



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINCHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2020 at 7.30 PM CONDUCTED VIA MEETS COMPUTER LINK DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Present:**

**Parish Councillors:** I Parr, K Barker, D May, D Kelly, A Webster, N Morgan, G Olive and W Shirley

**Unitary Councillors:** L Gibbon

**Parish Clerk N Morris**

No concerns were expressed during the public forum.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was conducted virtually, with the public invited to log on to watch and listen.

**1. Apologies for absence**

*Apologies had been received from Cllr Powell and  
and Cllrs N Wright and P Marshall and PCSO Wiggins*

*Resolved that the apologies be accepted*

*Proposed: Cllr Barker*

*Seconded: Cllr May*

**2. Declarations of any**

**(a) disclosable pecuniary interests or**

**(b) other disclosable interests**

**As are required under Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.**

*Cllr Barker declared a disclosable interest in Item 5, as a Governor of Wincham CP School. No further declarations were made.*

**3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 20 May 2020**

*Resolved that the Minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2020 be confirmed as a correct record*

*Proposed Cllr May*

*Seconded Cllr Barker*

**4. There were no matters arising from Previous Meeting.**

**5. The Unitary Councillor present reported.**

- i. The Unitary Councillors are working closely with the Parish Council over issues arising from the increase in visitors to Earles Lane and Pickmere Lake;*
- ii. The suggestions by Wincham for possible cycle paths had been received and were being considered.*
- iii. It is unlikely there will be a full Council meeting for Cheshire West and Chester Council until October.*
- iv. Cllr Gibbon is on the CWaC COVID-19 Commission, which is expected to report in the autumn.*
- v. Cllr Gibbon said she would investigate the proposal to build houses on the Northwich roundabout.*

**6. Thomas Relph from Russell Homes was welcomed to discuss the proposed Planning Application for a residential development at land off New Warrington Road, Wincham.**

- i. Russell Homes has had discussions with CWaC and expects to submit a Planning Application in the next fortnight.*
- ii. The proposed 98 units will include shared ownership through the involvement of a registered housing association. More than 10% of the units will be affordable homes.*
- iii. The 98 units will include 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties.*
- iv. On the original Urban Village proposal, there were to be two exits from the development; in this scaled down proposal, there will only be a single access point onto the New Warrington Road. There have already been discussions with Highways over traffic implications. The speed limit on the New Warrington Road may be reduced to 30mph around the junction, but Highways are sanguine that there should not be an impact on traffic flow. The Parish Councillors queried this since 98 properties might be expected to generate 98+ additional cars.*
- v. There may be separate cycle and pedestrian access points to the development. It was suggested that this could be at the end closest to Lostock Gralam.*
- vi. The number of parking spaces for each property will depend upon the number of bedrooms. The development will meet CWaC standards on parking spaces.*
- vii. The developers will meet such contributions to local schools as are requested by CWaC. The meeting noted that Wincham CP School was already over-subscribed. The original Urban Village proposal had included substantial contributions to Wincham School.*
- viii. It was noted that it would be a long journey on foot or bicycle from the proposed development to Wincham School and that the traffic lights at the Black Greyhound do not recognise bicycles and have no facilities for pedestrians crossing. It would be helpful if these facilities could be improved.*
- ix. It was observed that the development would need to be considered by the Environment Agency because of the Thor Exclusion Zones.*
- x. The question of brine beds was also raised. The Brine Compensation Board have yet to scrutinise plans for the development.*

**7. PLANNING**

*The meeting noted the concerns of residents about For Sale notices posted for the old shed previously used as a greyhound training facility. Planning permission had been granted for this shed to be replaced by a house on the same footprint, but there were fears that this footprint would be exceeded. The field surrounding the shed is green belt. The clerk was asked to notify Planning at CWaC of the position.*

**The following Planning matters were considered, but no comments were made.**

**A. APPLICATIONS**

*None received.*

**B. APPROVALS**

**a) 20/01016/FUL**

**Proposal:** Single storey rear extension

**Location:** 60 Shores Green Drive Wincham Northwich CW9 6EJ

**Approval.**

**b) 20/01245/FUL**

**Proposal:** Extension to existing livestock building

**Location:** Home Farm Linnards Lane Wincham Northwich Cheshire CW9 6ED

**Approval**

**C. REFUSALS**

*None received.*

**8. The clerk read out the following report from PCSO Wiggins:**

Thanks for the invite but I will be finishing work at 4pm today .

With regards to Pickmere Earles Lane side I have been patrolling the area and there have been no issues regarding parking over the last few days. I think the wet weather has played a big part.

Fixed penalty notices were issued at the weekend to vehicles causing an obstruction, parking fully on the pavement.

As to the recreational drugs, I will check on the system to see if anything has been reported recently to us by the general public.

I will get back to you tomorrow to let you know either way.

I recently spoke with Mr Gatley who reported the youths on his farm , he has mentioned that things have been quiet since the recent influx of visitors to the area.

I have also stated that if there are any issues what so ever then this need to be reported on 101 so that an officer can attend and action accordingly.

## **9. The following request had been received from PCSO Wiggins:**

*"We are looking to do a bike marking event at some point during the Summer Holidays which will be offered to members of the Wincham area .*

*Would it be possible to ask for some funding from the Parish Council in order for this to take place.*

*The event will then be placed on social media. We are looking for £250 for the event. This will cover the cost of the kits."*

*It was reported to the meeting that the event has been postpone because of the COVID-19 arrangements.*

## **10. The Notice advertising two vacancies on the Parish Council was posted and the notice period ended on 4 June 2020. No request for an election was received by Cheshire West and Chester Council which meant the Parish Council could now consider applications to be co-opted onto the Parish Council. The clerk reported that only one application had been received to become a Parish Councillor. This was from Ged Birbeck, who had stood down from the Parish Council due to health problems. Mr Birbeck now feels his health has recovered sufficiently to re-apply to join the Council.**

*Resolved that Ged Birbeck be co-opted onto the Parish Council*

*Proposed: Cllr Barker*

*Seconded: Cllr Webster*

## **11. Sub-Committees and Working Parties**

**i. No dates were known for sub-committee meetings before the next Council Meeting.**

**ii. The Grounds Maintenance Working Party did not have anything to report.**

**iii. The IT Working Party made a report to the meeting.**

*Three quotes have been obtained for different computer devices.*

*Three quotes have been obtained for different operating systems.*

*The reasons for choosing an operating system were considered, along with why this had not been budgeted in January.*

*Why Wincham Parish Council needs a new operating system*

*GPDR and Freedom of Information Requests*

- 1. Wincham PC has had numerous FOI requests in the past and more are to be anticipated in the future. Having a central email archive for all Parish Council documents and emails would make complying with requests more manageable and reliable.*
- 2. It is essential to maintain a consistent level of security for the storage of data and emails across the Parish Council.*
- 3. The Parish Council is under an obligation to ensure that all emails and documents are held in a secure cloud storage facility. This is only practicable if all parties use the same storage facility and that it is regulated by the Parish Council.*
- 4. For confidentiality and security reasons, Parish Council emails must be kept separately from private emails.*
- 5. When a Councillor leaves the Parish Council, their email would be deleted, ensuring security and GPDR compliance.*

*Why a New Operating System will make the Parish Council more Efficient in Serving the Community*

- 1. Working parties and committees and the Council Members can efficiently share and work on documents.*
- 2. All documents are centrally stored for easy access.*
- 3. Calendars can be shared.*
- 4. Dedicated emails are a professional approach and assist the public in contacting Councillors and the clerk.*
- 5. Making handling FOI requests easier saves time and increases efficiency.*

*How a New Operating System will reduce the exposure of the Parish Council to risk*

- 1. It will be easier to handle FOIs efficiently to avoid penalties*
- 2. The Council will be better placed to comply with GPDR requirements to avoid penalties*
- 3. Councillors will not use private emails, confusing personal and Council business.*
- 4. All email and documents kept on secure cloud server, no storage on individual's local devices - compliance with GDPR, advised by ICO*

5. *Minimising the risk of hacking of Parish Council data because only Council emails and contacts will be on the system.*
6. *The Parish Council must be open to all sectors of society and so this is part of an aim to provide Councillors with an email and a laptop in order not to discriminate against members of society who do not already possess IT hard and software.*

*Examples of when having a New Operating System would have increased Efficiency for the Parish Council*

1. *When dealing with multiple FOIs in recent years.*
2. *When working on policies for: Social Media; Publication; Complaints.*
3. *When developing ideas for the new Fit Track for the playing field*
4. *When working together on grant applications*
5. *When agreeing who will be present for Parish Council events, at Christmas, the summer and Remembrance Sunday.*
6. *When submitting volunteer inspections of the playing fields*
7. *When putting together information and articles for the newsletter.*
8. *When circulating papers prior to a Parish Council meeting.*

*A new operating system is an income expense to be covered by the Precept.*

*Why Having a New Operating System is Now Important to the Parish Council Although it was Not on the Budget in January 2020*

1. *The lockdown has made communication online and on paper more important than before when Councillors could meet informally.*
2. *Virtual meetings are the only way that the Parish Council can now operate.*
3. *Since the budget was set, there have been several resignations from the Parish Council, highlighting the need for a secure system to handle the removal of Parish Council business from ex-Councillor's emails.*
4. *Working from home has meant it is important to be able share documents electronically without having physically to deliver drafts.*
5. *Social distancing has meant the electronic submission of the volunteer inspection sheets for the playing fields is imperative if the insurance provisions are to be followed.*

*Resolved in principle that the Parish Council should purchase GSuite so long as this can be done with the accounting limitations of the Parish Council*

*Proposed Cllr Barker  
Seconded Cllr Webster*

*Resolved in principle that the Parish Council purchase Chromebooks once detailed quotations have been obtained and approved*

*Proposed Cllr Barker  
Seconded Cllr Webster*

**iv. No updates were received from other Working Parties.**

**12. The clerk reported that she was still awaiting receipt of quotations to repair the wet pour under equipment in the Linnards Lane Playing Field and the Chapel Street Playing Field.**

**13. Renewing the annual subscription to the Office of the Data Commissioner was discussed.**

*Resolved that the Parish Council renew the subscription to the Office of the Data Commissioner  
Proposed Cllr Barker  
Seconded Cllr Webster*

**14. It was noted that the ground-work has started as part of the HS2 project.**

**15. Paying £1/week to the Northwich Guardian in order to post articles on the village Facebook was discussed.**

*The clerk was asked to consult ChALC on whether the Parish Council was permitted to make these payments.*

**16. The meeting listened to a report on artwork being created for a bunting trail.**

*A bunting competition has been held and 110 pictures have been received which will be made into bunting to be put up at the School and around the village.*

**17. It was noted that there are over-grown bushes around the cut-through from Shores Green Drive, but that Cheshire West and Chester Council currently will not cut down any branches that are not life-threatening.**

**18. Discussion of work arising from the tree survey including trees affecting properties neighbouring the Playing Field was postponed to the next meeting.**

**19. The inspection procedure of the play areas during the pandemic was reviewed and the safety inspections were discussed generally.**

*The volunteer inspections are a requirement of the insurers. There is no expectation that the inspections should be done by someone with training or expertise. The volunteer inspections are in addition to expert inspections monthly by Northwich Town Council and yearly ROSPA inspections.*

*It was agreed to discuss whether to purchase additional rolls of tape at the next meeting.*

**20. Whether the MUGA and other equipment should remain closed and attempts to keep it taped were discussed.**

*Despite taping the equipment repeatedly, the tape is still removed and folk are using the benches and equipment, including the MUGA. It was noted that public access cannot be prevented, and it is impossible to police the use of the play equipment.*

*It was agreed to post more Notices, making it plain that the equipment remains closed and that the virus remains a real danger.*

**21. Considering the request for a donation from Annie Makepeace to assist volunteers helping the vulnerable during the pandemic was postponed to the next meeting.**

**22. It was noted that there have been considerable problems with water pressure, recently. The response from United Utilities was discussed.**

**23. Problems surrounding Pickmere Lake and Earles Lane, including blue/green algae were discussed.**

- i. In the absence of testing by the Environment Agency, there is no way of being certain whether there is blue/green algae in the Lake. The Rangers believe there is.*
- ii. The police have recently been ticketing cars causing an obstruction on Earles Lane.*
- iii. The residents on Earles Lane will be asked if they would favour white posts on the grass verges..*
- iv. It was noted that the litter-pickers had been doing a magnificent job around the Lakeside. CWaC have now installed two additional litterbins and are picking up bin bags of litter from Phil Gatley's field.*
- v. Highways are reluctant to paint yellow lines on the road at Earles Lane, but have said they will watch how the cones supplied by Cheshire East Council to Pickmere affect the situation.*

**24. Drugs in Wincham and the surrounding area were discussed.**

- i. Nitrous Oxide is difficult to police. Abuse of other substances it is a question of police resources and evidence.*
- ii. Cathy McGhee at Cheshire West and Chester Council has said she might be able to support the Parish Council in education about the dangers of drug use. The clerk said she would pursue this.*
- iii. It was observed that the police might find number plates useful if car drivers display suspicious behaviour.*
- iv. CCTV in the park was discussed.*

**25. Measures that the Parish Council might take during the pandemic had been discussed thoroughly under earlier items.**

**26. The generous gift of hand sanitiser by David Hewitt and Thor Corporation was noted with thanks.**

*A further delivery had been received from Thor and David Hewitt had said the Parish Council could have more if it needed it. The hand sanitiser has been gratefully received by businesses and vulnerable individuals across the parish. All the Parish Councillors expressed their gratitude.*

**27. Now that the Government is encouraging the use of masks, the Parish Council discussed ordering and paying for face masks for residents.**

*Resolved that the Parish Council would spend up to £1000 (exclusive of VAT) on masks to be distributed to vulnerable residents of Wincham. The £1000 would be spent on the best and cheapest of three quotations obtained.*

*Proposed Cllr Kelly*

*Seconded Cllr May*

## **28. Amendments to the Wincham Parish Council Standing Orders to take account of the need for virtual meetings were discussed**

*Resolved that the Standing Orders for Wincham Parish Council be amended with the following additional wording:*

During any period in which physical meetings are prohibited by UK Government, virtual meetings will be held via teleconference with public and press attendance by request to the Parish Clerk. The Council will not be responsible for providing the resources needed for the public and other guests to attend (e.g. computer, phone, software, broadband service etc). Any Standing Orders referring specifically to physical meetings will be dis-applied for this period.

The Standing Orders relating to the conduct of meetings will remain as for physical meetings with the exceptions of:

- Signing of documents. The Council will implement a process for signing of necessary documents outside the meeting. Documents requiring signatures will be signed as soon as possible after the date of the meeting and in any case, not later than two weeks after the date of the meeting.
- Voting will be by show of hands for those Councillors attending via video link with the alternatives of a chat message or verbal input from any Councillors who are attending via an audio-only or telephone link. The name of a Councillor making a chat or verbal vote and their preference is to be repeated verbally by the Chair before the Chair summarises the total vote or the record.
- All virtual meetings will be recorded, and an audio recording of the meeting will be posted on to the Parish Council web site in addition to the written minutes.

*Proposed Cllr Barker*

*Seconded Cllr Olive*

## **29. Whether to renew membership of ChALC at an annual cost of £629.28 was discussed.**

*Resolved that annual membership of ChALC be renewed*

*Proposed Cllr Barker*

*Seconded Cllr Webster*

## **30. Village Communication.**

- The newsletter – It was agreed that another newsletter should be produced and distributed to residents, but not businesses, across Wincham. The volunteer distributors have said they are prepared to do the deliveries and it is apparent how useful the last newsletter was in circulating information and advice, especially to those residents who do not have access to Facebook or the internet. All concerned with the newsletter were thanked by all those at the meeting.**
- The village website- No changes were mentioned.**
- Facebook- this is very active with the sharing of information. The number of “Likes” has increased.**

## **31. Accounts:**

- The following payments were considered:**

*Resolved to settle the following accounts:*

1. Northwich Town Council for					
Invoice 4271 dated	31/05/2020	£245.00			
VAT		£24.50	269.50		
Invoice 4216 dated	30/04/2020	319.25			
VAT		63.85	383.10		
Less credit			(60.10)	£323.00	£592.50
2. ChALC annual membership		£629.28			
Monthly review	£17.00				£646.28
Park view business centre,					

3. Clerk salary for June 2020 35 hours @ £11.22/hour £392.70

*Proposed: Cllr Barker*

*Seconded: Cllr May*

ii. Current Net Balances were noted:	
Current Account as at 5.6.2020	£200.00
Business Reserve Account 1. as at 5.6.2020	£62,113.68
Business Reserve Account 2. as at 31.3.2020	£12,041.49

### 32. Correspondence

1. Correspondence regarding the annual audit by the Internal and External Auditors
2. Emails regarding potential new Councillors
3. Correspondence regarding the cutting of a hedge
4. Telephone calls regarding the footpath to Pickmere Lake.
5. Emails and telephone calls relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. Emails and numerous telephone calls regarding litter.
7. Emails regarding parked cars.
8. Telephone call asking whether a car can be taken for MOT during the lockdown.
9. Emails relating to a proposed new development off the New Warrington Road.
10. Telephone call regarding how to obtain treatment for ear wax.
11. Emails and telephone calls relating to hand sanitiser.
12. Telephone call asking for advice about what to do if someone is feeling poorly.
13. Emails relating to an unattended fire on an industrial site.
14. Emails relating to water pressure (155 emails).
15. Emails relating to HS2.
16. Telephone calls from members of the public feeling depressed and alone (9 telephone calls).
17. Emails and telephone calls relating to a property with vermin.
18. Telephone call about lack of social distancing on the streets.
19. Telephone calls about young people.
20. Emails relating to a tree encroaching on a residential property.
21. Emails relating to the benches and MUGA during lockdown.
22. Telephone call about cyclists on the pavement.
23. Emails concerning the site of the Black Greyhound.
24. Telephone calls about whether the primary school is opening.
25. Emails and telephone call concerning bushes obstructing paths or road signs.
26. Emails about algae at Pickmere Lake.
27. Telephone call about aeroplanes and helicopters overhead.
28. Emails regarding purchasing an operating system
29. Emails and telephone calls setting up a virtual meeting regarding public attendance at Pickmere Lake (a total of 48 emails and telephone calls).
30. Emails regarding quotations for repairs to the wet pour in the play areas (12 emails and telephone calls).

*It was noted how many hours beyond her contracted hours the clerk will have spent since the start of the pandemic. The clerk was encouraged to keep a log of additional hours.*

### 33. Any Other Business.

- i. *Caroline Powell is on sabbatical leave from the Parish Council and it was felt that she should not be bothered with routine email correspondence.*
- ii. *It was agreed that the VE Day Commemorative mugs be stored in the PCSO room at the Community Centre until they could be distributed to the children of Wincham School.*

**There was no AGENDA PART 2**

**The meeting was declared closed at 10.29pm.**