

# MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Karen Peck, email: [mepalparishcouncil@msn.com](mailto:mepalparishcouncil@msn.com) tel 07842 499377  
Chairman: Mr Brian Rollason, email: [brianrollason.mpc@outlook.com](mailto:brianrollason.mpc@outlook.com)

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**NOTICE OF MEETING:** Full Parish Council Meeting  
**TIME:** 19.30  
**DATE:** Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
**VENUE:** Mepal Community Pavilion, Mepal

All members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend for the purposes of considering and resolving the business to be transacted at the meeting as set out below.

MEMBERS	6
VACANCIES	1
QUORUM	3

Members of the public and press are invited to address the Council at its Open Forum.

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## MINUTES

### 102/19 TO RECORD APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received by County Councillor Lorna Dupre, Councillor Alan Catley, Councillor Mark Brill, District Councillor Mark Inskip will arrive late to the meeting.

### 103/19 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lorna Williams declaration of interest - Mepal People  
Councillor Diana Bray declaration of interest - VE Day Celebrations

### 104/19 TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF:

Full Parish Council Meeting Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 approved and signed by Chairman Brian Rollason.

### 105/19 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Due to District Councillor Mark Inskip being delayed to the meeting this item on the agenda will be taken on his arrival.

### 106/19 OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were four members of the public present at the meeting.

A member of the public asked that the Parish Council consider installing CCTV in the village. It was asked that this be considered in the next financial review to which the Chairman agreed.

A second member of the public asked that as the Community Led Plan identified a demand for a large Community Event, that a reserve of £1000 could be allocated to community group who wish to hold a large event at the Community Pavilion in the future to allow them to hire a marquee. This could be taken from CIL money or from the CLP Project budget. The Chairman agreed.

### 107/19 RESIGNATION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

The chairman advised that Parish Councillor Steve Green has resigned from the Parish Council with immediate effect. The Chairman thanked him for his valued contribution and wished him well.

### 108/19 CO-OPTING OF NEW COUNCILLOR

By a majority vote it was resolved that Cassandra Brown is co-opted as a Councillor to Mepal Parish Council.

### 109/19 PLANNING

#### UPDATE:

**19/00826/FUL Land west of Whitegate Farm, Witcham Road, Mepal**

Demolition of 2 no. Nissen huts, construction of two dwellings with associated parking and amenity area

**APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**

**19/00627/FUL Site North East of 15 Bridge Road, Mepal**

Erection of dwelling and garage on land benefiting from extant outline permission (LPA ref: 19/00909/OUT) and retrospective consent for the retention of 2 mobile homes for a temporary period – **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**

**AMENDMENT:**

**19/01222/FUL**

**34 New Road Mepal**

Construction of detached 4 bed, one and half story dwelling

AMENDMENT – Additional information received parking for hot dwelling and proposed dwelling – the amendment was discussed and a no comment response was agreed.

**110/19 PAVILION MAINTENANCE**

The Parish Council discussed quotations for the insulation of loft area at the Pavilion. Three quotations A, B and C were discussed and by unanimous vote quotation A from David Frear Plumbing and Heating for £750.00 (including VAT) was agreed, Clerk to contact and accept quotation and work start date.

The purchase of fire-resistant curtains for main room within the Pavilion was discussed and it was agreed the Clerk could purchase these with immediate effect.

The Parish Council discussed three WIFI quotations A, B and C and by unanimous vote it was agreed to proceed with Talk Talk Business at a cost of £24.50 per month excluding VAT. It was agreed that the Clerk will proceed with the acceptance of this quotation once Councillor Catley has completed the postal address application with Royal Mail.

The purchase of materials for the Parish Handyman were agreed and the Pest Control charges for current services to the Pavilion of £25 per visit were also agreed.

**111/19 TO ADD SIGNATURES TO PARISH COUNCIL BANK ACCOUNTS**

It was agreed to add two further signatures on to the Parish Council bank account, Councillor Lorna Williams will be added and also given Administration rights and Chairman Brian Rollason will be added as a signatory. The Clerk provided paperwork to be signed and returned to Unity Bank once complete.

**112/19 TO APPOINT NEW INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The appointment of a new internal auditor was discussed by the Parish Council and it was agreed that Canalbs Ltd would be used for a single end of year check and their quotation of £42.50 per hour plus 45p per mile travel was agreed by unanimous vote. The Clerk is to contact Canalbs to accept their services.

Councillor Mark Brill joined the meeting at 19.50

**113/19 GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR 2020-21**

The Parish Council discussed all applications received for 2020-2021 Grants from local community groups. The following was agreed:

Mepal Youth Group – Agreed to provide them the full amount requested.

Mepal Achieve Group – Agreed to provide the full amount requested.

Mepal Friendship Group – Agreed to provide the full amount requested.

Mepal VE Day Celebration – It was agreed that this request would be funded from New Community Projects within this year's budget to allow planning to commence immediately. It was also agreed a sum of £250 would be released with immediate effect to the VE Day committee to act as a cash float, with full receipts for all payments against this cash float to be provided to the Clerk to account for these spends. With regard to other spending, invoices are to be addressed to the Parish Council and agreed in principle by the Clerk before services are undertaken. The Clerk will Contact the VE Day Committee to make arrangements.

Mepal Good Companions – no grant application was received. The Clerk has spoken to the group and they had advised they did not require any funding for the financial year coming.

Neighbourhood Watch – No grant application was received.

Mepal Parochial Church Council (St Mary's Church) – it was agreed to take forward to the next meeting once more information is known.

Mepal Sports FC Seniors – Agreed to provide the full amount plus additional match fees for the remaining session at £45 per game and 7 games remaining. The Parish Council also agreed to purchase a new container for the team. Councillor Mark Brill will progress the container purchase and obtain prices.

Union Chapel – it was agreed that the Chairman would inquire for alternative funding for the group.

Mepal Village Hall Committee – Agreed to provide the full amount requested.

District Councillor Mark Inskip joined the meeting at 20.31, item 105/19 on the agenda was now received at the meeting.

## 105/19 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

### **-Purdah**

The council, like all other local authorities, is in 'purdah' during the General Election campaign. There are a lot of myths about what councils can and can't do during this time, but in general terms it means councils cannot favour a particular party or candidate, and must not launch new public consultations or publishing the results of existing ones particularly if the content is sensitive.

### **Elean Business Park gates installed at last**

Success at last! Mark has been pursuing this energetically, and the gates have now been purchased and installed. Padlocks have now been fitted, and the aim is to have the gates closed between 8:30PM and 5:00AM on weekdays. On weekends the gates will normally be locked, and staff from the straw burning plant will open and lock as and when access is required. The straw plant has sole responsibility for operation of the gates.

### **A142 cycleway and footpath**

Work on the A142 combined cycleway and footpath between Witcham Toll and Sutton is proceeding at pace, and is expected to be complete by 29 November. This is the first phase of the works on this scheme. The second phase will be to connect the cycleway and footpath properly to the new Co-op, and this will happen next year to align with plans for the store.

### **Trading companies and Community Land Trusts**

On 11 October, we were among 13 East Cambridgeshire District Councillors who wrote an open letter to the auditors of the council and of the trading company to express our concerns at the finances and the governance of East Cambridgeshire Trading Company. The council's auditors have written to the council's Section 151 officer, seeking answers to a number of questions in response to our letter. We await the outcome of their enquiries. Meanwhile, following our open letter, a number of residents wrote their own open letter to the auditors, raising similar concerns surrounding the gathering of evidence of community support for a Community Land Trust development in Wilburton. The letter points out that 'the lack of oversight and regulation of Community Land Trusts ... means that they constitute a fundamentally unsafe basis for planning policy in East Cambridgeshire'. And in Kennett concerned residents have launched a crowd funder for a judicial review of the council's planning permission for the large development there.

### **Climate change 'ideas forum'**

The council is proposing to launch an online 'ideas forum' whereby residents can submit ideas via a webform or email or phone to help the council address climate change. This is a decidedly less ambitious plan than the motion your local councillors supported, which would have included working with partners across the region, proactively including young people in the process, and establishing an East Cambridgeshire Climate Change Partnership with a wide and inclusive membership.

### **Waste collections on private roads**

Some months ago the council decided it would introduce a new policy regarding collection of bin sacks and wheelie bins from private roads. It has now identified residents in 2,249 properties located on private or unadopted roads. Of these

- 111 currently present their waste on an adopted highway
- 1811 will be required to sign an indemnity protecting the council from liability for wear and tear to the road surface
- 279 are on roads which require minimal remedial work or which could cause problems in the future, and will be required to sign an indemnity
- 48 are on roads which pose a major risk to both vehicles and employees and require substantial remedial work to continue collections – none of these are in the Sutton ward.

### **Bus review group**

Lorna is on a council working group drawing up a response to the Combined Authority's review of bus services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

### **Reports online**

A reminder that our council reports are online at [www.tinyurl.com/lornasreports](http://www.tinyurl.com/lornasreports)

### **Flood risk**

I have been continuing to liaise with the Environment Agency and flood officers at the county council about the various pieces of work being undertaken to address the risk of flooding.

1. Short-term: the third year (of four) of works by the Environment Agency to build up the barrier banks between Earith and Welney was scheduled to come to an end on 31 October, though if a two-week extension is granted this may continue into the first half of November in view of the bad weather in late October.

2. Medium-term: The Environment Agency, county council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) and others are working on a seven- to ten-year project to collect data about the 'flood cells' at greatest risk in our sub-region, and work out what to do about them. The first phase of this piece of work, collecting the data, is due to finish in around April next year, and I have asked to be updated on progress at that point.

3. Long-term: in the long term, of course, the report into the flood risks posed by the Great Ouse tidal river system over the next 100 years makes sobering reading, with a 1:20 year chance of flooding in the area between Mepal and Denver by the year 2109.

#### **Climate Change & Environment Strategy**

The full council meeting in December will receive a first draft of the council's Climate Change & Environment Strategy, which officers have been working on alongside a steering group of five councillors including me. This work is being informed by a report by postgraduate students from the University of Cambridge working within the Cambridge University Science & Policy Exchange (CUSPE). This is a scheme that has been in place for several years, championed by my Cambridge colleague Cllr Ian Manning, enabling students to gain practical experience of research into real life issues which can help inform county council policy. This particular piece of research considers how to measure Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's carbon emissions, and how we might go about reaching carbon zero by 2050. It is enormously impressive and a useful base from which to work.

<http://tinyurl.com/CUSPE-carbon>

One of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions is transport, an area in which all tiers of government need to do more. The CUSPE researchers have been keen to pursue this particular area further and we are told there'll be more information on this towards the end of the year.

#### **Peatland**

One area of work which has leaped out at everyone from this report is the contribution of peatland to carbon emissions. Only three per cent of the world's surface is peatland, but it is a more effective carbon 'sink', holding and trapping carbon, even than trees about which we hear so much. Cambridgeshire of course contains large quantities of peatland, and the draining of this for agricultural use has released huge amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, contributing significantly to global warming. Restoration of peatland through re-wetting will capture more carbon, but raise challenges for agriculture.

**Meet your councillors** • Tuesday 12 November, 6:30PM-7:30PM, Sutton, School Community Room • Tuesday 10 December, 6:30PM-7:30PM, Sutton, School Community Room

#### **114/19 PIP REPORT**

The Parish Council discussed the recent Pitch Improvement Programme Report that was carried out on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 assist the Parish Council progress the recreation field improvement plan. Early indications highlight gravel levels are lower than expected and further investigation is required. Sheltons had been contacted and are providing information on equipment for test sites to be evaluated. It has also been indicated that the current system installed could be agricultural rather than a sports ground specification.

The current Parish Council agreed that ongoing maintenance had not been carried out and this is needed in future once the current issues are diagnosed and if possible, resolved. To further progress this issue a Working Group will meet on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm to discuss ideas to move the issue forward.

#### **115/19 MEMORIAL BENCH**

The Parish Council discussed the four quotations for a memorial bench and it was agreed by unanimous vote the quotation A would be accepted from Leisure Bench Ltd for £417.96 including VAT. The Clerk to place order and arrange delivery.

#### **116/19 BUDGET 2019-20**

To correct date error minute ref 290/18 b) which should have read "19/20 Budget".

#### **117/19 CIL PRECEPT**

The Parish Council discussed the legal requirement to report on CIL funding annually and advised on the restrictions that Parish's have to follow in relation to this spend. This report must also be published on the website. It was also highlighted that if the Brick Lane development was to be approved this would produce no CIL funding for the Parish due to it being 100% affordable housing stock. A new reporting spreadsheet will now be used to report CIL spend.

It was agreed by unanimous vote that a proportion of CIL funding already received by the Parish Council will be used immediately to fund the Phase 1 of the play area improvements to include new equipment, removal of older equipment, fencing and gates to separate the play area from the recreational field. It was agreed to proceed with the quotation from Fenland Leisure these improvements for the sum of £9378.00. The clerk was asked to accept the quotation and secure a work start date.

**118/19 FINANCE**

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|--|---------------|
| a) PAYMENTS made since last meeting -                                |               |
| Cambridgeshire ACRE Renewal 2019/20                                  | £57.00 BACS   |
| Optimum Top up transfer to card                                      | £2000.00 BACS |
| SLCC - 11 <sup>th</sup> Ed Local Council Admin and The Clerks Manual | £156.29 BACS  |
| HMRC October 2019  | £91.59 BACS   |
| Staff Wages and Expenses October 2019                                | £1333.15 BACS |
| Scribe Accounts Package  | £664.80 BACS  |
| CPD Electrical PAT Test  | £65.00 BACS   |
| East Cambs Neighbourhood Watch - 2 x signs Laurel Close              | £30.00 BACS   |
| David J Richards - printing of Mepal People October                  | £98.86 BACS   |
| Honey Housekeeping - October 2019                                    | £50.00 BACS   |
| Field (compost) Ltd  | £525.60 BACS  |
| Truelink October 2019  | £565.64 BACS  |
| Currys - Laptop  | £853.00 OC    |
| Aldi - Microwave for Pavilion  | £37.99 OC     |
| AO.COM - Mouse   | £15.00 OC     |
| Jewsons - Supplied for Parish Maintenance                            | £172.88 OC    |
| b) DIRECT DEBITS paid:   |               |
| SSE - Electric for Pavilion 14.06.2019-30.09.2019                    | £59.77 DD     |
| OPUS Pavilion Gas 18.09-18.11.2019                                   | £30.61 DD     |
| Plusnet Mobile -October  | £7.00 DD      |
| c) INCOME received:  |               |
| CIL Precept  | £4441.45 BACS |
| Pavilion Hire  | £500.00 BACS  |
| d) QUOTES  |               |
| e) PAYMENTS to be made:  |               |

**119/19 DIARY DATES** - Next Full Parish Council meeting will be Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 7.30pm in Mepal Community Pavilion

Meeting closed at 21.43

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14<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
Karen Peck  
Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer  
Mepal Parish Council

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14<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
Brian Rollason  
Chairman  
Mepal Parish Council