the County Council's Parish Paths Partnership. Led by Cllr Nicholas, a group of volunteers had been trained and begun maintaining the footpaths in between ECC's regular maintenance. Thanks were given to Cllr Nicholas for organising this.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that the air raid shelter had been cleared inside and out and the roof maintained, protecting the road salt stored inside and preparing it for preservation as an item of historical interest. The Chairman was also pleased to note that the telecoms mast finally went live in February, improving access for some parts of the village; it is hoped that more providers with a wider reach will be added.</p> <p>The Chairman explained that residents could follow the Council's progress on Speedwatch and other matters via the noticeboards, email, website, Facebook and the monthly Surgery held at the library. The Chairman thanked Cllrs Bates and Mundell and the Clerk for updating the website and email system.</p> <p>Lastly, the Chairman advised that the formal opening of the affordable housing at Mackmurdo Place had been a particular highlight, taking place during the previous month, with HRH The Princess Royal as patron of the English Rural Housing Association unveiling a plaque and meeting residents and others involved in the housing project.</p>

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18A/04	<p>The Wickham Bishops Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Councillor Williams talked the Assembly through the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan, from the vision and objectives established in 2016 through to the near completion of the draft policies. The draft policies cover the four areas of Economy, Environment, Facilities and Housing and Cllr Williams drew attention to the consultative approach the team had taken in gathering ideas and evidence.</p> <p>Once complete, the pre-Regulation 14 Draft Plan will be reviewed by a planning consultant if necessary and amended, prior to a referendum on its acceptance by the parish.</p> <p>Cllr Williams explained that grants are available to fund the Planning Consultant review and that, while timescales were difficult to predict, if few changes were recommended by the consultant and Maldon District Council, the referendum could be reached late this year.</p>
18A/05	<p>Speedwatch and Traffic Calming Measures</p> <p>Councillor Wardrop reported that the extension of the 30mph limit to the junction of Mope Lane with Church Road had been implemented during the year, as had the first rotation of the Speed Indicating Devices to two new locations. Disappointingly, one of the SIDs had since failed; the County Council was arranging for its replacement under warranty however this would take a minimum of two weeks. Recalling the lengthy delays to the two projects, Cllr Wardrop was not optimistic that the feasibility study into build-outs in The Street, due by April 2018, would be completed soon; some further consultation was required by ECC before progress would be made.</p> <p>The request to Braintree's Local Highways Panel to extend the operational hours of the traffic lights at the junction of Blue Mills Hill and Maldon Road was still in validation.</p> <p>Three more volunteers joined the Speedwatch team and were trained in July 2017. There was a slight reduction to 1091 of the number of vehicles caught exceeding the speed limit over the 95 sessions that the team achieved; one persistent offender's vehicle was targeted and caught by Essex Police and dealt with by prosecution. Essex Police also carried out a TruCAM check, catching a further 100 law breakers, with offences including not wearing a seatbelt and use of mobile phones. All activity has been reported on a monthly summary on the Parish Council's noticeboard next to One Stop. Cllr Wardrop expressed his gratitude to the Speedwatch volunteers for their commitment in turning out in all weathers.</p> <p>Councillor Wardrop stated that a TruCAM unit costs around £8,500 and whilst beyond the means of the Parish Council, the Maldon District Community Protection Team had one for deployment.</p>
18A/06	<p>District Council News and Annual Summary</p> <p>The Chairman of Maldon District Council and Parish Councillor, Cllr Henry Bass, spoke about the role of the Chairman of the District Council. The main purposes were explained as chairing the meetings of the full council and promoting the district and the district council, whilst remaining politically neutral and ensuring all Councillors received an equal chance to be heard. Historically, past Chairmen ("the Chain Gang") had attended galas and functions at adjoining districts to network and promote their areas, but in more recent times and with budget constraints it was preferable to visit local entrepreneurs and demonstrate the district council's support more directly.</p> <p>As Chairman, D/Cllr Bass felt honoured to wear the Chains of Office developed in 1974 and worn by his late father, and also worn by his sister and brother during their subsequent terms of office. D/Cllr Bass invited attendees to examine the Chains he was wearing, and read out their inscription of 'Vision, Courage and Integrity'.</p>
18A/07	<p>County Council News and Annual Summary</p> <p>Essex County Councillor and Leader of Maldon District Council, Cllr Mark Durham CC, presented the financial challenges facing Maldon District Council with a £1.5M reduction from the £8M budget. A major restructure was planned which would be revealed in due course.</p> <p>D/Cllr Durham CC contrasted this budget with Essex County Council's £2Bn budget requiring a £100M saving, highlighting how 80% of the budget would be spent on social care – a percentage that was expected to grow as the population ages.</p>

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	<p>Responding to earlier mentions of the Local Highways Panels, the County Councillor explained that Deputy Leader Cllr Kevin Bentley CC had taken over their responsibility and was working to improve the service. It had been suggested that an increase in budget would become available and issues had been identified with the service delivery from Ringway Jacobs, which was now receiving attention. In answer to a query as to whether parish councils could be represented on the LHPs, D/Cllr Durham CC acknowledged that the strict governance of the LHPs had been relaxed however membership of the panels could not be extended; the issue of parish council representation was being looked at.</p> <p>Regarding the District Council's Community Protection Team (CPT), D/Cllr Durham CC explained that although the CPT's time was chargeable, other parishes had found them effective in cutting antisocial behaviour, enforcing speed limits and preventing dog fouling. Examples of their recent work in checking window tinting, exhaust noise and mobile phone use while driving were given.</p>
18A/08	<p>Public Questions and Forum</p> <p>D/Cllr Durham CC noted the comments from a member of the public who suggested the 30mph zone should be extended past the Five Corners junction due to the dangers in accessing and exiting Back Lane, and recommended the verges along Back Lane be left untrimmed for the benefits of pollinating insects and butterflies. In answer to why the CPT's time was chargeable, D/Cllr Durham CC explained that the team had been increased to eleven personnel and these new employees had been added purely to increase the CPT offering.</p> <p>A member of the public expressed his appreciation of the efforts provided by the Clerk and Councillors.</p>
18A/09	<p>Close of Meeting 9.45pm</p>