

# MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020

**PRESENT:**      **Councillors:** Chapman (in the Chair), Karlake, Magee, Merryweather, Morgan, Seaman, Standbridge and Thomason  
                  **The Clerk:**      A Marabese  
                  **Others:**          Ward Councillor Liddiard, and 9 members of the public

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7:47pm.

## 447. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Read, Parsons and Brown.

## 448. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. The Chairman gave a reminder to all on public session parameters.

## 449. 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 of interests or dispensations requests were received.

## 450. PUBLIC SESSION

At this point (7:48pm) 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 Liddiard advised the meeting that:

- Bus Service Support – CBC has been awarded £154k to support bus services. The money can be used to improve accessibility of bus stops etc. Comments or ideas to be sent directly to Cllr Liddiard.
- CCTV in Taxis – CBC is proposing to pilot a scheme that will have 100 taxis installed with cameras.
- CBC Adult Care – CBC currently spend circa 40% of its budget on adult service care packages. A consultation is planned on pricing of those packages.
- CBC Leisure Strategy – This will be presented to CBC councillors this week and the report has identified that the Shefford Ward which includes Meppershall is lacking in fitness facilities at present.
- Highways maintenance – Shefford Road is to be walked by CBC Highways Officers to identify potholes requiring attention. Fildyke Road re-surfacing is planned for the end of September 2020. Orchard Close footpaths are to be assessed by CBC Highways Officers for issues.
- Highways Safety – At present the CBC Highways Safety Team do not believe the area outside the village Stores to be an issue. Ward Councillors will be asking for the installation of a raised kerb or bollards to prevent vehicles mounting the kerb in front of the village stores doors. The VAS on Shefford Road is to stay in situ until it becomes dysfunctional. CBC Highways Officers do not believe that parking opposite the entrances to Buxton Close and Brookmead warrant further investigation. Cllr Liddiard will discuss this issue again with CBC and Grand Union HG.

Parishioners made the following comments and asked the following questions:

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- Can CBC Highways Officers be asked to review the state of footpaths in Shefford Road, Brookside and Brookmead near the Sugarloaf ph and to the left-hand side of the school? *Cllr Liddiard agreed to ask that this be done and that Cllr Magee assist the CBC Highways Officer in identifying areas of concern.*
- Do CBC Highways Officers review the state of roads prior to a development starting? *Cllr Liddiard – Yes they do but any remedial work is not completed until the development has finished to avoid a costly return to repair again.*
- There have been another two accidents on the Shefford by-pass due to speeding. What more can be done to enhance road safety? *Cllr Liddiard advised that Beds Police and CBC Highways are already looking at the layout of the by-pass and are regularly monitoring vehicle speeds. A timescale for proposing a resolution has not yet been given.*
- Why have CBC changed the road dressing specification used as it is noisy and has loose stones left on it? *Cllr Liddiard suggested that the new specification was part of a cost cutting exercise.*
- Can Ward Councillors investigate further the issue of mud on Fildyke Road from vehicles accessing development sites without wheel washing facilities? *Cllr Liddiard agreed to look into the matter.*

Standing orders were reinstated at 8:15pm

### 451. MINUTES

- a. Proposed Cllr Karlake/Seconded Cllr Morgan. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020 are an accurate record of the proceedings and that they be signed by the Chairman. Carried*

### 452. CLERKS REPORT & MATTERS ARISING

Councillors requested clarification on the following items:

- a. Would the temporary road closure of Shefford Road between 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> February be a 24hour closure or would it be a 9:00-17:00hrs closure? Clerk – It would be a 24hr a day closure as the work area is in the middle of the road.*
- b. With regards to future management of the green open space on the Stocken House development, why is management by CBC not an option? CBC do not take on new green open spaces from developers. Their preferred options is that either the Parish Council or a management company take them on.*
- c. When will MPC decide on its preferred options for future management of the open green space on the Stocken House Development? MPC's Environment and Leisure Working Group is meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February to put together a proposal for MPC to consider at its next meeting.*

### 453. 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 and approved all purchase requests (as within original resolution) and noted the powers accordingly.*

#### b. Internal auditor – To re-appoint Internal Auditing Solutions Ltd.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Morgan. Resolved that Auditing solutions Ltd be re-appointed as Internal Auditor to the Council. Carried.*

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

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No documents were presented for approval at this meeting.

#### d. Orders for the payment of money

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

Payments made prior to meeting date			
BACS278	Mosaic FX Productions	Parish Facilities - Stage apron balance	£2,235.89
Payment requests received before agenda published			
BACS276	Ceiling Tiles UK	Parish Facilities - Ceiling tiles	£928.80
BACS277	HJ Contracts Fencing	Football pitch gates and PC stores fix	£3,510.00

## 454. PLANNING AND HOUSING

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

- i. CB/19/04272/FULL & CB/19/04273/LB – Fowlers Farm, 28 High Street, SG17 5NJ – Listed Building: New double garage.  
*Proposed Cllr Karlake/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that there is no objection to planning applications 19/04272 & 04273. Carried.*
- ii. CB/19/04274/FULL – L/adj to Fowlers Farm, 28 High Street, SG17 5NJ – Demolition of agricultural barn and erection of new dwelling and garage.  
Cllr Seaman attended the public exhibition regarding the above planning applications for Fowlers Farm. The exhibition was informative, and questions raised by the public on parking and wall boundaries were answered. Of note is that the roof of the new building will be a green roof. There are no reports of bats in the barn and no signs of nesting birds. Overall the new building seems to be well designed.  
*Proposed Cllr Seaman/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that there is no objection to planning application 20/04274. Carried.*
- iii. CB/20/00089/FULL - 34 Shefford Road, SG17 5LN - Proposed wooded garden room.  
*Proposed Cllr Karlake/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that there is no objection to planning application 20/00089. Carried.*
- iv. CB/20/00128/FULL - Goose Grange, 26A Shefford Road, SG17 5LN - Single storey side & front extension.  
*Proposed Cllr Karlake/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that there is no objection to planning application 20/00128. Carried.*

### b. Other Planning Matters for consideration

- i. Confirmation of response to CB/SN/19/0263 – Street naming for 32 Shefford Road, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LN and CB/SN/19/0337 – Street naming for land at Stocken House, 59 Shefford Road, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LL  
The Clerk advised that responses on street naming for the above had been sent to CBC as per resolution 439.b.iv.

## 455. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### a. Report from Cllr Thomason

Steering Group meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February. Timings for project stages agreed as follows:

- Draft of plan and consultation statement to be completed by end of March 2020

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- Regulation 14 Consultation planned to start 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 for 6 weeks with appropriate event, leaflets and communication to residents and stakeholders.

### 456. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

- a. Buxton Close** - To agree action to be taken regarding parked vehicles opposite entrance to Buxton Close.

Cllr Liddiard had already advised during the public session of the meeting that CBC Highways Officers do not believe that parking opposite the entrances to Buxton Close and Brookmead warrants further investigation. Cllr Liddiard will discuss this issue again with CBC and Grand Union HG.

### 457. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

- a. Croudace Parish Facilities – Update from Clerk and to consider actions specific to:**

- i. Snagging list**

The Clerk advised that Croudace Homes have resolved some minor issues on the snagging list e.g.: downpipe to PC Stores. No response has been received by MPC's surveyor regarding the request to meet regarding drainage issues on Centenary Field despite having emailed them several times. If no response is received, then it may be necessary with MVHT to pursue 'arbitration' as provided for in the contract.

- ii. Handover**

Until resolution of snagging items is resolved no handover can take place. Councillors expressed concern regarding 'public perception' of Centenary Field remaining closed to the public and requested that the Clerk write an article for the Messenger explaining the Parish Councils current position.

- b. Litter pick 4<sup>th</sup> April** – To consider purchase of additional equipment and refreshments. *Proposed Cllr Merryweather/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve expenditure of £100 on new litter pick equipment and that arrangements be made with the Walnut Tree Café to provide refreshments to litter pick volunteers (invoice to the Parish Council). Carried.*
- c. Signage** – To consider purchase of signage and surveillance equipment for PC stores. *Proposed Cllr Seaman/Seconded Cllr Morgan. Resolved to approve purchase of signage and surveillance equipment for PC Stores. Carried.*

### 458. HEALTH & SAFETY and RISK MANAGEMENT

- a. Risks assessments** – To provide update on risk assessments for Village Caretaker and Green Space Officer.

The Clerk, Cllrs Chapman and Seaman met on 21<sup>st</sup> January to review specific risk assessments with a view to including them in the Council's Risk software package. The writing of the risk assessments is currently in progress.

### 459. PROCEDURES

- a. Locum Clerk** – To approve appointment of Locum Clerk by Chair and Clerk to cover Clerk's absence.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Seaman. Resolved to approve the appointment of a Locum Clerk by the Chair and the Clerk to cover the Clerk's absence should the need arise. Carried.*

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**b. Green space officer** – To approve contract of employment

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Morgan. Resolved to approve the contract of employment for the Green Space Officer as previously distributed to Council. Carried.*

**c. Training** – To consider councillor training requirements

Councillors discussed the benefit of attending training offered by BATPC for new councillors and of reading the Good Councillor Guide.

*Proposed Cllr Merryweather/Seconded Cllr Thomason. Resolved to approve attendance to BATPC training sessions by Councillors as required and booked via the Clerk, and that the Clerk distribute a link to the Good Councillor Guide. Carried.*

**d. Procedure** – To approve Data Protection Policy v2.1 and Privacy Notice v1.1.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Thomason. Resolved to approve Data Protection Policy v2.1 and Privacy Notice v1.1. Carried.*

**460. OTHER ISSUES, MEETINGS & MATTER ARISING**

**a. Police Community safety meeting** – To discuss outcome of meeting and approve suggested actions.

A meeting with Beds Police and MVHT on Tuesday 21st January was attended by the Clerk, Cllrs Chapman and Seaman. This was a positive meeting with ideas generated for dealing with ASB, vandalism and youth activities provision.

Beds Police suggested:

- Installing CCTV to cover PC Stores
- Measures to prevent incursions onto centenary field near PC Stores. Is this
- Reinforce message of contacting Police on 101 to report ASB, vandalism etc
- Provide youth activities run from the village hall. Suggested we contact Nicola King at Shefford and via Facebook ask for 2 volunteers who would be willing to organise activities for 9-13yr olds from the main hall.
- Provide article to Messenger and Facebook about the cost to village organisations of vandalism in village. Problem > bill > impact statement. Include joint article on what we (Police, MVHT, MPC) have done in the last 12 months and what we will intend to do in the future.
- Provide article to Messenger and Facebook highlighting issue of children and youth riding bicycles without lights and reflective clothing. Parents to ensure that they have these. Link to U-tube videos and pictures.

*Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Seaman. Resolved to agree to advertising for volunteers to run Youth Club / activities. Carried.*

**461. CLOSE OF THE MEETING**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:23pm

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

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