

# Wickham Bishops Parish Council

## Parish Councillors

I D Wardrop (Chairman)  
S J Nicholas (Vice Chairman)  
H M Bass  
P J Bates  
K W Jarvis  
P D Layley  
M Mickelsen  
R Mundell  
J Williams



Winner Best Kept Village 2009, 2015  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place Essex Village of the Year 2015  
[www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org](http://www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org)

## Parish Clerk

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MINUTES of Online Parish Council Meeting via Zoom and YouTube Broadcast held on Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2020 at 7.30pm	
Item	Subject
20/239	<b>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</b> In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop (Due to technical difficulties, the Chairman joined the meeting by audio only) Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Jarvis, Layley, Mickelsen, Mundell, Nicholas and Williams and the Clerk. There were 7 observers on the YouTube stream.
20/240	<b>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework</b> There were none.
20/241	<b>Approval of Minutes</b> <u>Minutes of the Online Parish Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020</u> After a minor amendment to the third paragraph of Item 20/224, to add "MDC direct and the Local Government Ombudsman", <b>Resolved</b> that the Minutes were approved, proposed by Cllr Bates, seconded Cllr Williams, all in favour.  <u>Minutes of the Online Finance Committee Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020</u> <b>Resolved</b> that the Minutes were approved, proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Nicholas, all in favour.  <u>Minutes of the Online Planning Committee Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020</u> <b>Resolved</b> that the Minutes be approved, proposed Cllr Mundell, seconded Cllr Bass, all in favour.
20/242	<b>Chairman's Report</b> The Chairman had seen a concerned local resident picking up litter near One Stop and the car park area and thanked her for her efforts.  The Chairman confirmed that he had placed the wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday. Two other Councillors were also there, together with a few residents.
20/243	<b>Clerk's Report</b> The meeting acknowledged the updated Issues List.
20/244	<b>Public Forum</b> Correspondence had been received on the topics of Flooding and Fireworks and these had been placed on the Agenda for consideration.
20/245	<b>Planning Applications and Decisions</b> <i>Applications had been circulated to all Councillors, prior to publication of the agenda, for study ahead of the meeting. It was noted that Cllr Jarvis would not take place in voting on Planning Applications as he may be required to do so at Maldon District Council.</i>

	<p><b>Planning Applications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>20/01124/HOUSE Erection of single storey rear orangery, Pine Trees, The Street, Wickham Bishops.</b> <b>Resolved:</b> The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL, proposed Cllr Mundell, seconded Cllr Bass, all in favour.</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity in relation to land behind 9 Church Road:</b> There was no activity to report. A local resident had queried this item on the Agenda and the Chairman took the opportunity to reiterate that in the past 50+ houses had been proposed for this site. The application had eventually been refused but the Parish Council felt it prudent to keep a watching brief on the area for possible future developments.</p> <p><b>The following decision made by Maldon District Council was noted:</b></p> <p>FUL/MAL/20/00837, Erection of stable block/car port and construction of manege for personal use. Bouncers Farm, Wickham Hall Lane. APPROVED.</p>
20/246	<p><b>Traffic Calming &amp; Highway Matters</b></p> <p><u>Snows Corner parking, update</u> As agreed, an article had been placed in the Parish Magazine (as well as the PC noticeboard and Facebook page) making residents aware that it was an offence to park against a dropped kerb. Regarding the possibility of yellow lines, the Chairman had been in contact with SEPP who had referred him to the policy which indicated this area did not meet the criteria for parking enforcement. It was acknowledged that this had been raised before and the same conclusion had been reached that, if parking were to be restricted in this area, it would only push motorists further down The Street where the road was narrower, and cause problems there. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Chairman to write to the resident who had raised the issue and explain that the Parish Council had considered the matter but would not be pursuing it further.</i> <b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to write to BHSA and ask them to cut back the vegetation at the Village Hall frontage to improve the visibility for motorists exiting Church Road.</i></p> <p><u>Tiptree Road Footway extension, update</u> The meeting were disappointed that the vegetation had <i>still</i> not been cut back. The Chairman had been in touch with ECC Highways. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Chairman to contact Cllr Durham.</i></p> <p><u>White Gates – speed and volume surveys update</u> The meeting acknowledged that survey cables had appeared recently but there had been no information forthcoming. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Chairman to chase ECC Highways.</i></p> <p><u>Bus shelter (Maldon bound), update</u> As agreed, the Clerk had liaised with Great Totham PC and established that their bus shelter had been obtained through the Local Highways Panel. Correspondence from the Passenger Transport Team indicated that a revised programme would be launched shortly.</p> <p><u>Carriageway flooding, update</u> The Chairman reported that he had happened to pass by when the Highways Engineer was inspecting the carriageway outside 2 Blacksmiths Lane. It was disappointing to note that the Engineer felt it was unlikely a long-term solution would be found. The resident had emailed again with more photographs showing the water almost reaching their house and reiterating that it did not subside after 2 hours. Councillors agreed that this was a situation which should not be allowed to continue and at the very least, Highways should be taking steps to clear the drains which could be seen to be blocked. On the subject of leaves possibly adding to blocked drains, the Clerk had established that MDC carried out street cleaning every 6 weeks, the last visit being 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Chairman to contact Cllr Durham and insist that Highways take action to clear these drains at the earliest opportunity and impress upon him the impossible situation the householder found themselves in, which should not be allowed to continue.</i></p> <p>It was acknowledged that there were several other areas in the village which continued to flood during wet weather. However, it was suggested that we ask Highways to concentrate on Blacksmiths Lane at this time. In the meantime, Councillors would draw up a list of other areas to present to Highways at a later date.</p>

	The Chairman was hopeful that Speedwatch would be allowed to resume soon. Whilst laying the wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, he noted motorists passing at between 40mph – 45mph.
<b>20/247</b>	<b>Pavements</b> The Chairman had asked for this item as some pavements in the village were in a very poor condition. It was generally acknowledged that the worst of these was Blacksmiths Lane which was a patchwork quilt of previous repairs. A recent problem with a raised manhole cover had been reported. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to make enquiries through Great Totham Parish Council to ask how they had achieved the recent resurfacing of their pavements.</i>
<b>20/248</b>	<b>Fireworks in Wickham Bishops</b> Several emails had been received from residents bringing the Parish Council’s attention to the impact of prolonged firework noise on residents, family pets, wildlife and livestock. It was acknowledged that whilst fireworks were enjoyed by many, it was the noise level which was the disturbing factor. The Parish Council were mindful of the concerns of residents and considered the options available. Discussion took place around the current decibel limit and the availability of ‘industrial’ fireworks which were even louder. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Parish Council agreed to lobby the local MP to ask for a reduction in firework noise levels.</i>  <b>Action:</b> <i>In September/October 2021 the Parish Council would consider something similar to Chelmsford City Council’s ‘Rocket o’Clock’, remind residents of the 11pm limit and encourage them in the interests of good neighbourliness to organise their firework displays to take place on 5<sup>th</sup> November or one other evening only in an attempt to reduce the stress caused to fellow residents, family pets and livestock.</i>
<b>20/249</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Plan Update</b> The Regulation 15 consultation had taken place and Cllr Williams was awaiting confirmation of the response numbers from MDC, which were understood to be low. Cllr Nicholas made the point that we should not necessarily take this as a negative and that in his experience, people often only responded to consultations when they were dissatisfied. Cllr Williams thanked all those residents who had responded.
<b>20/250</b>	<b>Library Strategy Working Group Update</b> Cllr Jarvis was awaiting a response from Caroline Peters who had agreed to set up a meeting with Cllr Barker to discuss the way forward.
<b>20/251</b>	<b>Rainbow Field - replacement trees</b> Cllr Bass was pleased to report that Maldon District Council were agreeable to supplying the replacement trees and Chris Cooke was prepared to assist with planting. He added that more substantial straps may be required but this would be confirmed.
<b>20/252</b>	<b>Finance</b> <u>To note and agree recommendations of the Finance Committee</u> Cllr Mickelsen highlighted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internal Audit: No issues raised.</li> <li>- Internal Controls: The PC were doing all they could in the current situation.</li> <li>- Internal Auditor: <b>Action:</b> <i>Clerk to check that Mike Letch is agreeable to carrying out 2020/21 internal audit.</i></li> <li>- Asset Register: Updated Asset Register noted. <b>Action:</b> <i>Clerk to ask handyman to quote for repairs to Chequers Noticeboard. (It was noted that repairs had recently been carried out presumably by BHSA who it was thought were joint owners. The Clerk to check first).</i></li> <li>- Risk Assessment: <b>Action:</b> <i>Clerk to make alterations as suggested with a view to formal adoption at the January 2021 PC Meeting.</i></li> </ul> <u>Budget &amp; Precept for 2021-22 as recommended by the Finance Committee</u> Reserves at year end would be in the region of £14,760, an underspend of £4,000 mostly due to reasons around the pandemic. Reserves were still in line with recommendations.

Replacement Laptop The meeting noted that the screen on the PC laptop had deteriorated and was unrepairable. **Action:** Agreed that an emergency purchase of a replacement laptop in the region of £1500 be made as this was essential to the Parish Council and Clerk, proposed by Cllr Wardrop, seconded by Cllr Mundell, all in favour.

Moody Homes footpath Councillors agreed to set aside the sum of £1500 for works to the footpath. **Action:** Clerk to check whether WBPC had been successful in its Locality Fund application. **Action:** Cllr Jarvis to contact Jackie Longman at MDC and ask for her assistance and involvement in the project.

Cllr Mickelsen reported that the Finance Committee were keen to keep the Precept the same as last year. Taking the above amendments into account, the Precept figures would be adjusted and presented to the January PC Meeting for final approval by the Council in time for submission to MDC before the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021 deadline.

The following balances were noted, and the meeting agreed to authorise the payments below:

<b>Finance Report for Wickham Bishops Parish Council</b>					
<b>December 2020 Parish Council Meeting</b>					
Prepared by:	Lorraine Bailey, Parish Clerk & RFO			29 Nov 20	
<b>Status as at 29 November 2020</b>		<b>Debit</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Balances B/F</b>	<b>Balances C/F</b>
Unity Trust Current Account				19,290.82	
Unity Trust Deposit Account				0.00	
Barclays Business Premium Account				0.00	
Barclays Community Account				0.00	
Petty Cash Float				0.00	
Unbanked Cash				0.00	
Stamps				12.26	
Total Funds Held 29/11/2020				19,303.08	
<b>Unity Trust Current Account Transactions December</b>					
IP0448	J&M Payroll Services	-24.00			
IP0449	SLCC, ILCA Fee (Clerk Training)	-118.80			
IP0450	L A Bailey - Clerks Salary	-700.77			
IP0451	L A Bailey - Reimbursement - Zoom monthly subs	-14.39			
	Total Transactions	-857.96	0.00		
	<b>Unity Trust Current Account Balance</b>				<b>18,432.86</b>
<b>Stamps November</b>					
	Stamp Purchase	0.00			
	Stamp Use	-2.60			
	Total Transactions	-2.60	0.00		
	Stamp Balance 29/11/2020				9.66
	<b>Total Funds Held 29/11/2020 Including Stamps</b>				<b>18,442.52</b>

**20/253**

**Delegated Powers**

It was agreed that the delegated powers in respect of Covid-19 should remain in place.

**20/254**

**Neighbourhood Watch Update**

Cllr Bates had written a piece in the Parish Magazine asking for a volunteer from each street WhatsApp group in an attempt to set up a central network, as they had successfully done in nearby Woodham Walter. He had received one response so far and would ask again in the February Parish Magazine. Cllr Bass offered to contact residents of Maypole Road.

**20/255**

**District Council Report**

Cllr Jarvis was pleased to report that MDC's 31<sup>st</sup> March accounts had been signed off. They continued to liaise with leisure centres during this sensitive and challenging time. The Unitary Authority proposal had been

	deferred for at least a year. Cllr Jarvis had been contacted with concerns over travellers possibly gaining access to BHS land and had put the BHS in touch with MDC for practical advice.
<b>20/256</b>	<b>Progress Reports from Councillors</b> There were none.
<b>20/257</b>	<b>Correspondence</b> Councillors were asked to read the correspondence from EALC on the Essex Climate Action Commission – Interim Report. <b>Action:</b> <i>To be placed on the January 2021 Agenda for consideration.</i>  An email had been received regarding the 2021 Census, the first year in which the information from residents would mostly be collected digitally. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to invite the 2021 Census Engagement Officer to our February 2021 Parish Council to give a short talk.</i>
<b>20/258</b>	<b>General Village News and Events to Note</b> Following the lifting of lockdown restrictions, it was noted that the new toy shop in Wickham Bishops would be opening tomorrow.  It was regrettable that there would not be an opportunity to thank those volunteers who had helped during the year. However, the Chairman confirmed that he would be sending thank you letters to the Speedwatch volunteers.
<b>20/259</b>	<b>Date of Next Meetings:</b> Planning Committee Meeting – Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 (if required) Full Parish Council Meeting - Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2021, 7.30pm
<b>20/260</b>	<b>Close of Meeting</b> There being no further business, the Chairman wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and the meeting closed at 9.10pm.  Item for future agendas: - Standing item to consider whether the delegated powers in respect of Covid-19 can be lifted