

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD VIA VIDEOLINK ON MONDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2020

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

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

527. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

528. 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. The Clerk is acting as the meeting 'moderator'.

529. COUNCILLR CO-OPTION

a. To consider councillor co-option requests

The Council has received one co-option request from Mr J Thompson.

Proposed Cllr Seaman/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that Mr John Thompson be co-opted to Meppershall Parish Council. Carried

Cllr Karslake requested that special thanks be given to Mr Thompson for all the work he has done and helped with over the last few months.

b. To receive verbally the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct from new councillor in lieu of receiving the signed declaration. A Declaration of Acceptance of Office and undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct was received verbally and in paper format from Cllr Thompson and duly signed by the Clerk and Proper Officer.

Cllr Parsons joined the meeting at 7:57pm

c. To review the delegation arrangements to external organisations, committees and working groups in the light of councillor resignation and co-option.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Seaman. Resolved that Cllr Thompson join the Planning and Procedures Working Groups and that the Procedures Working Group be changed to the Procedures and Legal Working Group. Carried

530. MEMBERS INTERESTS

a. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda and requests for dispensation.

None

531. PUBLIC SESSION

At this point (8:00pm) 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.

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Ward Councillor Liddiard advised the meeting that:

- Garden Waste bins – 240ltr garden waste bins can now be ordered online or via telephone from CBC. Residents can either use the bins or bags but not both. CBC would like to encourage the collection of as much green waste as possible.
- Business Grants – 3480 grants totalling circa £42million were given out to businesses in Central Bedfordshire and CBC would like to thank MPC and the community for ensuring people applied.
- CBC's Community Capital Asset Grant Scheme. Scheme has now closed and there have been circa 30 applications that will be assessed.
- COVID-19 data – No new cases in Shefford and Stotfold areas in the last few weeks. There is a mobile testing unit in Shefford twice a week. Appointments should be made via the NHS. Intelligence regarding behaviour and practices causing concern can be emailed to Cllr Liddiard who will pass on the details to CBC's Environmental Health team to investigate in confidence.
- CBC CEO – A shortlist of candidates is in progress with interviews planned for 21st September.
- Highways Custodian – In mid-August councillors were informed that the new Highways Custodian for our area from 1st September would be Rick Thompson. Cllr Liddiard has emailed him regarding Meppershall footpaths and patching work required to Shefford Road.
- Local Plan – CBC have submitted their responses from the last consultation to the Inspectors. There are likely to be further hearings in November / December 2020.
- Tower View Nurseries – CBC won an appeal heard by the planning Inspectorate who upheld the Council's position that the developer had tried to circumvent the provision of s106 contributions. The developer is yet to contact CBC regarding the bungalow to be demolished and replaced with three houses.
- Stocken House planning application – Ward Councillors have been consulted regarding this RM application. They felt that the layout looked better this time. They have seen the response of MPC and note that it is in keeping with their thoughts.
- 32 Shefford Road development – Planning enforcement have contacted the developer today regarding non-compliance of the condition not to park workers vans on Shefford Road. Enforcement will visit site tomorrow.
- The Mow planning application – Ward Councillors have followed this application as they believe that this development is not required in Meppershall. Leisure Officer has now also agreed that s106 contributions should be sought for the application if it is to go ahead.
- Bandlands planning application – Ward Councillors have called this application into DMC as it is not in keeping with the village or the development that it would abut.
- CBC Libraries – Libraries will be opening from 11th August with a new select and collect service. The public are advised to check the CBC website for local opening times.

Members of the public asked the following questions:

- Who does the planted verge to the left of the footpath on Walnut Tree Way belong to as it has become overgrown and unsightly? *Clerk will investigate and act accordingly.*
- Can the Council remove the low hanging branches to trees on Fowlers Drive? *Mr Carne already has this on his list of jobs to do.*
- Can anything be done regarding previously reported highways issues not yet resolved e.g.: protruding manhole cover near 114 Shefford Road, 40mph speed limit from the Esso roundabout to village gateway, dragons' teeth on Shefford Road? *ML to chase manhole*

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cover resolution, dragons' teeth painting is booked in to be done and 40mph speed limit is an aspiration as it would require consultation with residents and support from Polehanger Farms. Waiting to see who our Highways Officer will be supporting the Highways Custodian in order to discuss these issues with them.

- 84 Fildyke Road development – Construction traffic is coming from Chapel Road but then passing the site to turn around before entering the site. Construction traffic has blocked the road today and residents had to leave their cars and walk to their homes. What can be done about this? *ML will liaise with planning enforcement and make them aware of the issue.*

Standing orders were reinstated at 8.25pm

532. MINUTES

- Proposed Cllr Morgan/Seconded Cllr Standbridge. Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council held on Monday 10th August 2020 are an accurate record of the proceedings and that they be signed by the Chairman of this meeting (at the first opportunity). Carried*

533. CLERKS REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

- To request clarification on matters arising and items within the Clerks report.
The Clerk highlighted:
 - Damage made to Brookmead fence had been reported to the Police.

534. FINANCE

- Update of Parish Facilities purchases** - To review and approve income, expenditure and purchase orders for parish facilities.
The clerk advised that no changes had been made since last month.
- Clerk training** – To approve Clerk's attendance at the Virtual National Conference organised by SLCC to celebrate all things clerking with this week-long training event, 12th - 16th October 2020. Cost is £25+VAT
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Karslake. Resolved that the Clerk attend he Virtual National Conference at a cost of £25+VAT. Carried.
- Rialtas set up on new computer** – To consider cost of £25 to move Rialtas and data from old to new computer.
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved to book Rialtas at a cost of £25 to transfer program and data to new computer. Carried.
- Insurance** – To consider insurance renewal options.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to renew insurance with Zurich for a 3-year term and to add the payment for this years' renewal to the schedule of payments for this meeting. Carried.
- Clerks Salary** – To approve amendments to Clerks salary following 2020-21 National Salary Award to be implemented from 1 April 2020.
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved to approve amendments to Clerks Salary following the 2020-2021 National Salary Awards and to authorise any back pay due. Carried.
- Standing order approval** – To approved revised standing order payments list.

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Proposed Cllr Thompson/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to approve the revised standing order list as presented valid until 30th April 2021. Carried.

- g. Document approval** – To approve journal entries, bank reconciliations and bank statements.

Proposed Cllr Morgan/Seconded Cllr Standbridge. Resolved to approve Bank Statements and Reconciliations numbered 010 savings account and 130&131 current account and journal numbers 64, and that they be signed electronically by Cllrs Morgan and Standbridge. Carried.

- h. Orders for the payment of money**

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised for payment with the addition of payments to Zurich Insurance and to Henlow Computers (payable after installation of Clerks new computer). Carried.

Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
Payments made prior to meeting date				
BACS330	Mayo Wynne Baxter	Professional charges - Brookmead fence registry	£608.40	
BACS332	Henlow Computers	Clerk PC Deposit	£200.00	
Payment requests received before agenda published				
BACS331	Mr Howard Trundle	Grant - Trundles seat of Life	£250.00	
BACS333	Qbic Internet Solutions	Website and email hosting	£143.99	
BACS334	Broxap	Centenary Field Goalposts	£1,819.44	
BACS335	A Marabese	Additional September Salary	£114.74	
BACS336	Anglian Water Business National Ltd	Allotment water (estimated bill)	£30.10	
BACS337	Anglian Water Business National Ltd	Allotment water (estimated bill)	£214.72	
BACS338	HMRC	Q2 PAY, EE NI & ER NI	£319.57	
Payment requests received after agenda published				
BACS339	Zurich	Insurance 2020-2021	£1,327.43	
BACS340	Henlow Computers	Clerks PC Remainder (payable after installation)	£530.00	

535. PLANNING AND HOUSING

a. Applications since last Council meeting for consideration

- i. CB/19/03877/RM – Stocken House, SG17 5LL - Approval of reserved matters (external appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the demolition of 59 Shefford Road and associated buildings and the erection of 145 dwellings pursuant to outline planning permission CB/17/03887/OUT.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Council submits objections and comments to 17/03887 as per the draft letter prepared by the planning working group and circulated to councillors. Carried.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Clerk contact the developer with regards to progressing a decision on green space ownership. Carried.

- ii. CB/20/02860/OUT – The Mow, SG17 5LP - Resubmission Outline Application: Demolition of one dwelling & erection of 13 dwellings and ancillary works.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Karlake. Resolved that the Council objects to 20/02860 as per the draft letter prepared by the planning working group and circulated to councillors. Carried.

The Clerk was asked to find out if Bandlands was also within 9meters of the IDB watercourse.

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- iii. CB/20/02985/FULL - 7 Orchard Close, SG17 5LW - Side garage extension (retrospective).

Proposed Cllr Karlake/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Council has no comment regarding 20/02985. Carried.

Note: For planning applications that are submitted between meetings and for which an extension to the comment's deadline date is not given, powers have been delegated to the Clerk (with a proposed response circulated to the Council) to submit comments to CBC Planning.

b. Other Planning Matters for consideration

- i. To approve letter sent to the CBC Planning Officer concerning application 20/02860 The Mow (Blakeney Estates Ltd) to advise that MPC are owners of land that is contained within this application.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Thompson. Resolved to approve the letter sent to the CBC Planning Officer regarding application 20/02860 The Mow and land ownership. Carried.

536. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

a. Report from Cllr Thomason

The Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr Thomason that the grant budget had been submitted and approved. The detailed proofreading of the draft plan is now at section 11 with additional meetings planned for this week and next to continue with the review. A volunteer has been helping with some great pictures to be included in the plan and now just need inserting where relevant.

537. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

a. Discussion on any highways issues if required

Councillors discussed the issues of traffic calming measures to be installed on Shillington Road, parking on the High Street footpath and the state of footpaths in general. Cllr Seaman reported that the CBC highways team had dismissed the request for a 20mph limit on Fildyke Road. As Walnut Tree Way is not currently an adopted road and in private ownership CBC cannot implement any speed restrictions. Cllr Seaman has therefore contacted the management company who are waiting for Croudace Homes Ltd to approve the installation of 20mph signage. The aim is to encourage slower speeds and respond to residents' concerns. The installation of the 20mph signage will not cost MPC any money. Cllr Seaman would like to write an article for the Messenger on this issue, which was approved by councillors

538. ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

a. Centenary Field Parish Facilities – Update from Clerk and to consider actions specific to Snagging list resolution, handover and the appointment of an 'Expert' as per the contract terms.

The Clerk provided councillors with an update on the meeting held between Croudace Homes Ltd and Parish Council representatives on 10th September. The meeting was attended by Ian Burgess and Liam Chapman of Croudace, Alan Joiner (surveyor representing Croudace), the Clerk, David Foskett and David Sawford (our surveyor). Croudace provided a minute taker for the meeting. The meeting started with a site visit

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and concluded with a discussion within the village hall to discuss matters further as per the snagging list and 78-page evidence pack put together by Cllr Thompson to assist discussions. The working group representing the Parish Council recommended the following:

- i. To provide Croudace Homes Ltd with the annual play inspection report on Centenary Field carried out by the Play Inspection Company and ask them to complete any works as indicated and cover the cost of the inspection at £125.00+VAT.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved to forward the Play Inspection Company annual inspection report to Croudace Homes Ltd with an invoice to cover the cost of the inspection at £125. Carried.
- ii. As the quality of the pitch is not 'good' and does not meet the standards required for handover by sports England or the FA, Croudace have suggested making a financial contribution to MPC to cover the cost of getting the pitch to a good standard (basically carrying out the work as suggested in the PIP).
Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Parish Council Working Group enter into financial discussions with Croudace Homes Ltd so that the cost of works to bring the pitch up to a good standard is covered by Croudace Homes Ltd but managed by MPC. Carried.
- iii. Croudace Homes Ltd have asked if MPC would be willing to take over the 12-month pitch maintenance as specified in the Master Specification post-handover. This comprises of 28 cuts and 2 applications of fertiliser. The working group recommend that MPC obtain quotations for this work and accept a financial contribution from Croudace for carrying out the work.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Parish Council Working Group enter into financial discussions with Croudace Homes Ltd with a view to accepting a financial contribution to cover the 12-month pitch maintenance post-handover. Carried.
- iv. It was agreed between both parties that there are both landscaping issues and drainage issues to resolve on Centenary field. Croudace have suggested making a financial contribution to MPC to cover the cost of works involved. The working group believes this to be the best way forward and is currently working on a specification of works in order to obtain quotes for presentation to Croudace.
Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Merryweather. Resolved that the Parish Council Working Group enter into financial discussions with Croudace Homes Ltd so that the cost of works to resolve landscaping and drainage issues on Centenary Field are covered by Croudace Homes Ltd but managed by MPC. Carried.
- v. Cemetery – The Clerk advised that this is currently the area of greatest concern. Croudace believe that they were to provide MPC with land for future use as a cemetery extension without any required planning permission. MPC's position is that Croudace were to supply MPC with land for use as a cemetery with the relevant planning permissions already obtained with MPC then having to deal with the design, layout, consecrations etc. The contract, master specification, planning application and s106 agreement all refer to different things and none are specific in their description of what is to be provided. A councillor commented that at sometime in the future the churchyard will be full and will need to close. The responsibility to provide burial space will then fall on the local authority and at present the closest cemetery in

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Bedfordshire is Norse Road in Bedford. MPC always believed and wanted to keep Meppershall burials in the village and hence the request for a cemetery as part of the Croudace/Polehanger/MVH/MPC agreement. Councillors agreed that more information was required on:

- Tier 1 assessment – Was it done and what does it cover? Is it adequate to accompany a planning request for a cemetery?
- Planning application for a cemetery – MPC may have to apply for permission for a cemetery and therefore need to understand what this will be required, and the costs involved.

Croudace have suggested that if agreement cannot be made on what was to be provided for the 'cemetery' would MPC consider handover of land excluding the cemetery area subject to reaching an agreement later. The working group are in favour of this suggestion.

Proposed Cllr Parsons/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Parish Council Working Group request that Croudace Homes Ltd provide a Tier 1 Assessment specific for burial sites and that MPC apply for planning permission. Croudace homes Ltd to cover the cost of both. Resolved also to agree to handover of land without the cemetery area subject to agreement of terms specific to future handover of all land. Carried.

b. PC Stores – To consider painting of PC stores.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the Clerk and Cllr Thompson arrange for the painting of the PC stores up to a budget of circa £100. Carried.

c. Centenary Field Security – To consider installation of landscape bund to prevent unauthorised incursions onto Centenary Field.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Karlake. Resolved to work with MVHT on the installation of a landscape bund to prevent incursions onto Centenary Field. Carried.

d. Planting of Woodland Tree Pack – To consider plans for planting of 420 Saplings due to arrive between 2nd and 20th November.

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Karlake. Resolved that the Clerk organise a working party of 6 people to plant the woodland tree pack and purchase any equipment necessary. Carried.

Cllr Seaman left the meeting at 9:00pm

e. Grass Cutting - Update from Clerk

The Clerk reported that all minor issues reported had been dealt with quickly.

f. Allotments – Update from Clerk including inspections.

The Clerk and Mr Carne completed plot inspections on Saturday 19th August and the main issues identified were; pathways not kept clear, trees too big in height or planted too close to pathways causing obstruction and unkempt plots with bindweed growing on them.

Proposed Cllr Merryweather/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the allotment regulations are amended so that they specify that any trees planted on allotments must be dwarf varieties and planted 1.5mtrs away from the allotment plot boundary. Carried.

g. Play Inspections – To consider offer to join ParksEast six county tender for annual play inspections.

Proposed Cllr Merryweather/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that MC join the ParksEast six county tender for annual play inspections. Carried.

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539. HEALTH & SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

a. Community Safety – To receive report from Cllr Seaman

Cllr Seaman attended a meeting with the Clerk, Police and MVH on 19th August to discuss recent ASB issues in the village. No further incidents have been reported since those that led to the meeting being called and regular Police patrols are now in place with monitoring. New CBC Community Safety Officers are coming on board soon. An article will be in the October edition of the Messenger on how to keep your home safe.

b. Risks assessments – To approve Litter Pick Risk Assessment

Proposed Cllr Chapman/Seconded Cllr Thompson. Resolved that the Council approve Litter Pick Risk Assessment. Carried.

c. Allotment Track – To approve appointment of Mayo Wynne Baxter as solicitors to assist in resolving allotment track issues.

Proposed Cllr Thompson/Seconded Cllr Parsons. Resolved that the Council appoint Mayo Wynne Baxter as solicitors to assist in resolving allotment track and boundary issues. Carried.

d. Brookmead Fence – To consider action required after communication from Blakeney Estates dated 7th September 2020.

Proposed Cllr Thompson/Seconded Cllr Chapman. Resolved that the Council follow the advice of MPC solicitors and agree to a highways search, costing circa £100. Carried.

540. 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.
