

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 7 th January 2020 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Boardroom	
Item	Subject
20/001	<p>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</p> <p>In the chair: Cllr Mickelsen</p> <p>Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Jarvis, Mundell (arr. 7.37pm) Nicholas, Wardrop and Williams; the Clerk. There were three members of the public present including Mr Chris Cooke, the Wickham Bishops Tree Warden.</p> <p>Apologies for possible lateness due to work commitments had been received from Cllr Mundell.</p>
20/002	<p>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interests.</p>
20/003	<p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd December 2019 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Wardrop.</p>
20/004	<p>Chairman's Report</p> <p>The Chairman advised that Cllr MacGregor had resigned from the Parish Council due to ill health and expressed her thanks for his many years of selfless service in various roles, notably as Chairman of the Parish Council and most recently as Chairman of the Planning Committee. All present expressed their support and thanks, and their best wishes for ex-Cllr MacGregor's future.</p>
20/005	<p>Clerk's Report</p> <p>The Clerk reported on the outstanding items on the updated Issues List and received confirmation from Councillors that the three-month trial of the extension to the traffic lights' working hours had begun. The intermittent streetlight on Blacksmiths Lane was now being investigated by UK Power Networks.</p> <p>The 2020 Precept had been submitted to Maldon District Council (MDC) and the new internal auditor advised of his selection. The Clerk had used the Parish Council's Facebook page to advise residents of widespread disruption to their water supply on New Year's Day and reported an over-full dog waste bin to MDC.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk to design and have printed, stickers for the parish's dog waste bins advising users to report over-full bins directly to MDC, along with the main MDC contact number.</p> <p>Cllr Mundell joined the meeting.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk to write again to residents on Station Road regarding their overgrown hedge.</p>
20/006	<p>Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Cllr Williams, leader of the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) Steering Group, was pleased to note that two residents had offered photographic evidence for the special spaces around the parish. The Environment section of the NHP had been re-written; following the Group's approval, the Parish Council would be asked to consider the revised Plan prior to a final health check and submission to MDC.</p>

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20/007	<p>Library Strategy Working Group Cllr Jarvis, leader of the Library Working Group, stated that the furniture was expected to arrive mid-January and would be stored in the air raid shelter. In response to a request from ECC's Library Outreach representative, the group had developed a draft Vision. Cllr Jarvis outlined the draft's key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The library would operate as a Community Supported Library, with ECC providing the library service and a core of professional staff, supplemented by volunteers - all current benefits and book reservation & replenishment systems would be included; - The library building would be owned and maintained by a charity set up by the Parish Council; - A stronger social hub and greater use of the building would be achieved through increased groups and clubs. <p>Acknowledging that many Expressions of Interest (EoI) for other Essex libraries had been withdrawn, Cllr Jarvis explained that few others had the opportunity to acquire an important asset for their parishes.</p>
20/008	<p>Public Forum A member of the public and of the Library Working Group explained that continuing to engage with ECC over the EoI had revealed the Community Supported Library opportunity.</p> <p>A member of the public urged the Parish Council to ask for close-boarded fencing along the new footpath, citing safeguarding concerns at the scout camp that would arise with chain-link fencing.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, Ms Sian Bewick, joined the meeting.</p>
20/009	<p>Planning Applications and Decisions</p> <p>There were no applications or appeals received from Maldon District Council to consider, and 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.</p> <p>Following ex-Cllr MacGregor's resignation, Cllr Bass volunteered for and was appointed to the Planning Committee.</p>
20/010	<p>Monthly Councillor Surgeries</p> <p>There were no visitors to the 21st December Surgery. Attendees at the 18th January Surgery will be Cllrs Bass and Wardrop, with Cllr Jarvis in his District Council capacity if possible.</p>
20/011	<p>Neighbourhood Watch Report</p> <p>The NHW Coordinator had been advised by Essex Police that the Christmas period had been quiet for crime, locally and across the Maldon District. Ms Bewick also reported that a free awareness session on gangs and criminal exploitation would be held on 22nd January at Plume School for parents.</p> <p>Noting that that she held the Coordinator role for three years, Ms Bewick announced that she planned to step down within months and thanked the Parish Council for its support. The Chairman expressed the gratitude of the parish for the excellent, professional approach she had brought to the role.</p> <p>A member of the public left the meeting.</p>
20/012	<p>District Council Report</p> <p>District Councillor Jarvis stated that MDC's accounts had finally been signed off, although there were many issues still outstanding, particularly around the budgeting process.</p> <p>D/Cllr Jarvis was still waiting for responses from MDC's Planning team over the request to mention the parish council on MDC's standard Planning Notification letter, and regarding third party contractors accompanying official MDC representatives when visiting applicants.</p> <p>Other complaints had also been made about the difficulty contacting the District Council following the move to only accept reports via the online, form-based system. The District Councillor would continue to press for improvements.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed that the works to the ditch running south from Church Green to Grange Road, designed to alleviate the flooding of properties, had not been implemented properly.</p>

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	Action: The Clerk to write to County Cllr Mark Durham and Mr Richard Holmes at MDC, asking who is responsible for ensuring the works to the ditch are completed successfully.
20/013	<p>Public Rights of Way</p> <p>The Clerk explained that Moody Homes, developers of the 'Land East of Malone Cottage' site and providers of the new footpath, had offered to install chain-link or close-boarded fencing along the scout camp side and had asked the Parish Council to decide.</p> <p>Councillors noted that close-boarded fencing had been installed along the opposite side of the footpath as planned. Given the minimum 2metre width of the path, it was considered that the path would not feel claustrophobic if close-boarded to both sides. Councillors acknowledged that chain-link fencing would cause a safeguarding issue.</p> <p>Resolved: The Council would request close-boarded fencing along the scout camp side of the new Malone Field footpath. Proposed Cllr Mundell, seconded Cllr Williams.</p>
20/014	<p>Traffic Calming</p> <p>Resolved: The Council would support both of the Local Highways Panel's (LHP's) suggested schemes for Witham Road / Blue Mills Hill, being a rearrangement of the signage and creation of a haunch / overrun area to the north corner of the Mope Lane junction. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Jarvis.</p> <p>The Essex Police Speedwatch review on 8th January at the library, with Cllr Wardrop and other Speedwatch representatives, was noted.</p> <p>Reporting on 2019's activity, Cllr Wardrop stated that 94 Speedwatch sessions had captured 1254 vehicles exceeding the speed limit, with 246 caught by TRUCam and referred for Police action. Very high TRUCam figures in November showed that Wickham Bishops still had a problem with speeding motorists.</p>
20/015	<p>Finance</p> <p>Resolved: The balances were noted and the list of payments agreed. Proposed Cllr Mundell, seconded Cllr Williams.</p> <p>The confirmed 2020 Band D equivalent figure of £20.39 was noted.</p> <p>Action: The Chairman and Clerk to provide a parish magazine article explaining the Precept increase by 15th March.</p> <p>Following ex-Cllr MacGregor's resignation, Cllr Nicholas volunteered for and was appointed to the Finance Committee.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk to arrange the amendments to the banking mandate.</p>
20/016	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>A complaint and subsequent apology had been received from a resident who had missed the Parish Council Surgery.</p>
20/017	<p>Progress Reports from Councillors</p> <p>A suggestion to declare Wickham Bishops a 'No Cold Calling' zone would be referred to the Annual Parish Assembly in May.</p> <p>The Arbour Lane water leak was fixed promptly by Essex & Suffolk Water following Cllr Mundell's report.</p> <p>Testing of an alternative and free website hosting service had progressed well and Cllr Bates was ready to begin copying over the Parish Council's site, which would run in parallel with the existing until proven.</p> <p>The Public Rights of Way volunteers, led by Cllr Nicholas, would be top-dressing the Handleys Lane byway once more as further muddy patches had developed. Cllr Nicholas would also be investigating a complaint about the footbridge on Footpath 1 being too slippery.</p>
20/018	<p>General Village News to Note</p> <p>There was no village news to note.</p>

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20/019	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public Resolved: In accordance with s.1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded from the meeting as there existed a likelihood that confidential or exempt information would be disclosed and that this therefore constituted a special reason why publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Jarvis.</p> <p>Three members of the public left the meeting.</p>
20/020	<p>Library Vision Statement Resolved: The Parish Council adopted the Vision Statement with amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Without Prejudice' would be added to the document; - The library building would be owned and operated by a suitable venture - no assumption would be made regarding whether a charity would be established or if the Parish Council would own and manage the building; - A typing error would also be corrected. <p>Proposed Cllr Jarvis, seconded Cllr Williams.</p>
20/021	<p>Dates of Next Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friday 17th January 2020 Planning Committee Meeting at 10.30am (<i>if required</i>) - Tuesday 4th February 2020 Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm
20/022	<p>Close of Meeting 9.56pm Items for future agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (Full Council, 4th February) - Annual review of asset register and risk assessment (Finance meeting, 20th March) - Consider a 'No Cold Calling' zone (Parish Assembly, May)