

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD VIA VIDEOLINK ON MONDAY 13TH JULY 2020

PRESENT: **Councillors:** Chapman (in the Chair), Austin, Karlake, Merryweather, Morgan, Parsons, Seaman, Standbridge and Thomason
 The Clerk: A Marabese
 Others: Ward Councillor Liddiard, and 4 members of the public

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

513. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Read and Ward Cllr Brown.

514. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. The Chairman thanked all participants of the meeting which was being held via video link. The Chairman then explained that during the 15-minute public session interventions would be limited to 3 minutes per person. All participants to the meeting were asked to 'mute' themselves and to raise a hand when wishing to speak. Councillor voting would be conducted by a show of hands. Cllr Standbridge would act as the meeting 'moderator' so that the Clerk and Chair could concentrate on the meeting.

515. MEMBERS INTERESTS

a. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda and requests for dispensation.
None

516. 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 Liddiard advised the meeting that:

- Local COVID-19 infection rate – CBC has concerns over the high number of COVID -19 infections in the CBC area especially due to the relaxation of rules. If there is a local outbreak CBC have published a plan on their website that explains how they will deal with the outbreak at a local level.
- Restoration of CBC services – CBC run leisure centres are due to re-open at the end of July. Libraries are also due to re-open by the end of July with enhance online borrowing services. All countryside facilities and carparks are now open however visitor centres remain closed at these locations. CBC run play areas are still under review.
- Other COVID-19 activities – 11,500 residents were actively supported by CBC during lockdown. 1000 families have requested assistance with council tax payments since March 2020. Unfortunately, the Meppershall Social Club and Walnut Tree Café have not been approved for the COVID-19 discretionary grant. Many traffic orders are currently in place especially near schools.
- Grants - Grants are still available on a match funding basis from the CBC Ward Councillor Grant scheme. The government has launched community grant funding via the Lottery Fund. CBC's Community Capital Asset Grant Scheme is open. Applicants can request up to £25k on a match funded basis (£106 can be used) and it is advisable to discuss the application with Ward Councillors before submission.

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- CBC CEO – Richard Carr is retiring and recruitment for a new CEO is underway.
- Local Plan – A response from the inspectors has been received that asks CBC to look at Luton’s unmet housing need. The letter is on the CBC website.

Members of the public asked the following questions:

- Can the Community Capital Asset Grant scheme be used to purchase vehicle activated signs (VAS)? *Cllr Liddiard will find out.*
- Could the Clerk write an article for Facebook in her own words regarding the Boundary Commission proposed changes? *Yes, the Clerk will do this.*
- Would MPC support Trundles Seat of Life as Mr Mick Trundles was a supporter of the village and provided much assistance and help to the parish council? *Agenda item 520.b.2 refers.*
- Would MPC please pass on thanks to Mr J Thompson for his assistance in clearing the rubbish left behind by youths who built a ‘camp’ in the Old Road Meadow Nature Reserve. *The Chairman supported this request and wished it noted that thanks be passed on to Mr Thompson.*

Standing orders were reinstated at 8:10pm

517. MINUTES

- a. *Proposed Cllr Seaman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday 8th June 2020 are an accurate record of the proceedings and that they be signed by the Chairman of this meeting (at the first opportunity). Carried*

518. CLERKS REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

- a. To request clarification on matters arising and items within the Clerks report.

The Clerk highlighted:

- Attendance at 84 Fildyke Road by planning enforcement officers.
- Removal of a ‘den’ created by youths in the Old Road Meadow Nature Reserve.
- Village Caretaker back at work.
- AGAR submitted to the external auditor and documents uploaded to the MPC website.

519. PROCEDURES

- a. To consider response to Local Government Boundary Commission for England’s consultation on draft recommendations for ward boundaries in Central Bedfordshire. Councillors discussed the pros and cons of the current ward boundary arrangements (with Shefford town represented by 2 councillors) and the proposed ward boundary arrangements (with Shillington and Gravenhurst with 1 councillor)
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved to support the proposed new ward boundary arrangements that would see Meppershall, Shillington and Gravenhurst represented by one ward councillor. Carried.

520. FINANCE

- a. **Update of Parish Facilities purchases** - 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.

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b. Grant Requests

- i. To consider response to letter from Magpas requesting a voluntary donation.
It was agreed that MPC would not respond to this letter with a donation.
- ii. To consider donation to 'Trundles seat of Life' as requested via email from resident.
Proposed Cllr Thomason/Seconded Cllr Morgan. Resolved to approve donation of £250 towards the cost of 'Trundles Seat of Life'. Carried.

c. Q1 Budget v Actual – To review current budget v actual expenditure

Councillors reviewed reports previously circulated by the Clerk and asked questions concerning the budget allocated to allotment maintenance. The report was noted with no issues.

d. Document approval – To approve journal entries, bank reconciliations and bank statements.

Proposed Cllr Seaman/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve Bank Statements and Reconciliations numbered 008 savings account and 128 current account, and that they be signed electronically by Cllrs Morgan and Standbridge. Carried.

e. Orders for the payment of money

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised for payment. Carried.

Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount
Payments made prior to meeting date			
BACS313	Anglian Water Business	Allotment Water	£25.95
BACS314	Anglian Water Business	Allotment Water	£224.83
Payment requests received before agenda published			
BACS315	Prestige Design & Workwear Ltd	PPE	£298.88
BACS316	Mr P Carne	Tractor Hire	£25.00
BACS317	Mr P Carne	Strimmer expenses (fuel and oil)	£34.69
BACS318	Miss A Marabese	Additional July Salary (after NI & PAYE)	£23.05
BACS319	Beds & River Ivel Drainage Board	Agricultural Drainage Rates - allotments 2019-2021	£4.51

521. PLANNING AND HOUSING

a. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

- i. CB/20/01609/FULL - Polehanger Farm, SG17 5LH - Installation of a ground source heat pump and associated ground collector.
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the Council has no objection to 20/01609. Carried.
- ii. CB/20/01799/FULL- 17 Coneygate, SG17 5GB - Two story rear extension with balcony.
Proposed Cllr Karslake/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Council has no objection to 20/01799. Carried.
- iii. CB/20/02058/FULL - 84 Fildyke Road, SG17 5LU - Resubmission of planning permission CB/20/00505/FULL Erection of 6 no. new dwellings with new access road and car parking.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to object to planning application 20/02058 on the basis of overdevelopment and landscape and environment issues. Carried.

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- iv. CB/20/02111/FULL – 84 Fildyke Road, SG17 5LU - Five new dwellings access road, car parking with change of house type on plots 4 & 5 CB/18/03306/FULL refers.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to object to planning application 20/02111 on the basis of highways, garage and landscaping issues. Carried.
 - v. CB/20/02153/FULL - Polehanger Farm, SG17 5LH - Change of use and development of an agricultural grass paddock to include four luxury 'glamping' accommodation pods and parking, along with a change of use to mixed-use of the farmhouse gardens to allow for temporary structures to hold weddings and events.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Council support planning application 20/02153. Carried.
- b. Other Planning Matters for consideration**
- i. **Local Plan** - To consider MPC response to Central Bedfordshire Local Plan - Consultation on Additional Evidence (June 2020). *Comments by 12th August.* Deferred to next meeting.

522. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

a. Report from Cllr Thomason

Cllr Thomason reported that the steering group have been reviewing the draft plan. The end of year financial report has been submitted and monies will need to be repaid before a new grant application can be submitted. All meetings are being held virtually.

- b. Green Infrastructure Plan** – To adopt the Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan 2020.
Proposed Cllr Thomason/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the Council adopt the Green Infrastructure Plan 2020. Carried.

523. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

- a. VAS** - To consider a proposal from the Meppershall Speedwatch team to purchase a VAS and arrange for installation in a variety of locations in Meppershall.
Councillors discussed the proposal from Meppershall Speedwatch regarding the purchase of a VAS for installation in a variety of locations in Meppershall. As there was not enough information available to councillors for them to make an informed decision it was agreed that:
- Confirmation required on whether s106 funds could be used for the purchase of a VAS.
 - CBC RMF scheme to be reviewed
 - Call required between Cllrs Seaman and Liddiard, Planning Officer Mr Traves and Highways Officer Mr Page to discuss options.
- b. Discussion on other highways issues if required.**
Cllr Seaman advised that a request had been received from some villagers for the installation of a pedestrian crossing over Shefford Road / The High Street that linked to the Crack Hill path and that a petition may be required to gain resident support. Concerns were raised that a crossing would not add to the character of the village as it would be visually intrusive and would be against the principles of the draft Neighbourhood Plan and that the suggested location was too near the junctions with Fildyke Road, Walnut Tree Way and Hoo Road. No decision was made on whether to take the proposal further.

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524. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

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

i. Snagging list and method of resolution, and handover

The Clerk reported that the working party set up to detail with the snagging list resolution had been meeting regularly on Monday mornings via zoom to discuss the progress of communication (or lack of it) with Croudace and members of the public. All email communication has been forwarded to councillors for their information. The last communication from Croudace was on 9th July and the working group propose the following:

- The Clerk, Mr Foskett with Mr Sawford of Robinson and Hall meet with Croudace to discuss and hopefully resolve snagging list items
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Working Group with Mr Sawford meet with Croudace to resolve snagging list issues and that the meeting is requested for July. Carried.
- If required, the second PIP visit by the FA is completed and paid for.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve second PIP visit if required. Carried.
- Regular updates approve by the Clerk are posted to Facebook to keep residents informed about the current situation.
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Standbridge. Resolved that the Clerk posts updates to Facebook to keep residents informed about the current handover situation with Croudace. Carried.

b. Grass Cutting update from Clerk

The Clerk reported that the Clerk was still waiting for the contractor to forward a grass cutting schedule and to sign the contract. A complaint regarding the cutting of paths and the bench areas at Old Road Meadows has been raised. Rights of Way footpaths now cut.

c. Litter

- To consider organising a Meppershall Autumn Litter Pick between 11th to 27th September.
It was agreed that an Autumn Litter pick should be organised for Saturday 19th September.
- To consider installing signage in village regarding considerate removal and binning of dog fouling.
Defer to next meeting

525. HEALTH & SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

a. Community Safety – To receive report from Cllr Seaman

As the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator (Walnut Tree Way) and police liaison councillor Cllr Seaman joined one of the Community Safety Local Surgeries virtual meetings. During the meeting he was told about the 12 newly appointed CBC trained officers carrying out duties similar to PCSO with the same authority and responsibilities within the community. Asked if Meppershall was experiencing any Safety and/or anti-social behaviour problems he reported concerns regarding the anti-social behaviour taking place behind the village

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hall. This involved drinking, drug taking and criminal damage. They requested the completion of a Multi-Agency Information Submission form detailing the village residents' concerns which has been done. Another concern raised was traffic speeding within the village. Further to this and applications for a 20mph zone to be applied to both Fildyke Road and Walnut Tree Way.

More recently further damage has been caused to the trees on the entrance to Walnut Tree Way one being completely pulled from the ground and others with branches snapped. Attempts to report this via 101 have not been positive and therefore an email was sent to one of the PCSO responsible for Meppershall with a response pending.

- b. Risks assessments** – To provide update on risk assessments.
These are currently in progress with focus on play areas.

526. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:03pm

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