

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2018

PRESENT: **Councillors:** Chapman (in the Chair), Bulley, Merryweather,
Parsons (arrived at 7:55pm) and Smith P
 The Clerk: A Marabese
 Others: Ward Councillors Brown. 8 members of the public.
Beds Police A Jeeves and J Hirst

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7:45pm.

249. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Foskett, Read, Thomason and Thompson, and also Ward Cllr Liddiard.

250. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Councillors and members of the public were reminded to adhere to time limits when addressing Council and it is requested that, in future, both Ward Councillors and Working Group reports are circulated to Council prior to meetings so that only matters requiring decision or action need be discussed during the meeting.
- b. Finance issues will be moved to the beginning of the meeting agenda from now on.
- c. A late request from CBC regarding street naming will be considered under 253.b. as it needs a response prior to the next meeting
- d. Residents over 65 are encouraged to see their doctor for a free flu vaccine.
- e. It is with regret that Cllr Smith R has resigned from the Council with immediate effect. Thanks was given for all his hard work and effort during his time as a councillor.
- f. Thanks was given to the 2 officers from Beds Police who took time out of their day to attend the meeting this evening.

251. MEMBERS INTERESTS

- a. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
 - b. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)
 - c. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate
- No declarations or dispensations were received.

252. MINUTES

- a. *Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Bulley. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday, 12th November 2018 are an accurate record of the proceedings and that they be signed by the Chairman. Carried.*

At this point (7:55pm) the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to receive reports from Beds Police and Ward Councillors, and to allow members of the public to address the Council in relation to items on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

Bedfordshire Police Officers PSCO's Ann Jeeves and Juliet Hirst advised the meeting that:

- Whilst Beds Police do not normally attend parish Council meetings they had been invited by the Clerk to attend this meeting to respond to questions concerning the anti-social behaviour being committed by youths in Meppershall.
- There are currently 3 PCSO's and 1 PC covering 26 parishes, therefore they will go where issues are reported. Meppershall residents need to report all issues to the Police including

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names and details of individuals so that they can respond to issues as they arise and deal with the youths and their parents accordingly.

- The local area team are looking at the youths causing the ASB. If individuals are over 16 years of age they can be given a 'community protection order'. Once this has been issued and if not adhered to then the severity of police action can increase in appropriate steps. If the individuals are under 16 years of age their parents can be issued with 'community protection orders. There are currently 2 community protection orders in place in Meppershall (1 given directly to an over 16 year old and another to a parent). If the orders are not adhered to then action at the next level will be taken.
- Regular Police patrols of Meppershall are happening including the alley way near Hoo Road. Recent incidents have included two Class B drugs and one alcohol related issues. On 9th December drugs were taken off the streets of Meppershall but the owner was not apprehended. The team are also aware of the problem of children and youths on bicycles with no lights. Last night 2 children were stopped and spoken to but in future they will be taken by the Police.
- All issues should be reported by either calling 101 or using the Police Online service <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report/Report-Shared/Report-a-crime>

Question: How can we identify individuals?

- Most of the individuals are local and as this is a small village many residents will know who is who. However, if names are not known a description of what they look like or where they live is helpful. Footage from CCTV or dash cams can also be provided.

Question: What are the rules on taking photos?

- If someone is causing anti-social behaviour, then you can take footage or photos on a mobile phone but please call 101 asap and provide details of your evidence so that the Police can provide guidance on how to get the evidence to them.

Question: How should information on drug dealers in cars be collected?

- The most important information is the vehicle number plate. If you have this information, please call 101 and provide them with a description of what you have seen.

Ward Councillor Brown advised the meeting that:

- RMF 2019/2020 – The scheme for 2019/2020 has been changed. Parish Councils are being asked to submit 2 local major highway problems to CBC which will be reviewed and the most urgent that meet CBC's criteria will be progressed (limited to £25,000) per scheme. This is a 2-year programme with a total amount of £400,000 available over the 2 years.
- Parking Strategy – A new strategy is being put together to deal with things such as parking on grass verges and additional on-street electrical charging points.
- House building – The target for new homes in CBC for this year is 1,600 as per the proposed Local Plan. To date CBC have registered 976 new homes as completed in the first 6 months of the year, with a further 1,422 under construction. It is anticipated that the number of new homes required by CBC based on the Government's new formula due for implementation in January 2019 could be 2,400 per year.
- Empty homes – CBC Executive have agreed that the current 50% premium on empty homes will increase to 100% from April 2019 for homes empty more than 2 years. It was also agreed that additional charges would be introduced; 200% in April 2020 for homes empty between 5 and 10 years, and 300% in April 2021 for homes empty more than 10 years.

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- Council Tax – CBC Council Tax collection rate for 2017/2018 was 97.95% amounting to £179.3 million. The average figure for all unitary councils was 98.90%.
- Meppershall Community Speed Watch Group received a speed detection kit from CBC this month. All data collected is passed to the Police for action. 9 other parishes are also receiving detection kits.
- Dates for the Town and Parish Council Conferences in 2019 are 21st May and 14th November.

Parishioners made the following comments and asked the following questions:

- Will there be a barrier (opposite no 55 High Street) over the track? *The Clerk was asked to request staggered bollards.*
- If a permanent footpath is permitted using the A507 underpass from Meppershall to Shefford what consideration will be made regarding access to school buses for children in Meppershall and potential flooding of the underpass?
- Regarding planning application CB/18/04382/OUT for 1 Shefford Road there is concern regarding the height of the proposed buildings and also building outside of the settlement envelope.
- How often are village footpaths inspected? *Cllr Brown believes this was done some ¾ years ago. The clerk and Cllr Brown were asked to contact CBC with regards to state of footpaths and highways in Meppershall.*

Standing orders were reinstated at 8:20pm

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

253. PLANNING AND HOUSING

a. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

- i. CB/18/03671/FULL – Land south of Sandy View, Shefford Road, SG17 5LL – Erection of 2 detached bungalows – amendments received.

Proposed Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to repeat objection made last month prior to receipt of amendments. Carried

- ii. CB/18/04382/OUT – 1 Shefford Road, SG17 5LJ - Demolition of garage and erection of five detached dwellings including associated garages, hardstanding and new access to 1 Shefford Road.

Proposed Cllr Smith P/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to object to the planning application on the grounds of over development, outside of development area (neighbouring application turned down), access issues and footpath issues. Carried

b. Other Planning Matters for consideration

- i. Points to note from the Clerks report:

- Planning application decisions made since last meeting

CBC Application ref:	Location	Proposal	CBC Decision
CB/18/03669/VOC	79 Shefford Road, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LL	Variation of Conditions 5 & 7 of planning permission CB/17/05090/FULL Erection of 3 bed detached single storey dwelling with integral garage and detached garage. Omitting the detached garage.	Granted

- Clerk contacted by planning officer dealing with 32 Shefford Road application regarding s106 contribution and capital projects required by MPC.

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- CB/SN/18/0388 received 7/12/18 requesting street naming for 10 new dwellings on New Close Nurseries site. Proposal is 'New close Nurseries'. Response required by 28th December.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved to request that the name be simply 'New Close'. Carried

Cllr Bulley left the meeting at 9:05pm

c. Cllr Thomason to provide update from Meppershall Action Group (MAG)

None available

254. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

a. Report from Cllr Parsons

A meeting was held last week. Preparations for the Green Infrastructure Plan workshop open to all residents on 23rd January 2019 continues. Work on raising the profile of the Neighbourhood Plan is in progress. Ultimately Meppershall residents will have to vote on the Plan with their feet.

255. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

a. Report from Cllr Smith R:

- i. Due to Cllr Smith R's resignation no report was available. A new Highways and Transport Working Group Spokesman will be elected next month.

b. Points to note from the Clerks report:

- i. Prev. ref: 153.b.i – Hoo Road Safety signage – Clerk is chasing CBC Highways for sign templates.
- ii. Prev. ref: 153.b.vi – CBC Highways still to provide data specific to Meppershall VAS's.

c. To consider the submission of an RMF 2019/2020 application.

Item deferred to next meeting.

256. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

a. Report from Cllr Merryweather:

- i. Quotations have been secured for goal posts for Centenary Field but additional quotations and perhaps a revised quotation will be required.

b. Points to notes from Clerks report:

- i. Prev. ref. 186.b.iv - Allotment plot security – Still pending.
- ii. Allotment water – 3 emails have now been received questioning MPC's intention to introduce water troughs to the allotments. Discussion required with the Leisure and Environment working group to discuss this and other options available.
- iii. Prev. ref. 243.b.3 - Polehanger Farm nature trail rubbing posts – Details forwarded to councillors. 8 posts to be installed at a cost of £200 each. Sponsorship / support details to be added to information boards either end of the woodland trail. Would the Parish Council consider offering monetary support?
It was agreed that the Clerk would make budgetary provision for this in 2019/2020.
- iv. John O'Connors have asked if MPC would like the grass cut once more if the weather dries out for a few days in succession. They were last cut in October. Cost to MPC – Urban verge £230 – ORM Play £112 – ORM Paths £22.99.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Merryweather. Resolved to approve additional grass cut. Carried

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c. Review of Leisure Time Survey responses and leisure strategy priorities.

Project	Where	Nos of votes
Outdoor gym equipment	Centenary Field	8
Junior Play equipment	Centenary Field	7
Infant play equipment	Centenary Field	7
Tennis and netball court	Centenary Field	6
Allotment security fencing	Allotments	4
Picnic benches and seats	Old Road Meadow	3
Allotment water system	Allotments	2
Allotment ECO toilet	Allotments	2
Additional ideas		
Benches in Centenary Field for watching and social chats		2
15 responses received		

No amendments required to Leisure Strategy as submitted to CBC

d. Cllr Foskett to provide Village Hall update.

Due to Cllr Foskett's absence no update available.

The Clerk was asked to arrange another meeting with the Meppershall Village Hall Trustees.

257. HEALTH & SAFETY and RISK MANAGEMENT

a. Points to note from Clerks report:

- i. Prev. ref: 155 – Land search / registry is still outstanding. The purpose of this is to ensure all land in the parish that should belong to MPC is registered accordingly.
- ii. Prev. ref. 187.a.ii - Old Road Meadow Play Area – Signage pending.

b. To consider location of current defibrillators (School and village stores).

Location of defibrillators currently acceptable. Cllr Parsons has volunteered to carry out monthly inspections from May 2019.

258. PROCEDURES

a. Points to note from Clerks report:

- i. GDPR update – Clerk gave GDPR presentation on 15th November at Gravenhurst Village Hall. 4 MPC councillors and Mr. Carne attended.
- ii. HR Committee meeting held and attended on 5th December.

b. To approve Data Protection Policy v2.0 and Privacy Notice v1.0 as circulated

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Smith P. Resolved the Data Protection Policy v2.0 and Privacy Notice v1.0 be adopted. Carried

c. To consider future website, email and IT requirements.

- i. Current Meppershall.org website
Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to maintain ownership of Meppershall.org website and domain name and renew hosting fee with Qbic. Clerk and Cllr Foskett to work together on handover. Carried
- ii. New Meppershall Parish Council website
Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to create new Meppershall Parish Council website on Beds Parishes that the Clerk will create and maintain. Carried

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- iii. Gov.uk domain name
Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to register a Gov.uk domain name (meppershall-pc.gov.uk website) for the new website via Cloud Next Ltd. Carried
 - iv. Gov.uk email addresses
Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to purchase a two-year web hosting package for either circa £145 (premium) or £215 (advanced) from Cloud Next Ltd and provide all councillors, Gnomes and Messenger with Gov.uk email addresses, with the Clerk as the account administrator. Carried
 - v. Ordnance Survey mapping software
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to transfer from Cllr Foskett to the Clerk asap. Carried
 - vi. Risk Assessment software
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to transfer from Cllr Chapman to the Clerk asap. Carried
- d. To consider scanning and storage of old financial documents to disc then disposal of originals to reduce paper archives held by the Clerk.**
It was agreed that the cost of this should be included in the 2019/2020 budget.

259. OTHER ISSUE, MEETINGS & MATTER ARISING

a. Points to note from Clerks report:

- i. Prev. ref: 158.d – Clerks Laptop purchase – In progress.
- ii. Parish Council new noticeboard. Ordered for £1300+VAT, pending delivery.

b. To receive report from Cllr Chapman following attendance at Community Priority Meeting on Tuesday 20th November.

Unfortunately, Cllr Chapman was unable attend.

c. To consider request to join local Parish Council Forum.

It was agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair would endeavour to attend these meetings.

d. To consider location of 2019/2020 Parish Council meetings.

The only two viable locations for parish council meetings within the village are the school and the village hall. Meetings at the school are uncomfortable due the height of the chairs and present issues of opening and closing of the school for the Caretaker. The increase in cost proposed by the village hall trustees is high and not in keeping with neighbouring parish council meetings held in village halls. MPC wish to note the fact that whilst it can meet the additional cost they do not believe that this how the Parish Council should be treated and would like to remind the Village Hall Trustees that parish council money is residents money and as such spending is accountable to parishioners. There seems to be little partnership working on the part of the Village Hall Trustees with MPC at present and this is something that needs to be re-established for the benefit of the community as a whole.

Please note that whilst shown here in the minutes this section of the agenda was discussed prior to item 253

260. FINANCE

a. Points to note from Clerks report:

- i. NALC have responded to MPC's request on how money from the Escrow fund should be recorded in MPC accounts, whether items can be purchased and donated at the same time and whether VAT can be reclaimed on purchases. Letter circulated to

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councillors. Meeting with Cllr Thompson also held to ensure that MPC have the appropriate power allocated to each purchase.

- ii. Finance working group meeting – Met on 23rd November to review journal, bank reconciliations, reserves movement and 2019/2020 budget. As a result of the meeting it is clear that another meeting with the Village Hall Trustees is required to ensure that MPC adequately budget for 2019/2020 expenditure that may / may not be required for parish facilities (e.g.: goal posts, pitch maintenance) and how those facilities will be managed in the future.

Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Clerk contact the escrow fund managers to request that funds be made available to the Parish Council to cover the provision of goal posts and associated items required to complete Parish Sport Facilities once handover takes place in 2019. Carried

- iii. Wave water bills have been received but meter readings are incorrect. Whilst correct readings have now been given amended invoices have not been received.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Smith. Resolved that the Clerk make appropriate payment to Wave once corrected bill have been received. Carried

b. Grant applications

- i. To consider Meppershall Messenger 2019/2020 grant application

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve grant request of £750 made by the Meppershall Messenger for 2019/2020. Carried

c. Update of Parish Facilities purchases – To review income and expenditure for parish facilities and donation of delivered purchases.

The Clerk was reminded that a timely VAT return would be required to maintain MPC cash flow and balances.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to register powers used to purchase items for parish facilities in master control sheet and to donate items received to Meppershall Village Hall. Carried

d. 2019/2020 Budget – To review draft budget for omissions, errors and changes.

The Clerk and Cllr Smith P were asked to review the proposed budget and submit a revised version for approval at the next meeting taking into consideration the following:

- 60% increase in meeting rent for the Village Hall
- Goal posts and associated items required for Parish Sports Facilities (no s106 monies currently available)
- Current budget shows an increase for Band D property at 4.4%. Psychologically this is high but in real terms this represents £2.57 per year.

e. Internet Banking authorisation – To consider increasing the number of councillors who can approve online payments.

Item deferred to next meeting.

f. Direct debit and standing orders – To approve revised instructions.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve direct debit and standing order instructions until the end of March 2019. Carried.

g. Document approval - journal entries, bank reconciliation and bank statements.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Smith. Resolved to approve journal entries and bank reconciliations as presented and that they be signed by Cllr Parsons. Carried.

h. Orders for the payment of money

Proposed Cllr Smith/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised. Carried.

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Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount
Payments made prior to meeting date			
BACS141	New Kitchens Ltd	VH Laminate Worktops (50% deposit with order)	£1,132.50
BACS146	TTS Group Ltd	VH Pre-school	£4,275.79
Payment requests received before agenda published			
300548	SLCC	2019 membership fee (scost shared with GPC)	£106.74
BACS142	Noticeboards Online Ltd	New noticeboard	£1,560.00
BACS143	Strictly Tables and Chairs Ltd	VH Tables and Chairs	£5,276.88
BACS144	AS Pub Sports	VH Pool Table and accessories	£2,135.00
BACS145	Cater Kwik Ltd	VH Bottle cooler and accessories	£1,380.10
BACS147	New Kitchens Ltd	VH Laminate Worktops (50% remaining before delivery)	£1,132.50
BACS148	Meppershall Village Hall	NP GIP workshop 23rd January 2019	£48.00
BACS149	A Marabese	Oct & Nov Expenses	£195.91

261. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:00pm

Where no signature exists in this electronic version, a hard copy version is available for inspection from the Clerk.
