

Chedburgh Parish Council

MINUTES

of a Meeting held electronically via Zoom on

Monday 11th January 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Sue Roberts (Chair), Jon Cardy, Michael Chester, Teresa Landymore and Margaret Rickard.

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council);
3 Members of the public.

28. Apologies

All Members were present and so there were no apologies.

29. Declarations of Interest

- a. There were no declarations of Pecuniary Interest in matters on this agenda.
- b. There were no declarations of Other Disclosable Interest in matters on this agenda.

30. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th December 2020 were agreed to be a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them as such.

31. Reports from County and District Councillors

- a. County Cllr Soons spoke to her report which she had submitted in advance and this was received by the Council. C Cllr Soons was keen to emphasise that she is happy to deal with any County related problems that people wish to raise. A question was raised about the nature of the additional ANPR speed devices that will be deployed by SCC. C Cllr Soons explained that this was part of a new initiative and so the details were not available yet but that she would find out in due course and report back.
- b. District Cllr Chester had submitted a written report and this was received by the Council. Cllr Chester highlighted that a great deal of information about changes to services was contained or linked to in the document (as long as remained in electronic format).

32. Public Forum

A resident raised the problem of new (as opposed to the regular flooding further down the lane) but persistent flooding at Queens Lane/Elizabeth Drive. This has arisen since the land owner (the Henry Smith Charities) dug out ditches and so removed any attenuation of drainage flows. The land owner's agent, Savills have said that they will be unwilling to spend any money on the problem but would look at a topographical report which has been commissioned by another resident.

It was reported that there is also flowback from the foul water drains. It was asked that the PC lend their support to residents with the agent and with Anglian Water.

It was noted that Anglian Water has been difficult to engage in the past.

No other matters were raised by members of the public.

33. Flooding in Queen's Lane

Following discussion, and the information discussed in the Public Forum, the Council resolved to contact the Henry Smith Charities' agent to express support for action to be taken and also to contact Anglian Water regarding the issue relating to the main drain. C Cllr Soons had also suggested that the resident contact our MP (Matt Hancock) to try to get additional support for action.

34. Clerk's Report

- a. The Clerk reported that delegated powers had not been used since the last meeting.
- b. **VAS** - Whepstead has acquired a VAS for their exclusive use and so would like us to take full time responsibility for the currently shared one. This was agreed by the Council.

External Audit - The external auditors have notified us of Satisfactory completion of Audit.

Roundabout - The problem with the surface sinking has not been resolved. Wickstead have been chasing payment and have sought to place blame on us. I have countered this in quite some detail in writing and have not heard back yet.

Co-option - The notice of vacancy has been displayed and there has been no call for an election. It was agreed to move to advertisement once the lockdown was over.

Defibrillator - We now have grants of £675 towards this (£475 from B Cllr Chester's locality budget and £200 from a charity called London Hearts, so it will certainly come in well within the amount that we've agreed. London Hearts, are arranging a site visit to advise and confirm the installation etc so I'll liaise with the Community Council once that's happened. I'd like to seek authority to draw a cheque for this before next meeting if necessary, up to the £1,250, although it may be some time before the installation takes place as there has been a great deal of interest in their grant offer.

IT - The Clerk reported that the Council's computer has been malfunctioning and will no longer turn on. It is being looked at by a computer repairer and the Clerk will report back in due course. At the same time the software needs upgrading but it seems sensible to see what happens with the PC before dealing with this.

Notice of 2021 Census - This will be on the 21st March and will be online (using a system similar to the one that is used for updating the electoral register) for all who can use that method.

Speedwatch - An offer of help from two people had been received (a father-in-law/ son-in-law) - see discussion under item 35.

35. Handyperson, Volunteers and VAS Operation

The Clerk reported that it had proved very difficult to recruit people to undertake paid or unpaid roles - for example for SpeedWatch and VAS operation volunteers and the handyperson jobs. He noted that this had seemed to be worse under lockdown but had already been evident before Covid struck.

In discussion it was agreed that this was a difficult problem to overcome. It was resolved to ask the two residents who had come forward in response to the SpeedWatch advertisement, to operate the VAS (with Cllr Jon Cardy and Laura Cardy as back-up volunteers) but to hold back on recruiting further until the Covid restrictions are over.

36. Planning and Environment

- a. There were no planning applications to consider.
- b. **Update reports** - The two applications from Pearsons, Bury Road, Chedburgh which had been considered at the previous meeting had been approved, with the conditions that the Parish Council had requested.
- c. **Mulberry Park development** - Enforcement notices had been issued but there was no other news. Cllr Chester suggested that it would be sensible to think about long term maintenance of the Public Open Space.
- d. **The Marquis Cornwallis Pub /Community Hub** - The Clerk had been in touch with the Community Hub but there was nothing to report as matters are largely on hold until such time as the prospect of the pub being offered for sale as such becomes a realistic possibility.

37. Street Design Guidelines Consultation

The Council discussed the consultation draft and length and came to the following conclusions:

- ◆ The draft guideline document is helpful and was to be welcomed.
- ◆ Climate change is an important factor and, as a low-laying village on clay soil, has the potential to affect Chedburgh particularly. The Council therefore supported the need to emphasise Climate change mitigation. Drainage that could cope with increases in both population and intensity of rainfall must be considered as part of any street design.
- ◆ The idea of incorporating vehicle charging points into lampposts was warmly supported.
- ◆ Design that militates against crime and, where appropriate, includes surveillance is helpful, especially in the context of diminishing levels of policing.
- ◆ While creating attractive streetscapes is important, practicalities are also important. Pavement trees often create problems arising from root spread and maintenance issues in the autumn, when leaves fall. The Council felt that copses and planting on green areas is often more sensible and practical. The choice of varieties is also important.
- ◆ Cycle routes on main roads are often not safe (for example the A143) so incorporating cycle routes off main roads is important.

38. Finance, including the 2021/22 Budget

- a. The Clerk introduced the financial statements for the third quarter of 2020/21 and responded to questions. The Council resolved to receive the statements.
- b. The Council considered the draft budget for 2021/22. After discussion it was resolved to adopt the budget as drafted.
- c. The Council noted that the budget was predicated upon a precept of £10,607 which represented an increase in income of 1% but a slightly smaller increase in the Parish Council element of the Band D Council Tax rate for 2021/22. The Council resolved to approve a Precept of £10,607 for 2021/22 and authorised the Chair and Clerk to sign the instruction to the Taxing Authority (West Suffolk Council).
- d. The schedule of receipts and payments was received and approved by Council.

39. Councillors’ reports and items for future agendas

Requests for agenda items for a future meeting were made in respect of:

- ◆ The wall on Queens Lane, opposite Chestnut Close
- ◆ Drainage at the Erskine Centre, including the play area
- ◆ Proposal for hardstanding for the recycling bins at the Erskine Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.

Signed as a true record by authority and on behalf of the Council:

..... Chair

..... Date