

WRESTLINGWORTH AND COCKAYNE HATLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Wrestlingworth and Cockayne Hatley Parish Council Meeting held at Wrestlingworth Memorial Hall on 8th January 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Chair Cllr J Kirkpatrick, Vice-Chair Cllr J Dix, Cllr L Chapman, Cllr A Ewens, Cllr M Wilson, CBC Cllr A Zerny, C Dear (clerk) & 6 members of the public

Apologies: CBC Cllr T Wye & Cllr M Kelly

Open Forum: A parishioner asked if it was possible to have a pavement installed between the High Street (Hatley Road end) along to the T-junction. It was explained that as the road is not wide enough so it would not be possible.

The T-junction was also discussed at this point as various parishioners felt that it is dangerous to cross the road there. CBC Cllr Zerny informed the meeting that various traffic calming measures were being discussed at CBC and a final decision will be made shortly. These measures include the possibility of widening the pavement, installing a STOP sign, new painted white lines and a raised platform. There is also the possibility of a 20mph speed limit throughout the village.

Ethics and Standards Code: None

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th November 2023, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Chairman's Report

Actions since last meeting:

- Discussed start of development of old Co-Op site with local lead of site development, with regard to closed access to track
- Read at Christmas Eve Carol Service at St Peters on behalf of Parish Council
- With vice chair interviewed Mark Kelly as prospective councillor and offered position, which was accepted
- Emailed Memorial Hall and councillors to indicate we would pay full rate for Hall Hire and withdraw our regular attendance at Hall meetings
- Requested further financial details regarding grant request from St Peters for heating upgrade
- Responded to planning application at the Chequers with concerns over street furniture re-location and parking implications
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Clerk's Report

- Forwarded relevant emails including parish crime statistics to Parish Councillors and dealt with general queries
- Completed agenda, budget and financial statement for January's meeting
- Reconciled bank statement with income and expenditure and transferred £2,000 to cover December & January's outgoings

- SAGE – transactions added to end of December
- Updated parish website with copy of draft minutes and agenda
- Completed weekly checks of defibrillator/housing in Wrestlingworth with no issues to date
- Updated PC's copy of the electoral register
- Sent planning applications to Councillors
- Spoke to potential grass cutting contractor about next season.
- Drafted budget for 2024/25 and distributed to Councillors for their observations in preparation for the meeting in January
- Included re-tensioning zip-wire in budget as requested
- Collected requests from parishioners regarding allotments – currently 6 to date
- Informed Memorial Hall committee of Council's decision regarding attendance of hall meetings and hourly rate
- Requested further information from St Peter's Church regarding grant request and circulated response to Council
- Requested additional access to bank account for Cllr Chapman which has now been completed.
- Contacted CBC regarding 2 hedges requiring attention in Wrestlingworth

PLAY AREA – Cllr Chapman informed the Council that she had:

- Inspected playground and emptied bins on a regular basis;
- Litter picking;
- Overview of the play equipment and area for any obvious damage;
- Cleared debris (broken branches/twigs etc.)
- Liaised with JD/Anglian Water/Environmental Health regarding environmental spill into the brook;
- Visited resident regarding overhanging hedge on Church Lane – responsibility of residents or council? This was discussed by the Council and it was agreed that Cllr Chapman would visit the owner and let them know that the hedge was their responsibility to cut back. Cllr Chapman to recommend someone to do this for them if necessary. **ACTION LC**
- Trees in the play area - some of the lower branches may need some attention. Cllr Kirkpatrick to inspect trees and report back. **ACTION JK**

MILLENNIUM GARDEN AND BROOK MAINTENANCE

Cllr Kirkpatrick informed the Council that the Millennium Garden had been tidied up by 2 volunteers.

HIGHWAYS – Cllr Dix informed the Council of the following:

- Reported a blocked drain outside the exchange on Church Lane, late November. Update from CBC as of 5/12/23, This has been added to planned works.
- Emailed Chris Dorow, the Rights of Way officer for Sandy, at CBC about the rotting footbridge on the fields. – I have been advised of the following.

Unfortunately, I cannot provide you with any additional information at this point. When I inspected the two bridges in September 2023, I confirmed they needed replacing and they have been in the queue for the work to be undertaken by our new contractor, Milestone. This issue has also been raised by the Leader of the Council who received a complaint about the bridges taking too long to replace. I am trying to find out a realistic date, but we have a very large backlog of bridge repairs, many in a far worse state than these two I'm afraid. If you feel the bridges have deteriorated further from the photos taken in September, (shown below), I will reinspect and if necessary, temporarily close the footpaths until the bridge works are completed. Please can you confirm?

I have taken more photos and video of the bridge and will email these to Chis Dorrow. James Kirkpatrick was copied in on my original email, to which he has also updated Chris to the state of the bridge and its condition.

- Emailed Adam Zerny to see if there is an update on the 20mph speed limit along with the planned speed bump. The planning is still in discussion and there is no further update since the last time I asked in November. Although Adam did say that it shouldn't be too much longer. The reason for the delay is that the "speed bump" is encompassed in the plan with the reduction of speed, hence the delay.
- Reported the blocked drain on the High Street/Co-Op track, again. Due to new contractors all previous faults had been closed. The issue here is that the drain is broken, as per advice by the street cleaners. This information has been added to the fault on Fix My Street along with photos.
- Reported blocked drain opposite No. 88 High Street to Fix My Street along with photo evidence.
- Emailed Adam Zerny regarding the parking at the bottom of Church Lane/High Street and advice on who we should contact as the visibility coming out of Church Lane is marred by the number of vehicles. I have been advised of a name at the council to contact but we need photographic evidence of the issue.
- I have emailed CBC Cllr Tracey Wye, to ask whether the vegetation at the crossroads was cut back after the two accidents that happened last year. The lights have been repaired but I couldn't see whether the trees/bushes had been cut back to allow the Give Way sign more visibility to approaching traffic.

SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN ISSUES – Cllr Ewens informed the Council of the following:

1. Village tidy up – I have attended two meetings with the PWWG to discuss the Village Tidy Up. Key points are:
 - a. Tidy up day to be Saturday 2nd March
 - b. Walk around village to determine tasks 13th Jan at 10 AM. All Parish Councillors welcome, meet at the pub.
 - c. Call for volunteers needs attention and could include:
 - i. door drop a leaflet or an insert in next issue of Village Link.
 - ii. PWWG (Val Cooper) will prepare a leaflet/poster
 - iii. promote through website and Village Link
 - iv. Air Cadets to be approached again
 - d. Allocating tasks to volunteers. JH will coordinate this when we have a clear picture of the numbers. To be published in advance, if we get full list of volunteers by 24th Feb task list will be circulated the following week.

- e. Skip - to be supplied by the PC - get the largest one possible, action required to order this. To be delivered on late on Friday 1st March and collected Monday 4th. A volunteer will be required to act as Skip Supervisor throughout the day.
 - f. Mechanical Equipment. JH to determine what is to be used and where, incorporate in the task list. Only trained people allowed to use.
 - g. Litter pickers, cones, Hi-Viz vests, waste bags etc – PWWG are “locating” them.
 - h. Risk assessment - last year's will be updated by PWWG,
2. EV Charging point – No further update – I will follow up later this year.
 3. Street lighting. It turns out that the email suggesting Npower would be discontinuing their service to us was sent in error and there is no change. I need to check on our bills going forward to make sure we are being charged correctly for the low energy lights.
 4. Solar Farm between Wrestlingworth and Sutton. It is more than a year since the most recent document was placed on the CBC Planning System website. I have taken another look at all the CBC memoranda and related documents. The last document dated 16th December 2022 is a lengthy review of the EIA Screening Option submitted by the developer in Nov 2022. The developer's document concluded that an EIA was not required, whereas the CBC review concluded that a full EIA is required. I recommend we request an update from CBC of any discussions that have been held with the proposed developer during the last 12 months.
 5. Potton Community Energy Project – The November meeting agreed the Project will incorporate as a community benefit society; the plan is to discuss the detail of getting incorporated at the next meeting - to be held in the Potton Community Centre on 16th January at 7.00. Cllr Ewens has a personal commitment on that day and cannot attend so Councillors were asked to consider attending in his place.

WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS - Cllr Wilson informed the Council of the following:

- Various posts made on Village Website & Facebook page as required, including;
 - Allotment interest
 - Parish Council vacancies
 - Provide update on Bin Collection dates.
 - Fire service public view request
- Reached out to Central Beds Planning to understand status of 16 house plan on Potton Road.
- Provide update for Village Link communications.
- It was agreed at a WhatsApp group would be set up for the Council. **ACTION MW**

Lease for allotment area

An article was put in the Village Link Magazine inviting all Wrestlingworth residents to let the Parish Council know if they have an interest in having an allotment by contacting the Clerk. So far 6 parishioners have responded positively which is too few for the requirement of allotments.

Planning

The current Planning applications were discussed. (**Appendix C**)

The planning application for the Chequer's Pub was discussed and it was agreed that the Council would object to the current proposal on the following grounds:

- 1) The revised application now places the entire new building outside of the beer garden area and wholly in the current driveway and carpark of the Chequers pub. The original suggestion that the development was outside the listed building curtilage now seems unlikely, as the development has moved considerably closer to the Chequers building.
- 2) The planning statement references the advice given that the development would need to 'respect the setting of the listed building'. The parish council maintain that the new development does not do this given the location of the proposed new building. Indeed, the visual impact of the new proposal on the listed building site is now considered intrusive compared with the previous proposal.
- 3) Although parking slots may help, it seems likely that the reduction in space will reduce the number of vehicles that can safely be parked. Overflow parking would impact adversely on the roads and neighbouring housing.
- 4) The proposal to relocate the access to the community field to the west of the development is not ideal. When used this area needs vehicular access for large vehicles with trailers, as well as heavy duty grass cutting machinery. The new location appears to make such access difficult.
- 5) The planning statement mentions in Section 19 that items of street furniture will need relocating, but doesn't mention where they should be relocated to, or who will be paying for the relocation. It is expected that the cost of relocation will be met by the developer. We therefore request to be kept informed on these discussions regarding the new/alternative location. Indeed, it seems odd that the new location for the bus stop and associated furniture is not mentioned in the application.

Finance

Councillors approved the payment of invoices (**Appendix A**)

The Financial statement (**Appendix B**) was reviewed along with the draft budget for 2024/25 previously circulated to all councillors by the clerk.

Grant requests from St Peter's Church was discussed and it was agreed that £1,000 would be granted for the work to the heating system. It was agreed with Mick Bister that no further grant would be requested from St Peter's Church for 2025/26.

The grant request from The Village Link for £100 was agreed.

It was agreed that a precept for 2024/25 would be requested of £27,975 at a rate of 5% increase on Band D Council Tax charge. Clerk to request precept from CBC and provide appropriate paperwork. **ACTION CD**

Correspondence – None, other than periodicals which were handed out for distribution and emails sent to Councillors between meetings.

Any Other Business

- **Alleyways in Wrestlingworth** – Clerk to chase request from 19th November for the hedges to be cut back at the alleyway from Butcher’s Lane to the High Street and another one going up to the Eyeworth Road. **ACTION CD**
- **Yellow drain cover at the T-Junction** – Cllr Chapman agreed to contact Highways regarding safety concerns over the large yellow drain cover which has been covering a large hole on the pavement near to the T-Junction for some months. **ACTION LC**

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Date of Next Meeting – Monday 11th March at 7.30pm at Wrestlingworth Memorial Hall

Appendix A**Payments for approval – January 2024**

The following accounts are to be paid and the clerk requested the council's endorsement.

December	Wrestlingworth memorial hall		22.50
December	HCI DATA Ltd		102.00
December	Clerk's Salary D/Debit		557.70
January	Clerk's Salary D/Debit		557.70
November & December	Clerk's expenses (Telephone, Internet, Stamps, stationery)		30.00
December	SAGE – accounting software D/Debit – UK-03964646		31.20
January	SAGE – accounting software D/Debit – UK-04072878		31.20
December	D J Granger – grass cutting		883.80

Appendix B**FINANCIAL STATEMENT AT 31 December 2023 with budget to March 2024**

	<u>Year to 31 March 2024</u>			<u>2022/2023</u>	-	Notes
	Actual to 31 December 2023	Budget for year	Expected outturn	Actual 2022/23	Proposed budget 24/25	
Income						
Precept	26,577.00	26,577.00	26,577.00	25,300.00	27,975.00	1
Interest	367.62	150.00	500.00	62.72	700.00	
Grass Cutting Contribution		403.15	403.15	403.15	403.15	
Insurance Claim				6,642.67		
CBC Grant				1,200.00		
VAT refund to March 2023	458.65	458.65	458.65	88.52		
Total Income	27,403.27	27,588.80	27,938.80	33,697.06	29,078.15	
Operational Expenses						
Accountants fees & Sage	588.00	650.00	670.00	608.00	714.00	
Affiliation Fees	328.00	350.00	328.00	207.00	350.00	
Amenity Field lease		120.00	120.00		120.00	2
British Legion	19.99	19.00	19.99	19.00	19.99	
Church Clock Maintenance		350.00	300.00	296.00	350.00	
Churchyard Maintenance		300.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	
Clerk's expenses	235.00	330.00	300.00	290.00	300.00	
Clerk's salary	5,409.27	5,760.00	7,080.00	5,721.33	7,000.00	
Defibrillator maintenance		300.00		300.00	300.00	
Election expenses	64.82	2,000.00	64.82		2,000.00	
Electricity - street lighting	1,854.65	6,000.00	4,800.00	3,914.88	5,000.00	
Electricity/lighting - maint	911.25	2,000.00	1,600.00	1,907.50	2,000.00	
General Maintenance	1,249.50	500.00	1,250.00	715.39	1,200.00	
GDPR Data Protection		35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	
Grants (see below)	600.00	600.00	600.00	250.00	1,100.00	
Normal Grass and Hedge cutting	6,120.00	7,500.00	7,000.00	3,902.68	7,200.00	
Other grounds & tree work	400.00	500.00	400.00	1,415.00	500.00	
Insurance	1,017.28	950.00	1,017.28	893.66	1,300.00	
Memorial Hall Hire	54.00	90.00	72.00	66.00	150.00	
Millennium Garden		100.00	100.00	64.96	100.00	
Parish Tidy Up		300.00	350.00	241.67	500.00	
Playing field Maintenance	2,376.50	750.00	2,376.50	251.50	1,500.00	
Playing field lease		360.00	360.00		360.00	3
Training expenses	35.00	100.00	70.00	90.00	100.00	
Web site	240.00	360.00	360.00	310.00	360.00	

Vat expensed and not yet recovered	623.00		0.00	391.97	
Total Operational Expenses	22,126.26	30,324.00	29,373.59	21,991.54	32,858.99
Operating surplus/deficit	5,277.01	-2,735.20	-1,434.79	11,705.52	-3,780.84
Projects & rent arrears					
Allotment lease and set up		2,500.00		2,500.00	2,500.00 4
Amenity lease arrears		600.00		600.00	720.00 2
Play Area maintenance	775.00			5,174.11	
Playing field lease arrears		3,600.00			3,960.00 3
Cockayne Hatley land & set up				23.00	4
Bus shelter				5,575.00	
Noticeboard CH				2,098.40	
Net Project costs	775.00	6,700.00	0.00	15,970.51	7,180.00
Overall surplus/deficit	4,502.01	-9,435.20	-1,434.79	-4,264.99	10,960.84
RESERVES					
Bank brought forward	29,106.16			29,837.50	
(Deficit)/Surplus for period	4,502.01	-9,435.20	-1,434.79	-4,264.99	
Bank carried forward	33,608.17	-9,435.20	-1,434.79	25,572.51	
VAT refund due				88.52	
Total	33,608.17	-9,435.20	-1,434.79	25,661.03	
GRANTS PAID IN YEAR					
Village Link	250.00	250.00		250.00	100.00
Magpas	200.00	200.00			
History Society				120.00	
St Peter's Church					1,000.00
PWWG	150.00	150.00			
	600.00	600.00		370.00	1,100.00
Bank balances					
Current account - 31/12/2023	1,653.03		31/03/2023	2,238.19	
Deposit accounts - 31/12/2023	31,955.14		31/03/2023	26,867.97	
	33,608.17			29,106.16	

NOTES TO BUDGET

1 - 5% (band D 4.5%) increase for 2023/24

2 - Lease expired September 2016 with annual rent of £120. Yet to be renewed by CBC and no rent paid.

3 - Lease expired March 2011 with annual rent of £360. Yet to be renewed by CBC and no rent paid. The last email from CBC dated 19 Nov 2018, refusing our request for a reduction and time to pay. No invoice from CBC to date.

4 - Estimated costs

Appendix C

Planning Applications as at

Application Ref	Date Submitted	Location	Works Proposed	PC Comment	Target Decision Date	Status	Date Granted / Refused
CB/23/03332/FULL	16/10/2023	65 High Street, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EN	Single storey side extension		17/11/2023	Granted	23/11/2023
CB/TCA/23/00482	10/10/2023	Briar Cottage, Church Lane, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EU	Works to trees within a Conservation Area: T1 Corsican pine, T2 Deodar cedar and T3 Atlas Cedar - all three trees to be felled ground level as all three trees are causing damage to retaining walls, patios and garage. Roots are creating a major trip hazard.	No comment	07/11/2023	Application No Longer Visible	
CB/23/02967/FULL	03/10/2023	66 High Street, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EP	Erection of a front outbuilding		10/11/2023	Refused	
CB/23/03012/FULL	13/09/2023	1 Hatley Road, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EH	Erection of a wall over 1m high adjacent to the public highway (retrospective)	Comments Provided (JK)	08/11/2023	Application Withdrawn	
CB/23/02447/FULL	21/07/2023	12 Braggs Lane, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2ER	Erection of an outbuilding to rear garden	No comment	04/10/2023	Awaiting decision	
CB/21/04834/FULL	15/11/2021	Land to south of Potton Road, Wrestlingworth	Erection of 16 dwellings with access onto Potton Road, parking and landscaping	Parish council objection		Awaiting decision	
CB/22/04445/SCN		Circa 80 Hectares of Land to the West of Wrestlingworth,	EIA Screening Opinion: Proposed solar farm.	No comment		Pre Application Advise Received	
CB/23/03662/FULL	13/11/2023	The Chequers, High Street, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EP	The erection of a one and a half storey single dwelling house with associated parking and new private access onto the High Street. Part of the pub car park is to be re-modelled to suit.	Comments Provided (JK)	08/01/2024	Awaiting decision	

CB/TCA/23/00581	06/12/2023	47 High Street, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EP	Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Ts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9 Leyland and Deodar Conifers - Reduce tops and sides of by max 5ft; T7 Cedar (dying) to be felled. T5 Leyland - reduce height by 10ft. T6 Leyland - reduce height by 15ft. Yew - minor reshaping. T8 Conifer - reduce height by 2-3ft.		Awaiting decision
CB/23/02447/FULL	11/12/2023	12 Braggs Lane, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2ER	Erection of an outbuilding (annex) to rear garden	01/01/2024	Awaiting decision
CB/23/03670/FULL	13/11/2023	The Chequers, High Street, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, SG19 2EP	Erection of a two bedroom detached dwelling with associated parking, new private access into the High Street and re-model part of the pub car park	16/02/2023	Consultation Period

In relation to CB/21/04834/FULL - Just prior to the holiday period commencing, the government made a number of revisions to its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). One of the key revisions was an amendment to the principles surrounding Exception sites, which is what the application was originally submitted as. The revisions to the NPPF will have clear consequences for the application as currently presented and as such, I have asked for the applicant's views on the matter and particularly on how they intend to proceed as a consequence.