

# MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2019

**PRESENT: Councillors:** Chapman (in the Chair), Karslake, Merryweather, Morgan, Parsons and Seaman

**The Clerk:** A Marabese

**Others:** Ward Councillors Brown and 2 members of the public

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7:50pm.

## 385. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Thomason and Ward Cllr Liddiard. Apologies were not received from Cllrs Magee and Reed.

## 386. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Reminder to the public on the time limits of their contributions during the public session.

## 387. 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.

## 388. TO CONSIDER CO-OPTION REQUESTS

The Clerk confirmed receipt and circulation to Councillors of an expression of interest in co-option from Miss Lucy Standbridge but that CBC were yet to confirm if MPC could co-opt a councillor.

- a. *Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Morgan. Resolved that Miss Lucy Standbridge be co-opted to the Council subject to future confirmation from CBC that no election has been requested. Carried*

## 389. DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS

- a. To appoint third councillor to Personnel Committee  
*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parson. Resolved that Cllr Merryweather be appointed to the Personnel Committee. Carried*

## 390. PUBLIC SESSION

**At this point (7:55pm) the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to receive reports from Ward Councillors, village organisations 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.**

Ward Councillor Brown advised the meeting that:

- Schools for the Future – Central Bedfordshire has 11 cluster and Meppershall is within the Shefford/Stotfold cluster. All the schools within our cluster have indicated that they would like to change to a two-tier system. In order to establish what the general public think a consultation will be running from 29<sup>th</sup> October through to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020.
- Town & Parish Conference – Will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> November at Priory House.
- Councillor Grants Scheme – CBC has introduced this scheme which enables ward councillors to offer small match funded grants to voluntary and non-profit making organisations. The

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allocation in total is £2k/yr and Shefford ward councillors will limit the maximum grant to £250.

- Community Grant Scheme – CBC intend to introduce this scheme in December 2019 with a maximum £25k match funded grant available. More information on this will follow in the coming months.
- The Public Realm Scheme – In January 2020 this scheme will be introduced. This is for the provision of an operator who will be employed by a town of combination of towns and villages to cover minor general projects required. CBC will provide a banded van, overalls, tooling etc. The towns and villages would be responsible for the labour costs associated with the number of hours that the operator is based in their location.
- Green Waste Collections – will cease from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
- A programme to assess what Central Bedfordshire should look like in 30 years' time is being promoted and a stall on Shefford market on 25<sup>th</sup> October will be manned by officers for any discussion. Survey paperwork will also be available for the public to complete.

Parishioners made the following comments and asked the following questions:

- Road closures – There have been an excessive amount of road closures in the village this year and some have resulted in no work being carried out at all. Can ward councillors please provide information on the number of road closures in the village this year and the reasons for them? *AB – Yes, will request information.*

**Standing orders were reinstated at 8:10pm**

## 391. MINUTES

- a. Proposed Cllr Merryweather/Seconded Cllr Seaman. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019 are an accurate record of the proceedings and that they be signed by the Chairman. Carried*

## 392. CLERKS REPORT & MATTERS ARISING

Points to note from the Clerks Report:

- a.** CB/19/02039/OUT – Land to rear of 40 Shefford Road – Planning application for 103 dwellings has been refused.
- b.** CB/18/03781/FULL – 32 Shefford Road / Inland Homes - CBC Leisure Officer has confirmed that £11.5k is in the s106 for the allotments.
- c.** Shillington Road VAS – CBC have provided minimal details with regards to the developers plans to deal with traffic calming. *The Clerk was asked to liaise with CBC and advise that the village sign is an MPC asset, request more info on exact location of the new VAS and also whether any other road signage (roundels, dragon's teeth etc) is to be installed.*
- d.** Shefford Road VAS – CBC Highways Safety Officer has provided minimal details on the proposed adoption process of the Shefford VAS. *The Clerk was asked to request additional information.*
- e.** Meeting held with Croudace on 10<sup>th</sup> September and covered all issues concerning Centenary Field.
- f.** UKPN & Old Road Meadow tree removal – Works completed on 27<sup>th</sup> September.
- g.** A churchgoer was injured on 22<sup>nd</sup> September by brambles growing at the base of the hedges running up to St Marys church. The grass cutting contractors has now cut back the brambles in this area.

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h. Defibrillator battery has been replaced at Ansell Stores.

## 393. FINANCE

### a. Update of Parish Facilities purchases

i. To review and approve income, expenditure and purchase orders for parish facilities. Councillors noted the content of the report, reviewed all purchases and noted the powers accordingly.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved to purchase vacuum cleaner and blinds and donate to the village hall (£106 funds to be used as part payment). Carried.*

### b. Clerks Manual 2019 - To approve purchase.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to approve the purchase of the Clerks Manual 2019. Carried.*

### c. Green space management – To approve machinery purchases of £831.64 + VAT

*Proposed Cllr Merryweather/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve the purchase of multi-tool trimming equipment to the value of £831.64 + VAT. Carried*

### d. Grant applications – To consider any grant applications received.

None received

### e. Banking Mandate – To approve banking mandate changes

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that Bank Mandate changes to remove Mr Bulley from the mandate and to add Cllrs Karlake, Morgan and Seaman be signed in addition to the new savings account application form. Carried.*

### f. Document approval - journal entries, bank reconciliation and bank statements.

*Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that Bank Reconciliation and Bank Statements 114, 115 and 116 be accepted and signed. Carried.*

### g. Orders for the payment of money

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

#### Payments made prior to meeting date

BACS236	Walnut Tree Café	Drinks for Litter Pickers - 14th Sept 2018	£18.00
BACS239A	Zurich Municipal	Council Insurance 1/10/19 to 30/09/20	£148.55
BACS239B	Zurich Municipal	Council Insurance 1/10/19 to 30/09/20	£1,094.83
BACS240	BATPC	New councillor Training KK & AS - 3/10/19	£60.00

#### Payment requests received before agenda published

BACS237	The Community Heartbeat Trust	Defib Battery - ansell Stores location	£282.00
BACS238	The Play Inspection Company	Old Road Meadow Annual Play Inspection	£90.00
BACS241	BATPC	Training on Transparency and Audit 4/2/20	£40.00
BACS242	Anglian Water Business National	Allotment Water	£32.96
BACS243	Anglian Water Business National	Allotment Water	£464.20
BACS244	John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Grass Cutting August	£766.52
BACS245	Meppershall Village Hall	Hall Hire 9th September 2019	£30.00
BACS246	John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Grass Cutting September	£1,357.88

## 394. PLANNING AND HOUSING

### a. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

i. CB/19/02719/FULL – Wild Winds, 120 Shefford Road – Proposed residential development to provide 3no new dwellings with integrated garages and all associated works including improved access and new turning area from Shefford Road, following demolition of existing detached bungalow.

*Proposed Cllr Karlake/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to object to planning application 19/02719 on the grounds of highways safety and impact on landscape. Carried.*

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- ii. CB/19/02671/FULL - Woodview Nurseries, Shefford Road - Change of use from vacant plant nursery to residential and erection of a detached dwelling and garage building with ancillary works as a variation of previous application number CB/16/05715/FULL. *Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved to request that any previous conditions attached to planning permission granted under CB/16/05715/FULL be included in any permission granted to this application 19/02671. Carried.*
- iii. CB/19/02762/FULL – 33 Orchard Close, SG17 5LW – Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a two-storey side extension. *Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Karlake. Resolved that the Council has no objection to planning application 19/02762. Carried.*
- iv. CB/19/02679/VOC – Tower View Nurseries, 81 Fildyke Road - Variation of Condition number 12 to planning permission CB/18/04569/FULL (demolition of existing greenhouses and redevelopment with 9 residential dwellings including new access and all ancillary works). *Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the Council has no comment on planning application 19/02679. Carried.*
- v. CB/19/02909/FULL - Tower View Nurseries, 81 Fildyke Road - Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of 3x detached residential dwellings and all ancillary works. *Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to object to planning application 19/02909 in the absence of a legal agreement securing financial obligations and the provision of affordable housing, and to request that if a legal agreement can be secured then this should include an s106 contribution to parish outdoor sports provision. Carried.*
- vi. CB/19/02994/VOC - New Close Nurseries, Fildyke Road - Variation of condition 12 of planning permission CB/17/02409/FULL: Demolition of existing glasshouses and redevelopment with 10 residential dwellings and all ancillary works, removal of condition. *Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to object to planning application 19/02994 and request that the condition to install a footway be retained. Carried.*

### **b. Other Planning Matters for consideration**

- i. Stocken House / Bidwell – Update on meeting request.  
Bidwell's contacted the Clerk on 20th September regarding the reserved matters / FULL application they hope to submit. They wish to consult with MPC but during the public session of an MPC meeting. Response has been sent with another copy of our engagement with developer policy and assurance that MPC is happy to help shape the development for the benefit of current and future residents and is willing to put time and effort into the exercise but not to be treated as a tick box exercise. Further email received on 11<sup>th</sup> October saying that they are likely to hold an event and have in mind sometime in next 4 weeks. They have suggested that the popularity of the main hall means there is limited availability and from checking on the online booking schedule it looks like there might be potential to hold an event in the main hall on Thursday 7 November maybe between 2pm and 6pm as the room is then booked from 7pm. They have asked if the parish council has any thoughts on this. *The Clerk was asked to respond to the email detailing the inappropriate date and timing of the proposed exhibition, that alternative locations in the village hall e.g.: social club area could be used successfully on Saturday mornings and that the public event would not be considered a formal meeting with the parish council.*

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- ii. Clerk to provide update on appeals and enforcements.
  - CB/EN/19/0445 - Tower View Nurseries, 81 Fildyke Road - Commencement of development prior to discharge of pre-cons (CB/18/04569/FULL) – Investigation in progress.
  - CB/EN/19/0431 - 38 Fildyke Road - Erection of building on drive – Closed wooden structure removed.
  - CB/EN/19/0448 - Opposite Sandy View, Shefford Road - Check compliance with 19/00710 & erection of garden building – investigation in progress
  - CB/EN/19/0471 – 38 Fildyke Road - Change of use of domestic garage to barbers – Investigation in progress.
  - CB/EN/19/0449 – 38 Fildyke Road - Change of use of domestic garage to barbers – Investigation in progress
  - CB/EN/19/0474 – 32 Shefford Road - Commencement of development before discharge of conditions 18/03781/FULL – Investigation in progress.

## 395. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- a. Report from Cllr Thomason  
New grant application submitted and next meeting to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> October with Sally Chapman in attendance.
- b. **To consider MPC aspirations for neighbourhood plan.**  
Councillors asked to consider this for discussion at the next meeting,

## 396. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

- a. **Hoo Road bollard** – Clerk to provide update  
Update pending from CBC

## 397. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

- a. **Centenary Field Parish Facilities** - Clerk to provide update  
Meeting held with Croudace on 10<sup>th</sup> September.
  - i. Football pitch.
    - Gates for pitch fencing ordered.
    - Croudace have asked Clerk to get FA to review pitch
  - ii. Play areas
    - Design of toddler play area signage to be supplied by Hags / Croudace agreed.
    - Post installation inspection completed with minor snagging list.  
*The Clerk has been asked to obtain independent confirmation that the new slide in the junior play area meets the appropriate EN requirements.*
  - iii. Landscaping and security
    - Croudace have confirmed that wooden fencing separating the track and field will be extended to prevent unauthorised entry onto the field in between the track and the toddler play area.
    - Wooden gates to be installed for entry onto field and into Polehanger Farms land.
    - Only 3 bins installed on Centenary field when there were meant to be 5. After much discussion 2 additional bins will be installed by Croudace
    - Benches all delivered to Croudace and pending installation

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- iv. PC Stores - MVHT and Clerk still to compete work on agreement. Croudace will replace the downpipe missing from the PC stores.
- v. Cemetery area
- Standpipe to be installed.
  - Landscaping and fencing – Croudace to review installation of fencing as per contract. They did request a change to the specification (suggested wooden fencing) however they required a quick response which could not be provided.
- vi. Track
- Discussions ongoing with Polehanger regarding installation of drop-down bollard at beginning of track to mitigate unauthorised entry up the track. Issue to overcome is emergency access. Current proposal is to have a key operated drop-down bollard with key in key safe located on wall of village hall. Permission will be required from the village hall to do this.  
*The Clerk was asked to contact the MVHT about installing a key safe on an outer wall of the village hall and that if required a contribution to the cost of purchasing installing the bollards should be made to Polehanger.*
- vii. Handover – To consider handover options.  
The Clerk advised that MPC were unlikely to accept handover of Centenary Field until landscaping is well established and all snagging items have been completed.  
*The Clerk was asked to write an article for inclusion in the Messenger about what facilities will be on Centenary Field and where additional items such as play, and outdoor gym equipment will be coming from.*
- b. Allotment Track** – Clerk to provide update  
Another letter has been received from Tollers on the status and possible routes of action MPC can take. *The Chairman asked that all members of Council consider the content of the letter and what action they believe would be in the best interests of MPC for discussion at the next meeting. The Clerk was also asked to forward the letter to the National Allotment Society for comment.*
- c. Brookmead Fence** – Clerk to provide update  
No response received from Tollers yet.
- d. Litter Pick Plans** – Clerk to provide update  
Event was well attended, and article submitted to Messenger. 6 bags of litter collected from just Chapel Road. There was a great deal of litter on Shefford Road before the 30mph sign s you enter the village. *The Clerk was asked to investigate the installing no 'litter signs' in this area.*
- e. Play Inspection Report Old Road Meadow** – To review report and consider recommended actions.  
The previously circulated report was noted including action items.  
*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to purchase anti-graffiti paint at a cost of £149.78 + VAT for ORM bench and table and to re-seed the football goal mouth areas as required. Carried.*
- f. Grass Cutting Contract** – To approve issue of 3-year grass cutting contract tender.  
The previously circulated draft contract was circulated, and suggested amendments reviewed. *The Clerk was asked to liaise with Cllr Karlake on the final document before issuing.*
- g. Allotment update** – Clerk to provide update

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New annual contracts to be issues this month.

## 398. HEALTH & SAFETY and RISK MANAGEMENT

- a. **Risks assessments** – To create job specific risk assessments for village caretaker and green space management.

*The Clerk was asked to liaise with Cllr Chapman and Seaman on specific risk assessments and to include them in the Risk software package.*

## 399. PROCEDURES

- a. **GDPR** - Completion of GDPR Awareness Checklist for all Councillors and those working with the Council.

The Clerk advised that she will be reviewing all documentation prior to the end of the year for completion by councillors

- b. **MPC Website** – To reconsider website plans subsequent to CBC communication regarding non-availability of current CBC website platform provided for free to parish councils.

Deferred to next meeting.

- c. **Meetings** – To approve MPC Meetings – Recording and Filming Policy v1.0.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Secoded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to adopt MPC Meetings – Recording and Filming Policy v1.0. Carried.*

- d. **Noticeboard** – To consider options on installation, location and subsequent costs.

MVHT have provided a quotation of £511 to install the noticeboard in the previously agreed location on the village hall and alternative cheaper locations are not suitable. The Clerk has obtained quotations for converting the notice board so that it is free standing and has had confirmation from the Walnut Tree Way management company appointed by Croudace that a noticeboard can be installed at the entrance to Walnut Tree Way in an appropriate location which would be a more central viewing point for residents.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Secoded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to convert wall mounted noticeboard to post mounted at cost of £460+VAT and install in appropriate location on Walnut tree Way. Carried.*

- e. **Status of MPC Contractors** – To consider employment status of MPC contractors (IR35).

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Secoded Cllr Parson. Resolved to approve appointment of Mr Carne as employee of MPC rather than contractor from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019. Carried.*

- f. **Planning training** – Update from Clerk and Cllr Karslake.

Slides from the training have been circulated. Key issues for MPC to consider when responding to applications is: ways to mitigate effects of development, evidence that can be provided, policies in Neighbourhood Plans and to contact the planning officer for assistance when required.

## 400. OTHER ISSUE, MEETINGS & MATTER ARISING

- a. **VE Day 75 Celebrations** – Clerk to provide update

Meppershall events have provisionally pencilled in a fireworks display.

- b. **Consultation** – To consider response to CBC Consultation on Public Space Protection Orders which relate both to dog control and public drinking.

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*The Clerk was asked to respond to the consultation requesting dog control orders be applied to all sports playing pitches.*

- c. Consultation** – To consider response to NALC on The National Audit Office’s second part of its consultation on the new Code of Audit Practice.

*The clerk was asked to respond to the consultation stating that the normal function of council should not be put at risk due to vexatious complaints.*

- d. Village Hall AGM** – To consider attendance at Village Hall AGM on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October starting at 18:00hrs in the village hall.

*It was agreed that Cllr Seaman and Merryweather would attend.*

- e. Croudace Estate Neighbourhood Watch Scheme** – Update from Cllr Seaman.

Cllr Seaman reported that signage had been installed with costs covered by Croudace and that an article on the scheme will be in the next edition of the Messenger.

## 401. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:20pm

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

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