

MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Karen Peck, email: clerk@mepalparish.org tel 01353 741066
Chairman: Mr Brian Rollason, email: brian@mepalparish.org

NOTICE OF MEETING: Full Parish Council Meeting
TIME: 19.00
DATE: Tuesday 15th December 2020
VENUE: Virtually via Zoom

Please note: due to the current Covid-19 Coronavirus situation, the Parish Council will meet virtually using Zoom as permitted in "The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020" ("the 2020 Regulations").

The Parish Meeting link is Meeting ID: 83779001022 Passcode: 192346 if you wish to raise any points within Public Participation, we would ask these are sent to the Parish Clerk 48 hours prior to the meeting.

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	5
VACANCIES	2
QUORUM	3

MINUTES

- 161220/1 TO RECORD APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies received from Councillor Brian Rollason (Chairman) who would be more than 10 minutes late arriving to the meeting due to work commitments. Vice Chairman Lorna Williams chaired the meeting. Councillor Cassy Brown was absent from the meeting
- 161220/2 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
None
- 161220/3 TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF:**
The Full Parish Council Meeting minutes from Tuesday 24th November 2020 were approved by unanimous decision as a true record of the meeting.
- 161220/4 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS SINCE LAST MEETING**
To advise all reports are published on the Mepal Parish Council website under Local Government. County Councillor Lorna Dupre updated that the Youth Service Funding motions had been passed with a small amendment at the Full Council Meeting of East Cambs District Council. District Councillor Mark Inskip updated that Brick Lane application was now scheduled to be heard at February Planning Committee. He also advised that no application had been received for Mepal Outdoor Centre and it was unclear when this would happen. Councillor Williams asked if the District and County Councillors were consultees on the AD Plant proposal and it was confirmed that as this falls under Fenland, they were not official consultees but if the community feel they would like to be represented in regard to this they are happy to do so. District Councillor Mark Inskip stated that regarding the increase in traffic concern he understood that the AD Plant can increase without breaching their current agreement.
- 161220/5 OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (15 minutes)**
At the close of this item, members of the public will no longer be permitted to address the Council unless invited to do so by the Chairman.
There was one member of the public present who did not wish to speak
- 161220/6 TO RECORD COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION**
To minute that Councillor Rebecca Margieson has resigned as a Parish Councillor

161220/7

PLANNING (15 minutes)

20/01330/FUL Bedford House, 14 Bridge Road, Mepal

Proposed four bed, two storey dwelling to replace existing dwelling

The Council discussed the application and agreed by unanimous vote a "No Comment" response

CCC/20/052/FUL Mepal Reservoir, Land off Blaby's Drove, Sutton Gault

Construction of irrigation reservoir by the extraction and export of sand and gravel; silt lagoons; mineral processing plant; weighbridge; temporary buildings and use of existing access into the A142 Chatteris Road between the Mepal Outdoor Centre and Hiams Bridge

The Council discussed the application and agreed by unanimous vote a "No Comment" response

20/01571/RMA Horticultural Site between 8 and 14 Bridge Road, Mepal

Reserved matters for construction of Plot 1 Detached dwelling

The Council discussed the application and agreed by unanimous vote a "No Comment" response

TO UPDATE:

20/00630/FUM *AMENDMENT* Site South and West of The Bungalow Brick Lane, Mepal

Erection of 55 dwellings, new access, estate roads, driveways, parking areas, open space, external lighting, substation and associated infrastructure.

The amendment and additional information received includes:

1. Amended proposed site plan
2. Refuse Vehicle Tracking Information
In response to the Local Highways Authority comments. These details are for information only and no response is required

The Council discussed the amendment and agree there was no substantial difference and the plans had received only a subtle change to highways which did not mitigate the main concerns that the Parish Council have previously expressed.

20/01235/FUL The Elms, High Street, Mepal

New bay window to front of property and single storey rear and side extension - **APPROVED**

161220/8

MATTERS ARISING (30 minutes)

1. Brick Lane Committee Response since amendment – to approve Parish response for a hopeful January Committee
The Council has discussed the amendment and agreed by unanimous vote the Councillor Williams would make minor amendments to the Parish response and bring back to January's meeting for approval
2. Wi-Fi Provision
The Council discussed a letter received from Mepal Village Hall Secretary regarding Wi-Fi provision offered through Connecting Cambridge. The Parish Council agreed by unanimous decision that the Parish Council would remain on the list for funding once more is made available through Connecting Cambridgeshire. The Clerk to send a response
3. Lilibet Woods –to discuss essential maintenance quotations and agree course of action
The Council discussed the land now known as Lilibet Woods and Brangehill Drove that was gifted to the Parish Council some years ago after the development of Meadow Way. They noted the lack of maintenance of this area after an initial tree planting exercise a number of years ago and discussed the implications this had caused to both land and trees in the area. As no regular annual maintenance has been carried out since the Council was gifted in December 2011, other than the initial tree planting, this has a negative effect on the health on the young trees and also an increase in fly tipping in the overgrown ditch has been noted. There is also reduced accessibility of the byway/footpath along the Drove. The Parish Council has recently been working with Cambridgeshire County Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and Environment Agency to try and resolve the issues caused due to the neglect and to rectify its obligations on the land. The Council discussed two quotations (a third had not been received as the contractor felt he was unable to take on the vast works required) and agreed to proceed with Quotation A with CGM Group to complete the following work:
Clearance of drainage ditch running along the back of meadow Way / Brick Lane properties, with mulching of brambles/nettles
To provide operatives with waders and brush cutters and adequate training

CGM Ltd to provide x3 operatives

Total Cost - £2,440.00 +VAT

Cutting back of overhanging trees along Brangehill Drove to a height of at least 3m from the ground
To provide qualified operatives to clear all brash and branches to safe height with waste removed or placed for insect and habitats

Total Cost - £1,855.00 +VAT

Clearance of brush/nettles/brambles along Brangehill Drove to allow public access to the entire area as is our legal obligation.

To provide qualified operatives to clear all vegetation to provide a safe environment.

Mulch and clear all brambles

CGM Ltd will use a small compact tractor for ease.

Total Cost - £11,800.00 +VAT

Investigation of Oak Tree with remedial action to cut dead branches at top of tree of necessary

Tree survey to be carried out with a detailed report to follow

Work to be carried out after a survey this will require to be priced separately

Total Cost - £965.00 +VAT

The Council noted that once these works were completed, we must establish an annual grounds maintenance program for this area and this must be incorporated into the 2022-23 budget.

Although quotation had been received for works to Lilibet Woods it was decided that these works would be dealt with in 2022-23 financial year due to the vast amounts needed. It was also hoped that the community could take a more active role and engage with the Parish Council to make Lilibet Woods usable for everyone in the community.

Councillor Williams will mark out the defined boundary so works can commence.

The Clerk is to contact CGM Group to clarify there is an asbestos clause within the contract.

4. To note allotment flooding

The Parish Council noted that there is flooding in the allotment area after the recent heavy rain and high water-table. It was reported that there is serious flooding in the back garden of 3 Laurel Close and this runs along the end of the allotment area. The flooding in this area is not coming from the field run-off as that is currently being held in the new attenuation pond. Unfortunately, as the land in the allotments is lower than the field, any excess will not run back uphill to the new pond. The hope is that we have a dry summer in 2021 and the heavy clay soil may have time to dry out and the issue could improve.

The contractor that is carrying out the works on the recreation field is due to visit site in January 2021 and the Parish Council has asked for their assessment on works that could be carried out to the area to assist but these would have to be viable regarding budget spend.

Councillor Hickman stated he had visited the allotment site and spoken to an allotment holder who advised that the site had always flooded in the 6 years he had tenanted a plot.

Councillor Brian Rollason joined the meeting at this point.

5. To set Parish Budget and Precept 2021/22

The Parish Council discussed the draft budget that had been circulated to all before the meeting by Councillor Williams. Each Councillor had reviewed the budget and information sent, and an attempt has been made to simplify the categories and to classify the annual maintenance and overhead costs separately from any projects. Overheads need to be covered by the precept and any income generated from assets, projects are covered by any CIL money received and reserves or grants.

Councillor Williams highlighted the main points that have formed the budget:

Previous precepts have not been set to balance the overheads with the total non-CIL receipts for some years and in effect the per household contribution has now reduced to pre-2016 levels due to the reliance on the large reserves being held by the previous Council for non-completed projects.

The Community Pavilion is an expensive asset that requires significant time and money to maintain and due to it being left empty and unheated after a flood, the current Parish Council have been working hard to bring up to the required standard for community use. The work has identified several cases of poor workmanship, poor fittings and in some cases incorrect installation which have all had to be rectified this year.

Likely increases in energy, utility costs and insurance in 2021 will continue to be a significant contribution to budgeted payments and Covid-19 has resulted in declining Pavilion rental. We have taken steps to manage the energy costs by getting better control of the heating and hot water and continue to source the best value utility contracts.

The Council agreed to increase the precept to £37300.00 for 2021-22, to bring the balance in payments and receipts to only -£2000 next year.

161220/9 COUNCILLOR UPDATE (10 minutes)

Councillor Hickman advised that when carrying out a play area inspection (as he is part of the new inspection rota) he found a used condom between the fort and the metal climbing frame. This was disposed of this appropriately, but the Parish Council would like to ask the users of the Park to please be mindful of others.

Councillor Williams advised that the Clerk, Maintenance Manager and herself have been monitoring the area outside the playpark, which is also used by residents to access the recreation field and have noted that the current high water-table and constant pedestrian access has made this area very muddy recently. The Council have received two comments asking that we look at improving this area, which is not in fact a footpath. As a temporary solution the Clerk has managed to source some free wood chippings and with the Maintenance Manager and Councillor Williams has today spread the first load in the area to improve access to the playpark. We hope that residents appreciate this effort.

161220/10 FINANCE

1. To approve payments and Bank Reconciliation up to 30th November 2020

a) Online Payments:

Optimum card fee	£1.99 OC
Amazon - Grass seed and security chain	£71.94 OC
CPTC - Course Fee	£90.00 BACS
Ely and District Training	£96.00 BACS
Perspex Distribution Ltd	£545.27 BACS
Truelink	£238.26 BACS
Container People	£39.78 BACS

b) Direct Debits Made:

Public Works Loans	£448.92 DD
Opus Energy	£64.19 DD
Eon - Street Light Energy	£24.78 DD
EE - Telephone and Broadband	£35.72 DD

c) Income received:

None

The bank reconciliation and all payments were approved by unanimous decision

161220/11 TEMPORARY DELEGATION SCHEME

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the council in a reasonable time, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. This will be carried out where possible by consultation with members by electronic means or telephone. The clerk will further consult with the chairman for guidance, as necessary. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the council after the council meeting at which the delegation was put in place

The scheme was agreed by unanimous decision

161220/12 DIARY DATES - The next Full Parish Council meeting will be Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 7pm via zoom

Meeting to closed at 8.15

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K Peck
Karen Peck
Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Mepal Parish Council
12th January 2021

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B Rollason
Brian Rollason
Chairman
Mepal Parish Council