

# 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 Meeting of the Parish Council via Zoom and YouTube Broadcast held on Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 7.30pm	
Item	Subject
20/122	<p><b>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates (from 7.37pm), Jarvis, Layley, Mickelsen, Mundell, Nicholas and Williams, County Councillor Mark Durham, the Clerk. No members of the public were present. There were 10 observers on the YouTube stream.</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Cllr Layley to his first Parish Council Meeting and Cllr Durham to the meeting.</p>
20/123	<p><b>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework</b></p> <p>Cllr Layley declared a personal interest in the Summer House, Back Lane Planning Application as he lives near the site. Cllr Bates joined the meeting at 7.37pm after experiencing technical difficulties.</p>
20/124	<p><b>Approval of Minutes</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The minutes of the Online Statutory Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 were approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Bass. This being a virtual meeting, the minutes would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.</p>
20/125	<p><b>Chairman's Report</b></p> <p>The Chairman had attended a virtual EALC Chairman's Forum. There was nothing of note to report. The Forums are held once a fortnight and the Chairman would endeavour to attend when possible.</p>
20/126	<p><b>Clerk's Report</b></p> <p>The Clerk had nothing to report.</p>
20/127	<p><b>Essex County Council and Local Highways Panel Report</b></p> <p>Cllr Mark Durham reported that he is now Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development which includes Housing and Planning - a very busy portfolio. Cllr Durham advised that figures (to April) showed the number of people in Essex on Universal Credit due to Covid-19 was 51,665, as compared to the preceding 3 months (Jan – March 28,500) and ahead of the national average. This of course would impact the tax base and consequently the future looked gloomy. The Government had stipulated that those Councils with reserves (this included Essex) should use those reserves for the additional spending incurred on Covid-19 matters.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Cllr Durham, who went on to report on Highways Panel matters.</p> <p><b>LMAL182022, Footway on Tiptree Road.</b> Cllr Durham explained that this scheme was on the 'awaiting funding' list. Cllr Bass suggested that the LHP report was inaccurate in that the trees would not necessarily require removal (he had been advised there were methods of flexible surface which could be laid around the trunk of the tree without causing damage to the roots), there were possible Title issues with the land as several nearby properties had requisitioned Highways land by planting on the verge, and in other parts of the district, above ground telephone cable boxes had been relocated without issue. It remained a hazardous area for families with young children. Cllr Durham advised that he had asked for clarification on which utilities existed in this area and further information on the costings quoted. The meeting agreed to</p>

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leave Cllr Durham to press the LHP to investigate the details of the scheme further. Cllr Durham said he would consider the matter further. The Chairman impressed on Cllr Durham that anything he could do to support the Tiptree Road footway scheme would be very much appreciated.

**LMAL192002 : Signing and lining, Witham Road.** This had been agreed by the LHP which included a run-off area at the junction with Mope Lane at a cost of £26,000.

**LMAL192012 : Carters Lane HGVs.** The speed and traffic volume survey did not show evidence of HGV's using the lane and as such the panel voted to remove the scheme. Cllr Durham had asked for dates when the survey was carried out.

Cllr Bass raised the question of members of the public being able to attend and speak at LHP meetings as they did in the Braintree District. It was acknowledged that people living in a particular area could provide vital local knowledge which was essential when considering these schemes.

**20/128**

**Public Forum**

No questions had been received from the public or press prior to the meeting and there were no comments on the YouTube broadcast.

**20/129**

**Traffic Calming**

**Collision in Witham Road:** An email had been received from a resident living in Witham Road whose CCTV had recorded a collision between a passing motorist and a parked delivery van. She had raised concerns about speeding and asked the PC to consider road humps or other traffic calming methods. Councillors were not convinced that this collision was caused just by speeding, but by driver error/without due care and attention. The Chairman suggested and the meeting agreed that road humps would require street lighting and evidence suggested that in other areas, residents had complained about the noise created by motorists accelerating over the bumps. However, speeding remained a concern in the village. The Chairman reported that he had asked whether Speedwatch could resume so long as the participants kept a distance of 2m apart.

After discussion it was agreed to wait until the review of the white gates at the entrances to the village had taken place before taking any further action. This had been delayed due to Covid-19.

**20/130**

**Planning Applications and Decisions**

The Chairman explained that all planning applications had been circulated to all Councillors, prior to publication of the agenda, for study ahead of the meeting. Cllr Jarvis reminded the meeting that he would not take part in voting on planning applications as he may be required to do so at Maldon District Council.

**Applications**

**20/00490/FUL – The Summer House, Back Lane, Wickham Bishops – Erection of 1 dwelling**

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the history of this site which had been subject to a number of previous planning applications. Essentially, this was the same as the one recently received, and refused by MDC, when the applicant sought approval for a 'minor' amendment to the previously approved dwelling. The Chairman referred to several anomalies on the current Design and Access Statement. The application sought approval for a larger dwelling overall with the addition of a garage, which was, in effect, an extension to the approved dwelling and was therefore contrary to the Planning Inspector's decision of 2014. Since then, MDC's LDP had been approved and this proposed dwelling fell outside the development boundary, contrary to Policy S8 of the LDP. The larger dwelling would be overbearing on the plot.

Two letters of representation had been received from residents, both of which were recommending refusal. Councillors had been made aware of the contents of these letters but in view of the virtual nature of the meeting, the Chairman briefly summarised them.

**Resolved:** The Parish Council agreed to oppose development on the site and recommended REFUSAL. Proposed by Cllr Nicholas, seconded by Cllr Bass. Cllr Jarvis in his role as a District Councillor was asked to 'call in' this Planning Application for consideration by the NW Area Planning Committee.

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**20/00488/LBC – Hillside Cottage, Station Road, Wickham Bishops – Replacement Windows and Doors**  
The resident of this property had contacted the Clerk to advise that the current windows and door were letting in wind and rain. The meeting noted that the windows and door would be replaced like for like.  
**Resolved:** The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL. Proposed by Cllr Mundell, seconded by Cllr Bates.

**20/00529/HOUSE – Corner Oaks, Tiptree Road, Wickham Bishops - Proposed double garage with play loft over, lobby and external store.** **Resolved:** The Parish Council had no objection to the proposals and recommended APPROVAL so long as the proposal was used in conjunction with the main house and not as an annexe. Proposed Cllr Bass, seconded Cllr Layley.

**20/00550/WTPO – Glenridge, Witham Road, Wickham Bishops – Reduce 2 Oak trees by up to 4m.** Chris Cooke advised that he was in favour of the works to the trees. A neighbour had also written in support of the proposals. **Resolved:** The Parish Council recommended APPROVAL. Proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Nicholson.

It was noted that the map accompanying this Planning Application was completely inadequate and most unprofessional. **Action:** *The Clerk was asked to write formally to MDC Planning Department asking why they were not insistent on proper plans/drawings showing the extent of the trees and specific properties affected to enable proper consideration to be given. Cllr Jarvis agreed to take this up with MDC too.*

**To note activity in relation to land behind 9 Church Road:** The meeting had been made aware of an ecological survey taking place which in the past had implied a Planning Application would be forthcoming. It was agreed that the Parish Council should make members of the public aware as soon as any information became known. Cllr Jarvis agreed to monitor any developments at MDC.

There were no delegated responses made by the Parish Clerk. The decisions made by Maldon District Council, were noted. There were no local decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate to note.

**20/131 Neighbourhood Plan**  
Cllr Williams had recently circulated a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan to all Councillors and thanked those that had responded for their comments. She explained that the final document needed to be with MDC before 6 May 2021. Cllr Williams would make the necessary amendments and communicate with MDC.

**20/132 Library Strategy Working Group**  
Cllr Jarvis reported that Essex Libraries were planning a phased re-opening starting on 6 July 2020. The Library Strategy Working Group were waiting for ECC to respond to the Vision Statement and Cllr Jarvis had asked Ruth Warboys for an update.

**20/133 Finance**

**To consider applying to BHSA for credit for unused boardroom hours:** After much discussion, the Parish Council resolved to pay the BHSA Block Grant invoice in the sum of £534 and to give consideration to applying for a credit at the July Parish Council Meeting. **Action:** *The Clerk would ask BHSA for a copy of the Agreement to clarify the relationship between BHSA and the Parish Council.*

**Resolved:** The following balances and credits were noted and the list of transactions agreed. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Bates. **Action:** *Cllr Nicholas to create the internet payments, Cllr Mickelsen to approve online, as due to our inability to communicate with Barclays, this was the only method of payment available to the Parish Council at present.*

Community Account	£3,128.42
Business Premium Account	£23,375.57
Petty Cash Float	£0.00
Stamps	£8.09
Total Funds Held 16/06/20	<u>£26,512.08</u>

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**Receipts included in the above**

HMRC VAT Refund	£1,633.34
Bank Interest received March-June	£4.38
Total Receipts	<u>£1,637.72</u>

**Community Account Transactions June**

IPO411	J&M Payroll Services, April Payroll	-£24.00
IPO412	J&M Payroll Services, May Payroll	-£24.00
IPO413	Microsoft, Online Services	-£135.36
IPO414	BHSA, Parish Council Block Grant	-£534.00
IPO415	Wise Maintenance, Grass Cutting May 2020	-£75.00
IPO416	L Bailey, May Salary	-£682.37
IPO417	L Bailey, June Salary & Expenses	-£705.46
IPO418	Clr Richard Mundell, Expenses	-£72.66
RECEIPT	HMRC VAT Refund	
	Total Transactions	<u>-£2,252.85</u>

**To consider changing bank account from Barclays to Unity Trust Bank:** The Clerk had no access to the bank account, Clr Mundell's security situation remained unresolved and Clr Mickelsen had limited access. Barclays Bank continued to be unreachable by telephone and were impossible to work with. **Resolved:** The Clerk to provide details of Unity Trust Bank monthly charges and availability of a deposit account, to be considered at the July Meeting.

Clr Durham left the meeting at 9.04pm and was thanked for his attendance.

**20/134**

**Delegated Powers**

There was no motion to lift the extended delegated powers in respect of Covid-19.

**20/135**

**Neighbourhood Watch Update**

**Resolved:** Clr Mundell would place an advertisement for Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator on the WB Facebook page and NHW site. Clr Bates to place in the Parish Magazine.

**20/136**

**District Council Report**

Clr Jarvis briefly reported on the appointment of a new MDC Financial Officer, Chris Leslie; High Street social distancing initiatives; assistance grants for businesses which have suffered financial loss as a result of Covid-19; continued pressure on the Interim Measures Group i.e. the directors of the Council to revert to back to normal; County Councillors Locality Fund of £10k available to parishes. Clr Jarvis strongly recommended that WBPC submit an application to this Fund sooner rather than later.

**20/137**

**ECC Salt Bag Partnership Scheme**

**Action:** Clr Nicholas to check on the number and condition of salt bags stored in the Air Raid Shelter. Clr Bates to check those stored in the Church. **Resolved:** Decision to be made at the July Meeting.

**20/138**

**Progress Reports from Councillors**

**Footpath clearance:** Clr Nicholas reported that ECC had now given the go ahead for the Footpath Team to deal with overgrown brambles and nettles. They would be starting with the footpath from Grange Road to Langford Road.

**Action:** The Clerk to report the nettles along Grange Road from Roots Lane to Grange Farm to ECC Highways.

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	<p><b>Action:</b> Cllr Nicholas agreed to report the vegetation at Blue Mills Bridge to ECC Highways for attention.</p> <p><b>WBPC Website:</b> Cllr Bates spoke on the recently received NALC Website Accessibility document which outlined rules to enable disabled people and those partially sighted to access websites. Unfortunately, the colour contrast on our WBPC website does not conform but we are restricted by the limitations of our host. Cllr Bates to look at the options available to enable WBPC to comply with the regulations.</p> <p><b>Rainbow Field:</b> Cllr Bass reported that the recent drought had affected more trees than he had realised and the Parish Council would need to find the money next year to replace a number of them. <b>Action:</b> Finance Committee to consider this at the December Budget Meeting.</p>
20/139	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p><b>Moody Homes footpath:</b> Moody Homes had contacted the Clerk to advise that they were ready to hand over ownership of the path to the Parish Council. <b>Resolved:</b> The Clerk to advise Moody Homes to communicate with the Parish Council solicitor, Bright &amp; Sons of Maldon. The Council agreed to spend up to £500 + VAT with Brights to enable ownership of the footpath to be legally passed over. <b>Action:</b> Cllr Bass and Cllr Nicholas to meet on site to inspect the footpath.</p> <p><b>ECC Locality Fund:</b> Cllr Durham was seeking bids from parish councils and other qualifying bodies for any project up to £10k. Applications to be received by 1<sup>st</sup> September. <b>Action:</b> Councillors to consider suitable projects, to be decided on the July Agenda.</p>
20/140	<p><b>General Village News and Events to Note</b></p> <p>Tall weeds in the verge were reported to be obstructing the visibility of motorists at the junction of Great Totham Road and The Street. Discussion took place as to ownership and responsibility of the verge. <b>Resolved:</b> The Clerk to contact the owner of The Mitre to establish this point.</p>
20/141	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 Online Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm</p>
20/142	<p><b>Close of Meeting 9.39pm</b></p> <p>Items for July agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moody Homes footway</li> <li>• Decision on Salt Bags</li> <li>• ECC Locality Fund</li> </ul>