

# Wickham Bishops Parish Council

## Parish Councillors

Mrs A Mickelsen (Chairman)  
I D Wardrop (Vice-Chairman)  
H M Bass  
P J Bates  
K W Jarvis  
I S F MacGregor  
R Mundell  
S J Nicholas  
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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<b>MINUTES of Parish Council Meeting</b> <b>held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall Boardroom</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>
<b>19/207</b>	<b>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</b> In the chair: Cllr Mickelsen Present: Cllrs Bass (arr. 7.03pm), Bates, Jarvis, Nicholas, Wardrop and Williams; the Clerk. Apologies for absence from Cllrs MacGregor and Mundell were given. There was one member of the public present.
<b>19/208</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework</b> There were no Declarations of Interests.
<b>19/209</b>	<b>Approval of Minutes</b> <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Nicholas. <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Williams. <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.
<b>19/210</b>	<b>Chairman's Report</b> The Chairman had nothing to report from November.
<b>19/211</b>	<b>Clerk's Report</b> Cllr Bass joined the meeting.  The Clerk stated that the Council's insurers were happy for Members to undertake minor maintenance tasks such as verge and hedge trimming with a suitable risk assessment. <b>Action:</b> Cllr Nicholas to monitor the state of the verges outside One Stop and The Mitre and advise when work was needed.  The trimming of the vegetation which had been obscuring visibility at Blue Mills bridge was noted. <b>Action:</b> D/Cllr Jarvis to ask the Local Highways Panel (LHP) Officer if this was as a result of the Parish Council's efforts to increase the frequency of cutting or as part of the inadequate twice-yearly schedule.  A temporary repair to the loose kerbstone by Handley's Lane had been arranged and the Manager of Benton Hall been chased regarding the overgrown hedges along Mope Lane and Blue Mills Hill. Sadly, no response had been received from the residents responsible for the hedge near the war memorial. <b>Action:</b> The Clerk to chase Moat Housing regarding the hedge by the Kelvedon Road bus stop.  The Clerk's request for signage at Carters Lane had been accepted onto the LHP's unfunded schemes list. <b>Action:</b> Cllr Wardrop to obtain photographs of the blocked drains' locations along Wickham Hall Lane.  <b>Action:</b> Councillors to report to the Clerk the time, date and state of the streetlight at the junction of Arbour Lane and Blacksmiths Lane, to aid the investigation into its intermittent illumination.

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	<p>It was unclear whether the drainage improvement works, along Footpath 12 from Church Green to Grange Road, were complete. There was also confusion over the unexpected re-routing of the northern end of Footpath 12 along the field edge from the track, by Essex County Council (ECC).</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to request the approved plans of the drainage works for D/Cllr Jarvis.</i></p> <p>Finally, the Clerk advised that the Essex Highways survey had been completed and a nil return for Maldon District Council's (MDC's) Rough Sleeper estimate submitted.</p>
<b>19/212</b>	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <p>The invoice for the Landscape Character Assessment had been received and the Leader of the NHP Steering Group, Cllr Williams, was pleased to note that it was £500 less than expected. Ms Alpin of MDC had been asked to review the draft plan and to help identify a suitable Examiner, with submission planned around the beginning of June 2020. The next meeting was scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> January.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the Parish Council would respond with 'No Comment' to the Langford &amp; Ulting Neighbourhood Plan consultation. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Williams.</p>
<b>19/213</b>	<p><b>Library Strategy Working Group</b></p> <p>Cllr Jarvis, Leader of the Library Strategy Working Group, reported that the first Warhammer club session had been successful with 12 scouts attending; more were expected at the next session. Further clubs were planned, however volunteers were still needed to lead them; public liability insurance would be covered under ECC's policy for low-risk clubs operating within the library.</p> <p>The Clerk was pleased to clarify that the clubs could have their own social media accounts as required, however any public statements from the Working Group, being part of the Parish Council, should be made on the Council's Facebook page and website.</p> <p>A meeting with ECC's representative was expected before Christmas, to discuss whether a community-supported library option was available.</p> <p>The £500 grant for furniture had not yet been spent.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Cllr Jarvis to advise the Clerk how many chairs were required.</i></p>
<b>19/214</b>	<p><b>Public Forum - a maximum of 15 minutes with no more than 3 minutes per person</b></p> <p>A member of the public reported that a bus stop sign had been attached to a telegraph pole in his front garden on Kelvedon Road. The installers had been observed trespassing in order to affix the sign, which the resident believed encouraged bus users to queue on his private driveway, due to there being no footway in the location. The parishioner was advised to contact County Cllr Mark Durham.</p> <p>A member of the public left the meeting.</p>
<b>19/215</b>	<p><b>Planning Applications and Decisions</b></p> <p><u>Applications</u></p> <p><b>19/01161/FUL - Leys Manor Langford Road Wickham Bishops</b></p> <p>No letters of representation had been received.</p> <p>Cllr Wardrop reported that the design was an amended version of an approved application made earlier in the year, which the Parish Council had supported. The alteration was to the facing material of a retaining wall, due to the proximity of trees and the soil conditions making the original material unsuitable.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Nicholas.</p> <p>There were no delegated responses made by the Parish Clerk or decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate, to note. The decisions made by Maldon District Council were noted. In addition, the Council noted three further decisions made by the planning authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WTPO/MAL/19/01044 - Oakwood 11 School Road Wickham Bishops – APPROVE</li> <li>- WTPO/MAL/19/01045 - Acorns 13 School Road Wickham Bishops – APPROVE</li> <li>- FUL/MAL/19/01050 - Pinetrees Blacksmiths Lane Wickham Bishops – APPROVE</li> </ul> <p>The Clerk reported that all three TPO applications in the vicinity of School Road had now been approved.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>D/Cllr Jarvis to take the Parish Council's concerns about the district council's Tree Consultant, reportedly accompanied by a private contractor on appointments, to MDC's directors.</i></p>

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<b>19/216</b>	<p><b>Monthly Councillor Surgeries</b></p> <p>There was one visitor to the 23<sup>rd</sup> November Surgery, with queries relating to a substation and traffic calming on Blue Mills Hill. Councillors were able to reassure the resident that it was a replacement of an existing utility and gave an update on LHP request progress.</p> <p>Attendees at the 21<sup>st</sup> December Surgery will be Cllrs Mickelsen and Wardrop, with Cllr Jarvis in his District Council capacity if possible.</p>
<b>19/217</b>	<p><b>Neighbourhood Watch Report</b></p> <p>An outbuilding at a property on Wickham Hall Lane had been burgled during the weekend prior. The NHW Coordinator was advising the owners on additional security measures.</p>
<b>19/218</b>	<p><b>District Council Report</b></p> <p>D/Cllr Jarvis stated that MDC's accounts were close to being signed off, and an action plan would be established in the new year to tackle the system failures and auditor's observations. The budget was being developed, although it was being hampered by a lack of clarity around existing income streams.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to email MDC's Director of Service Delivery Mr Richard Holmes over the removal of all contact numbers from MDC's website.</i></p>
<b>19/219</b>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The balances were noted and the list of payments agreed. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Wardrop.</p> <p>The recommendations of the Finance Committee were noted.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The Parish Council would appoint Mr Mike Letch as internal auditor. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Wardrop.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the Tax Base figure had not been released by MDC but was expected to be slightly higher than the previous year.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The budget was agreed and the Precept set at £20,276 giving a 2020 Band D equivalent of £20.40, based on last year's Tax Base. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to submit the Precept request and circulate the Band D figure once the 2020 Tax Base was available.</i></p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>The Chairman and Clerk to write an article for the March 2020 parish magazine explaining the reasons for the increase.</i></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The updated Financial Regulations were agreed and adopted. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Williams.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The Parish Council would appoint Mr George Wise as the grass cutting contractor at a cost of £70 per cut (<i>in accordance with the General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, s.1(1)</i>). Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Williams.</p>
<b>19/220</b>	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>The responses received from the DVLA, Essex County Councillor Simon Walsh and Moody Homes were noted.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Councillors to photograph and note the time, date and registration marks of untaxed vehicles parked on the public highway along Great Totham Road, and to send the details to the Clerk for compilation.</i></p>
<b>19/221</b>	<p><b>Progress Reports from Councillors</b></p> <p>Cllr Nicholas advised that Footpath 3 had been stabilised and resurfaced by the building contractors at Lintons on Station Road, and he hoped that the Rosina Place footpath would be to a similar standard.</p> <p>Cllr Bates stated that he was trialling a free alternative website hosting service called The Voice, for the Horticultural Club. If all went well, the Parish Council would be asked to consider using the same service.</p> <p>A parishioner who had complained about antisocial parking had been disappointed to learn that there was little that could be done.</p>

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	Finally, Cllr Wardrop reported that 104 vehicles had been captured exceeding the speed limit by his Speedwatch team in November; the next meeting of the LHP would be on 6 <sup>th</sup> December.
<b>19/222</b>	<b>General Village News to Note:</b> The fundraising initiative by The Mulberry Spa to provide a defibrillator outside The Mitre was noted.
<b>19/223</b>	<b>Dates of Next Meetings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 Planning Committee Meeting at 10.30am (<i>if required, earlier date</i>)</li> <li>- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm</li> </ul>
<b>19/224</b>	<b>Close of Meeting 9.03pm</b> Items for future agendas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (Full Council, 4<sup>th</sup> February)</li> <li>- Annual review of asset register and risk assessment (Finance meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> March)</li> </ul>