

Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Parish Councillors

Mrs A Mickelsen (Chairman)
I D Wardrop (Vice-Chairman)
H M Bass
P J Bates
K W Jarvis
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 Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 4th February 2020 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Boardroom	
Item	Subject
20/023	<p>Those Present and Apologies for Absence In the chair: Cllr Mickelsen Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Nicholas, Wardrop; the Clerk. There were no members of the public present. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Jarvis, Mundell and Williams.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Mickelsen, reported the sad news that ex-Cllr Iain MacGregor had passed away in January. Remarking on the personal loss of a friend and colleague and the gratitude felt by all present for his contribution and friendship, the Chairman thanked the Councillors and Clerk for attending his funeral. A minute's silence to respect ex-Cllr MacGregor's memory was held in tribute.</p>
20/024	<p>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework There were no Declarations of Interests.</p>
20/025	<p>Approval of Minutes Resolved: that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th January 2020 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p>
20/026	<p>Chairman's Report The Chairman had nothing further to report.</p>
20/027	<p>Clerk's Report The Clerk was expecting Maldon District Council's (MDC's) confirmation that co-option could begin and had provided the banking mandate forms to Cllr Nicholas. A fire extinguisher had been installed in the air raid shelter and the dog waste bin stickers ordered. Maldon District Council was waiting for a delivery of dog waste bins and would install the two additional bins when received.</p> <p>It was suggested that the blocked drains along Blue Mills Hill had been cleared, following the road traffic collisions near Blue Mills Bridge during icy weather. The Clerk had received a request for information and was liaising with Essex Highways and one of the drivers.</p> <p>Action: Councillors and Clerk to monitor the drainage during the next period of heavy rain.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk to create a poll on the Parish Council's Facebook page to gather data on the effectiveness of the traffic lights' timing change.</p>
20/028	<p>Neighbourhood Plan On behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, the Clerk reported that the raw data behind the Landscape Character Assessment had been obtained and would form part of the evidence base. More evidence was required to support the Local Green Spaces, which would otherwise need to be removed from the Plan. The Leader of the Steering Group, Cllr Williams, had been pleased to note a good response to the request for photographs and historical documents.</p> <p>A 'light-touch refresh' of the Strategic Environmental Assessment was being sought and costs were being obtained for a consultant to review the Draft Plan and to provide the Basic Conditions Statement.</p>

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20/029	<p>Library Strategy Working Group</p> <p>The Clerk read out a report from Cllr Jarvis, Leader of the Library Strategy Working Group. The Vision Statement had been amended in line with the Parish Council's requirements and delivered to: the Essex Library Strategy representative; to County Cllrs Finch, Barker and Durham; and to the Witham MP the Rt Hon Priti Patel. A further meeting with the Essex Library Strategy team was expected, when the Working Group members would be pressing for agreement in principle to the acquisition of the building by the Parish Council and a Community-Supported library service.</p> <p>The clubs continued to meet with more groups planned. The tables and chairs had been delivered and were now in use and ECC had been asked to provide heating outside normal library hours so that clubs could make greater use of the building's availability.</p>
20/030	<p>Public Forum - a maximum of 15 minutes with no more than 3 minutes per person</p> <p>There were no members of the public present.</p>
20/031	<p>Planning Applications and Decisions</p> <p>The delegated response made by the Parish Clerk and the decisions made by Maldon District Council and the Planning Inspectorate were noted.</p> <p>There was no motion put forward to respond to the <i>Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document</i> consultation.</p>
20/032	<p>Monthly Councillor Surgeries</p> <p>There were three visitors with three queries at the 18th January Surgery. A question about social housing at the Moody Homes development was referred to Maldon District Council and Councillors gave updates on the proposed footway along Tiptree Road and the intermittently working streetlight on Blacksmith's Lane.</p> <p>Attendees at the 15th February Surgery will be Cllrs Mickelsen and Wardrop.</p> <p>Action: Cllr Wardrop to consult library staff on the logistics of holding the Surgery on what will be 'Love Your Library' day.</p>
20/033	<p>Neighbourhood Watch Report</p> <p>The vacant NHW Coordinator role had been announced in the parish magazine and on the Facebook page. No-one had yet volunteered.</p> <p>It was reported that a WhatsApp group, set up by a village resident, was being used to share information.</p>
20/034	<p>District Council Report</p> <p>The Clerk read out a report from District Councillor Jarvis. The District Council's budget was expected to be approved on 13th February, however proposed increases to car parking and wharf fees were attracting media attention. Financial accountability was under intense scrutiny from the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee. D/Cllr Jarvis had also raised the issue of insufficient oversight of the ditch improvement works from Church Green to Grange Road.</p> <p>The Parish Council's concerns over a third-party contractor attending site visits with MDC's appointed Tree Warden had been raised with senior staff at MDC. An investigation was said to be underway.</p> <p>MDC would also be responding to the Clerk's concern that the main telephone number was no longer displayed on the website. The request to add an explanatory note to MDC's Planning Notice was refused.</p> <p>Finally, the District Councillor had visited properties in Wickham Bishops to better understand planning breach issues.</p>
20/035	<p>Traffic Calming</p> <p>Cllr Wardrop reported that the proposal to resurface the northern end of Handley's Lane had been refused. The request to improve signage along Witham Road had appeared on the unfunded schemes list and the project to provide a bus cage marking at the Kelvedon Road bus stop was in validation.</p> <p>Sadly, speeding remained a problem, with 48 drivers caught exceeding the speed limit by TRUCam in December and 25 vehicles caught by Speedwatch in January. A review of Speedwatch, held by Essex Police, had been attended by Cllr Wardrop.</p>

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20/036	<p>Governance: Annual Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Resolved: that the Parish Council would re-adopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations with no amendments. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Wardrop.</p>
20/037	<p>Finance The Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer stated that the turnover forecast for 2019-2020 was slightly over the external audit limit, which would attract costs. This was due to Neighbourhood Plan one-offs. The Clerk would delay non-urgent works to try to bring the total expenditure below the £25,000 limit. Resolved: The balances were noted and the list of payments agreed. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Nicholas.</p> <p>Resolved: The Parish Council would make a £50 charitable donation to 'Children with Cancer' in memory of ex-Chairman and Councillor of Wickham Bishops Parish Council, Mr Iain MacGregor <i>in accordance with the General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, s.1(1)</i>. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Bass. Action: The Clerk to investigate a suitable bench for a memorial plaque for ex-Cllr MaGregor for consideration at the 3rd March meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: The Parish Council would replace the streetlight at the junction of Arbour Lane and Blacksmith's Lane at a cost of £299 + VAT <i>in accordance with the General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, s.1(1)</i>. Proposed Cllr Nicholas, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p>
20/038	<p>Annual Litter Pick It was noted that the Great Britain Spring Clean would be held between 20th March and 13th April. Resolved: The Parish Litter Pick would be held on 28th March and a survey of the state of repair of the pavements would be included. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p>
20/039	<p>Correspondence The request from a person involved in a road traffic incident near Blue Mills bridge was noted.</p> <p>A complaint about parking on Great Totham Road and The Street had been received. It was hoped that the Government's consultation on footway parking would provide powers to tackle anti-social parking. Action: The Clerk to contact Moody Homes regarding parking on Great Totham Road.</p>
20/040	<p>Progress Reports from Councillors The Chairman thanked Cllr Bates for his work on readying the website to move to a new hosting provider. Action: Councillors and Clerk to review their website profiles and provide updates to Cllr Bates. Action: The Clerk to re-circulate the Councillors' contact details and road responsibilities.</p> <p>Cllr Bass was pleased to advise that MDC would replace six trees at Rainbow Field that had died.</p> <p>The Public Rights of Way volunteer team had addressed further muddy areas along Handley's Lane. Cllr Nicholas was pleased with the enthusiastic response and expected further work to be undertaken.</p>
20/041	<p>General Village News to Note It was reported that The Mitre would be re-opening as a coffee shop during February.</p>
20/042	<p>Dates of Next Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friday 21st February 2020 Planning Committee Meeting at 10.30am <i>(if required)</i> - Tuesday 3rd March 2020 Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm
20/043	<p>Close of Meeting 9.07pm Items for future agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review of asset register and risk assessment (Finance meeting, 20th March)