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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF WINCHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 24 JUNE 2021 at 2 PM IN LINNARDS LANE PLAYING FIELDS DUE TO COVID-19

Present:

Parish Councillors: I Parr, G Birbeck, D May and W Shirley

Parish Clerk N Morris

No concerns were expressed during the public forum.

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Barker, Fitzsimmons, Casson and Morgan

Resolved to accept the apologies.

Proposed: Cllr May

Seconded: Cllr Shirley

2. Declarations of any

(a) disclosable pecuniary interests or

(b) other disclosable interests

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

No declarations were made.

3. The following Planning matters were discussed:

A. APPLICATIONS

i. Land To The East of New Warrington Road Wincham Northwich

**Erection of 103 dwellings including associated works, access and landscaping
20/03068/FUL**

Case Officer: Mr Paul Friston

Resolved to write to express disappointment and concern that none of the issues raised in the letter from the Parish Council dated 16 September 2020 have been adequately addressed or solved.

In particular, the Councillors would like more thought given to: transport and access from the site and the impact on the already congested and dangerous Chapel Street; water pressure; the impact on Wincham School and the implications for parking problems around the and cycling routes to and from central Wincham and Northwich and this proposed development.

Proposed: Cllr May

Seconded: Cllr Shirley

ii. 45 Church Street Wincham Northwich CW9 6EP

Demolition of existing garage, single storey rear extension, erection of rear dormer, rendering to rear, alterations to patio and erection of side fence

21/01580/FUL

Case Officer:

Resolved to write to ask Officers to consider the parking implications of this property having its garage and access to parking removed and an additional bedroom constructed. Parking on the street at this point of Church Street is already congested.

Proposed: Cllr May

Seconded: Cllr Shirley

iii. Ashwood Park Chapel Street Wincham Northwich CW9 6DA

Demolition of existing building and sitting of 4 park homes

21/01575/FUL

Case Officer:

Councillors noted that this related to the site of the former Crusty Cob Café, which had been used by residents of Ashwood Park and by residents of other parts of Wincham, also. The Café had been an asset to the village community and it was observed that it might fulfil the criteria for designation as an Asset of Community Value, should such an application be made.

Resolved to object to this application on the following grounds:

1. Loss of an asset of community value

This development would involve the loss of the site of the only place for people to meet for a snack/meal/drink within the whole of Wincham. The café that would be lost served the whole village, but, in particular, was adjacent to and well-used by the residents of Ashwood Park. The average age of Ashwood residents is around 75 and they were able easily to walk to this café. Without it, their nearest premises currently serving any kind of food is the Red Lion in Pickmere or else the centre of Northwich. There is no bus connecting this area to either Pickmere or Northwich and so the journey would only be possible by using a car. This is not compatible with a sustainable future and nor is driving possible for all Ashwood Park residents.

Changing the use of this site from café to residential would severely impact every one of the existing residents of Ashwood Park and would be a loss of an asset of community value to all the residents of Wincham.

2. Egress and Access to Ashwood Park

Ashwood Park is a site spreading across the borders of Wincham and Marston, but there is only one access point, which is onto Chapel Street, a road busy with domestic and heavy industrial traffic. Vehicles driving along Chapel Street do not expect traffic to be joining at the Ashwood Park entrance and so safety depends upon those leaving Ashwood Park being able to see when Chapel Street is safe to enter. At present, there is a clear view across the open car park; this development would completely remove the field of vision. A high wall or fence is planned across the entire frontage entirely blocking drivers leaving Ashwood Park from seeing traffic coming down Chapel Street. The fence/wall would go right up to the present pavement and would make the junction unsafe. Vehicles driving up to the Ashwood Park entrance along Chapel Street would be as blind as those leaving the site.

As has been noted above, the average age of the present residents of Ashwood Park is around 75 and because there is no bus service along Chapel Street, the residents are dependent on driving themselves. Making their only entrance/exit from Ashwood Park more dangerous cannot be permitted.

3. Density of Units

If you walk through Ashwood Park, you will see it is a very pleasant site. Every dwelling has a garden and most have off road parking. There are also no high fences within the site; it is open and gives the residents a welcoming and pretty outlook.

The present aerial view of the site shows that this pleasant aspect is due to the space between dwellings, whereas the proposed development is very different. The new units would be packed together. The new units would be the only homes without gardens and the only homes contained within very high fences.

The density of the proposed units is far too high and completely out of keeping with the existing dwellings on Ashwood Park.

4. Lack of Parking

Insufficient parking has been allowed in the proposed development for the new residents, let alone their visitors. There will be at least four cars for the proposed four units, plus visitors, but these cars would have to be left elsewhere in the Park. This would be of detriment to the parking amenity of existing residents of the site and would also potentially add to the danger of pedestrians walking along the streets within Ashwood Park.

5. Out of Keeping with the Neighbourhood

Having a substantial and high wall immediately adjacent to the pavement would be unsightly and out of keeping with the rest of this residential end of Chapel Street.

6. *Loss of retail premises*

In addition to the former café, this site had a second retail premises. Changing the use to residential would remove one of the very, very few retail premises within Wincham.

In the submission, the applicants state that the proposed development will assist retail in Northwich. There are no buses to Northwich and the residents of these new units are unlikely to be sufficiently fit to walk the several miles back and forth to Northwich. In order to access the shops in Northwich, they would need to drive. Keeping the retail use of this existing unit in Wincham would instead allow the residents to walk to a shop.

Proposed: Cllr Parr

Seconded: Cllr May

iv. Site Address: **The Bungalow Church Street Wincham Northwich CW9 6EP**

Proposal: **Single storey rear extension and erection of detached garage**

Reference Number: **21/01683/FUL**

Case Officer:

Resolved to object to this application on the following grounds:

1. *Greenbelt*

This property is on greenbelt.

2. *A Disproportionate addition*

Four years ago, permission was sought to build a workshop on this site. It was granted. Permission was then sought to change the use of the workshop to residential. This was granted. This application seeks to extend the property. The extension or alteration of an existing building may be permitted on greenbelt (as long as it is not a disproportionate addition compared to the existing).

A single storey rear extension and a detached garage are disproportionate additions to the original permission for a workshop.

3. *Extension by Stealth*

Planning permission would not have been granted for a dwelling of the size now proposed on greenbelt if it had been declared in the original application for the workshop. It cannot be equitable that a developer obtains by means of multiple applications within a year or so of each one, what would have been refused in a single application.

Proposed: Cllr Parr

Seconded: Cllr Birbeck

v. Site address **6 Partridge Way Wincham Northwich Cheshire CW9 6PY**

Proposal: **First floor side extension**

Reference Number: **21/02070/FUL**

Case Officer:

This is a domestic application, and the Councillors had no comments to make.

B. ONE APPROVAL WAS NOTED:

19/04229/FUL

Proposal: Erection of one dwelling and detached garage

Location: Land At Chapel Street Wincham Northwich

Further to previous correspondence relating to the above planning application, I write to advise that the application has now had the following decision:

Approval

C. THERE WERE NO REFUSALS

4. **The Earles Lane Working Party gave the following report:**

Several meetings are planned with the police, landowners and CWAC officers.

5. **The proposal to purchase 100 no parking cones for the use of residents at very busy times on Earles Lane was discussed, referring to the comparative quotations provided.**

Marston Parish Council have been informed of the plans in Wincham and may also buy cones.

Resolved to buy the package of 100 cones from Ebay at £349 (the cheapest of the options on the list of quotations). The clerk was asked to purchase the cones on behalf of the Parish Council and then to apply for reimbursement.

Proposed: Cllr Birbeck

Seconded: Cllr May

- 6. Recent tragic events at Pickmere Lake were discussed and all parties expressed their sadness at the loss of life. The Coroner's Report has yet to be issued and details have not yet been made public.**

7. Accounts:

- i. The following payments were considered:**

Resolved to settle the following accounts:

Accounts to settle.

1. Northwich Town Council			
i. Invoice 4906 dated 30/04/2021	£293.99		
VAT	£58.81	£352.80	
ii. Invoice 4928 dated 30/04/2021	£343.50		
VAT	£68.70	£412.20	
iii. Invoice 4986 dated 31.5.2021	£319.00		
VAT	£63.80	£382.80	£1147.80
2. ChALC:			
i. Planning training for Cllr May	£25.00		
ii. Induction for Cllr Fitzsimmons	£25.00	£50.00	
Park View Business Centre Combermere Whitchurch Shropshire SY13 4AL			
3. Global River website management	£120.00		
Brook Barn Chapel Lane Mere Knutsford WA16 6PP			
VAT	£24.00	£144.00	
4. Cllr Debs May reimbursement for:			
i. Transparent wallets	£1.99		
ii. Lanyards	£2.85	£4.84	
5. Clerk:			
i. salary for June 2021 35 hours @ £11.76/hour	£411.60		
ii. working from home allowance @ £26/month	£26.00	£437.60	
iii. Reimbursement for Renewal of subscription to the Information Commissioner's Office		£40.00	£477.60

Proposed: Cllr Birbeck

Seconded: Cllr Shirley

ii. The following balances were noted:

Current Net Balances

Current Account as at 4.6.2021

£200.00

Business Reserve Account 1. as at 4.6.2021 £50,501.62

Business Reserve Account 2. as at 1.4.2021 £12,046.39

- ii. **The Final Accounts (in Excel) and Bank Reconciliations and Budget Analyses were noted and accepted.**

Resolved that the Parish Council note and accept the Final Accounts, the Bank Reconciliations and the Budget Analyses for 2020/21

Proposed Cllr Birbeck

Seconded Cllr Shirley

- iii. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 was considered in detail including:**

a) The statements and assertions Section 1

The clerk read out all the statements and assertions in Section 1 and the Councillors agreed to each answer.

Resolved that the Parish Council has heard and agrees with all the statements in Section 1 and authorises that the Chair sign on behalf of the Parish Council

Proposed Cllr May

Seconded Cllr Birbeck

b) Section 2 The Accounting Statement 2

The clerk read out all the statements and assertions in Section 2 and the Councillors agreed to each answer.

Resolved that the Parish Council has heard and agrees with all the statements in Section 2 and authorises that the Chair sign on behalf of the Parish Council

Proposed Cllr Birbeck

Seconded Cllr Parr

- iv. **The Parish Council considered the effectiveness of current arrangements for Internal Audit**

The clerk read out the following and Councillors at the meeting considered each point:

Factors when judging the effectiveness of current arrangements for Internal Audit

- *The scope of the internal audit*
- *The independence of the Internal Auditor*
- *The competence of the Internal Auditor*
- *The working relationship between the clerk and the Internal Auditor and*
- *The current system of audit planning and reporting*

Factors for judging the effectiveness of The Risk Document and The Financial Risk Document

a. For the Risk Document: is the Document was compatible and appropriate?

- *Does it Identify risks?*
- *Assess risks?*
- *Address risks?*
- *Review risks and the reporting of risks.*

b. For the Financial Risk Document: is the Document compatible and appropriate?

- *Does it identify any significant financial risks facing the Parish Council?*
- *Ensure proper book-keeping?*
- *Ensure payment controls?*
- *Ensure budgetary controls?*
- *Put in place payroll controls?*
- *Ensure there is no petty cash?*

- Provide asset control?
- Allow for proper year-end procedures?
- Ensure proper year-end arrangements?

Resolved that the Parish Council has heard and agrees with the statement of current arrangements for Internal Audit and is satisfied

Proposed Cllr Parr

Seconded Cllr Birbeck

v. The Parish Council considered the Risk Document and Financial Risk Document

The clerk read out the following and Councillors at the meeting considered each point:

Table 1 Area where there may be scope to use insurance to help manage risk	
<p>Risk Identification Insurance cover for risk is the most common approach to certain types of inherent risks: The protection of physical assets owned by the council – buildings, furniture, equipment, etc. (loss or damage)</p> <p>The risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the council providing services or amenities to the public (public liability) The risk of consequential loss of income or the need to provide essential services following critical damage, loss or non-performance by a third party (fidelity guarantee) Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability)</p>	<p>Council's response Comprehensive insurance is in place with Zurich</p> <p>These items are covered.</p> <p>Public liability insurance cover for £10,000,000</p> <p>Fidelity cover for £100,000 Reviewed at appropriate times in the year.</p> <p>As above</p>
<p>Internal controls A council's internal controls may include: An up to date register of assets and investments</p> <p>Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets</p> <p>Annual review of risk and adequacy of cover</p> <p>Ensuring the robustness of insurance providers</p>	<p>Council's response</p> <p>Yes, reviewed annually</p> <p>Playing field equipment inspected every month by local contractor and ROSPA once a year</p> <p>Use insurance recommended by organisations NALC/ChALC</p>
<p>Internal audit assurance Internal audit testing may include: Review of internal controls in place and their documentation Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management</p>	<p>Council's response This is covered by general management arrangements with a financial calendar with reports to the Council.</p> <p>Also compliance with Standing Orders</p>

Table 2 Areas where there may be scope to work with others to help manage risk	
<p>Risk Identification The limited nature of internal resources in most local councils means that councils wishing to provide services often buy them in from specialist external bodies, e.g.</p>	<p>Council's response Employing trained personnel to inspect play equipment monthly and to pay for annual ROSPA inspections.</p>

<p>Maintenance for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment</p> <p>The provision of services being carried out under agency/partnership agreements with principal authorities</p> <p>Banking arrangements, including borrowing or lending</p> <p>Ad hoc provision of amenities/facilities for events to local community groups</p> <p>Markets management</p> <p>Vehicle or equipment lease or hire</p> <p>Trading units (leisure centres, playing fields, burial grounds, etc.)</p> <p>Professional services (planning, architects, accountancy, design etc.)</p>	<p>Present banking arrangements with National Westminster Bank.</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Internal controls</p> <p>A council's internal controls may include:</p> <p>Standing orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts for services or the purchase of capital equipment</p> <p>Regular reporting on performance by suppliers, providers, contractors</p> <p>Annual review of contracts</p> <p>Clear statements of management responsibility for each service</p> <p>Regular scrutiny of performance against targets</p> <p>Adoption of and adherence to codes of practice for procurement and investment</p> <p>Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption</p> <p>Regular bank reconciliations, independently reviewed</p>	<p>Council's response</p> <p>In place, reviewed annually or if a change of circumstances occurs</p> <p>WPC activities are not on such a regular basis to require such controls. Individual projects have controls in place</p> <p>Internal and External Audits carried out</p>
<p>Internal audit assurance</p> <p>Internal audit testing may include:</p> <p>Review of internal controls in place and their documentation</p> <p>Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are available, and the basis of the powers recorded and correctly applied</p> <p>Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption</p> <p>Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers</p> <p>Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management</p>	<p>Council's response</p> <p>A comprehensive internal audit is provided by JDH Ltd.</p> <p>This is done on an individual basis because of small number of projects undertaken.</p>
<p>Table 3 Areas where there may be a need to self-manage</p>	
<p>Risk identification</p> <p>There are a number of activities that create business risks but do not fall easily into either of the above categories for a number of reasons, principally because they are either difficult to quantify or considered inefficient to have provided externally or just uninsurable.</p> <p>Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements`</p>	<p>Council's response</p> <p>Council has a management plan in place for the Linnards Lane Playing Field and is putting in additional signs to warn of the dangers to the public during the current pandemic.</p> <p>Done</p>

<p>Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to local councils Complying with restrictions on borrowing</p> <p>Ensuring that all requirements are met under employment law and Inland Revenue regulations Ensuring all requirements are met under Customs and Excise regulations (especially VAT) Ensuring the adequacy of the annual precept within sound budgeting arrangements Monitoring of performance against agreed standards under partnership agreements Ensuring the proper use of funds granted to local community bodies under specific powers or under section 137 Proper, timely and accurate reporting of council business in the minutes Responding to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitation</p> <p>Proper document control</p> <p>Register of members' interests and gifts and hospitality in place, complete, accurate and up to date</p>	<p>Done and checked on internal audit</p> <p>No current borrowing</p> <p>Professional advice taken where necessary</p> <p>Check done and internal audit</p> <p>Part of the budgeting is checked on internal audit</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Internal audit process checks this item.</p> <p>Done</p> <p>Procedure in place</p> <p>Procedure in place</p> <p>Clerk responsible for compliance and council calendar. Discussed in Council and professional advice sought</p> <p>In place and revised annually</p>
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Table 3
Areas where there may be a need to self-manage risk

Internal controls	Council's response
<p>A council's internal controls may include: Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure Recording in the minutes the precise powers under which expenditure is being approved Regular returns to the Inland Revenue; contracts of employment for all staff, annually reviewed by the council, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation Regular returns of VAT; training the responsible officer in matters of VAT and other taxation issues as necessary Regular budget monitoring statements</p> <p>Developing systems of performance measurement Procedures for dealing with and monitoring grants or loans made or received Minutes properly managed with master copy kept in safekeeping Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public Documented procedures to deal with responses to consultation requests Documented procedures for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing Procedures in place for recording and monitoring members' interests and gifts and hospitality received Adoption of codes of conduct for members and</p>	<p>These items are covered by regular calendar of meetings, financial calendar, management system, attendance on courses so members of staff and councillors keep up to date. There is also an annual appraisal of the only employee, the clerk, reviewing the contract of employment</p> <p>In place</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Done</p> <p>Procedure in place</p> <p>Procedure in place</p> <p>Procedure in place</p> <p>Annual review of Members' interests and a monthly record kept of gifts or hospitality</p>

employees	Part of Code of Conduct In place
<p>Internal audit assurance</p> <p>Internal audit testing may include:</p> <p>Review of internal controls in place and their documentation</p> <p>Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place, recorded and correctly applied.</p> <p>Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions</p> <p>Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption</p> <p>Testing of disclosures</p> <p>Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management</p>	<p>Council's response</p> <p>These are part of the management process, covered by the Financial Calendar and the Internal Audit process.</p> <p>Committees and Council carry out monitoring procedures</p>

Issues relating to the flooding of certain properties surrounding the Linnards Lane Playing Field were discussed. No further flooding has occurred; there is no evidence that any claims have been submitted or would be submitted; the insurers of the Parish Council were informed at the time and their instructions followed and the Parish Council was investigating how to improve drainage to prevent future flooding. For all these reasons, it was felt that the insurance position of the Parish Council had been protected.

Resolved that the Parish Council has heard and agrees with the statement of Risk and Financial Risk and is satisfied and that the clerk and Chair are authorised to confirm this as necessary on the AGAR

*Proposed Cllr Shirley
Seconded Cllr May*

vi. The Parish Council reviewed whether any significant financial risks face Wincham Parish Council.

The clerk read out the following and Councillors at the meeting considered each point:

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

PEOPLE AT RISK	OUR CONTROLS
Clerk and Councillors	Wincham Parish Council have adopted Financial Regulations which govern the conduct of financial transactions of the Council and which may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. These are reviewed annually.
Clerk and Councillors	All monies are held in three NatWest bank accounts named Wincham Parish Council.
Clerk and Councillors	All cheques require three authorised signatories.
Clerk and Councillors	Four councillors and the clerk are authorised signatories and have been through the bank's procedures to become so.
Clerk and Councillors	There is no petty cash held by the clerk or any of the councillors.
Clerk and Councillors	The Fidelity guarantee is £100,000 to cover the total

	sum of the Precept/the greatest sum held in the Bank accounts at any time.
Clerk and Councillors	The annual accounts are internally audited by a qualified accountant and are externally audited by a body appointed by the Audit Commission.
Clerk and Councillors	The internal auditor shall carry out an audit yearly and shall report on systems and procedures.
Clerk and Councillors	All cheques shall be checked against invoices by a councillor who is a non-signatory.
Clerk	Quarterly reconciliations and budgetary analyses are produced.
Clerk	All payments are authorised by the Parish Council and are recorded in the appropriate Minutes.
Clerk	Where an invoice is presented for urgent payment between meetings and a cheque is sent; authorisation for payment should be sought from the next Council meeting.
Clerk	All requests for donations are authorised by the Parish Council and recorded in the appropriate Minutes.
Clerk	All quotations obtained for work to be done on behalf of the Parish Council are discussed with councillors and are recorded in the appropriate Minutes.

Resolved that the Parish is satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to identify and guard against significant financial risks and that the clerk and Chair are authorised to confirm this as necessary on the AGAR

Proposed Cllr Birbeck

Seconded Cllr Parr

8. Any Other Business.

- i. A young resident is keen to volunteer to help the village with odd jobs during his Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. This was greatly welcomed, but it was suggested that the young man's parents agree to take responsibility for his safety as a volunteer. They should inform the Parish Council immediately if they have any concerns, although emergencies should always be directed to the police.*
- ii. The clerk was asked to investigate how to have the stump of the old noticeboard removed.*

The meeting was declared closed at 3.07pm

*Naomi Morris
28.06.2021*