

MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL

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

NOTICE OF MEETING: Full Parish Council Meeting
TIME: 19.30
DATE: Tuesday 14th July 2020
VENUE: Virtually via Microsoft Teams

Please note: due to the current Covid-19 Coronavirus situation, the Parish Council will meet virtually via Microsoft Teams as permitted in the 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 obtainable from the Parish Clerk and 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 to enable the Council to respond.

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

Present - Councillor Brian Rollason (Chairman), Councillor Lorna Williams (Vice Chair), Councillor Cassy Brown, Councillor Rebecca Margieson, Councillor Mark Brill, County Councillor Lorna Dupre and District Councillor Mark Inskip

MINUTES

- 140720/1 VIRTUAL MEETING PROCEDURE TO BE ACCEPTED AND APPROVED**
The Virtual Meeting Policy was circulated before the meeting and was agreed by unanimous decisions.
- 140720/2 TO RECORD APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
No apologies given, all Councillors in attendance
- 140720/3 CO-OPTION OF NEW PARISH COUNCILLOR**
By a unanimous vote it was resolved that Mrs Georgina King is co-opted as a Councillor to Mepal Parish Council
- 140720/4 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Councillor King declared an interest in item 140720/8 and 12
Councillor Brill declared an interest in item 140720/9
- 140720/5 TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF:**
The minutes from the Full Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 9th June 2020 were signed by the Chairman and agreed by all
- 140720/6 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS SINCE LAST MEETING**
All reports are now published on the Mepal Parish Council website
- 140720/7 OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
There were no members of the public present.
- 140720/8 PLANNING**
20/00630/FUM Site South and West of The Bungalow, Brick Lane, Mepal
Erection of 55 dwellings, new access, estate roads, driveways, parking areas, open spaces, external lighting, substation and associated infrastructure.

The Parish Council discussed the application in depth. The draft Parish response circulated to all Councillors before the meeting was agreed by all. Two minor amendments on page 11 paragraph 3 and 12 Conclusion were to be made by Councillor Williams and then submission made to EDCD Planning by the extended deadline of 16th July 2020.

The full Parish response will be uploaded on the Parish Website for the community to view.

19/01005/DISA Site North-West of 11 Bridge Road, Mepal (Information only)

To Discharge Condition 5 (archaeological Work) of decision dated 21st November 2019 for erection of bungalow, garage and new vehicular access – information only

TO UPDATE:

None

140720/9

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

Councillor Williams reminded everyone that at the last meeting all Councillors had agreed to engage RedAct, a local website company in Ely to develop the new compliant website. The first instalment has now been paid, and work has commenced on the background structure. Councillor Williams and her daughter have taken a number of parish scenery pictures in dawn light to be able to illustrate the website and she will be working with RedAct over the next month to get the first working draft for test. At that point we can decide how much of the current website content to include.

All Councillors will be allocated an @mepalparish.org email address, and if they want to forward this to an existing address then this is possible.

140720/10

MEPAL PRE SCHOOL PROVISION

Statement from Jacqueline McCamphill, Director of Trust Development, Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust (DEMAT)

“I wanted to provide an update on the Mepal and Witcham pre-school. As you are aware the third-party provider charity has decided to close the charity for their own reasons and hence not continue with the pre-school provision. Whilst DEMAT had been in long standing discussions to try and work with the pre-school this became unviable.

I am very pleased to confirm that the Trust has submitted an application to the DfE for a Foundation Stage pre-school at Mepal and Witcham which will be available from September 2020, which will be formalised in mid-July. The headteacher is currently in the process of recruiting for this provision. Please do raise awareness of this in your community so that we can encourage parents to sign up to this provision.

If you have any further questions regarding this matter please do contact the Headteacher”.

140720/11

MEPAL PLAY AREA

It is with regret that Mepal Parish Council need to advise that because small Parish Councils like Mepal are currently not able to comply with the current detailed guidance from Government relating to how to open a COVID secure play area that the Mepal Play area will remain closed to all until further notice.

We will regularly re-evaluate this position in light of any additional guidance and will take the opportunity to carry out some additional maintenance to be ready to open as soon as it is safe to do so. Please visit the parish Council website for a link if you want to read the government guidance.

Any persons entering and using this play area do so expressly against the advice of Mepal Parish Council and at their own risk

140720/12

RECREATION FIELD RENOVATION PROJECT UPDATE

Councillor Williams summarised the recently submitted report on the progress of the project looking at the issues with the quality of the playing surface on the natural grass pitches. We have seen a three month delay due to the Covid-19 lockdown, but three companies have now inspected the area and we are waiting for the final two proposals for a solution to the uneven surface. All three companies agreed that even if the gravel depth below the grass is uncertain, as we do not see any drainage problems in terms of standing water there is no need to dig up the whole area. It was suggested by all three companies that lack of a regular maintenance programme, including techniques like verti-draining, are responsible for the unplayable surface. To resolve the issues we would need to commit to focussed maintenance and Councillor King reminded us that if we can get a football team back playing, then there is money on offer to cover both costs and purchase of equipment to cover this from the FA. We are also looking at solutions to the flooding that is caused in the allotments, located behind the wooded area at the back of the field. Installation of an attenuation pond, seeded with wildflowers would act as a stop for when heavy rainfall runs through the drainage. system too fast for the boggy run off area in the trees to hold the water.

Councillor Brown commented that we had a number of quotes relating to artificial sports surfaces and that the cancelled drop-in was to have given the villagers a chance to let us know what their thoughts are.

Councillor Brill suggested that there were other sports that had some money to support projects, but it was felt that football still seems to have the deepest pockets. We know for a fact of money available from the FA's pitch improvement plan, and this is available over a 10-year period. This would only be for a natural grass pitch.

There were some discussions about whether we had the resource to run a project of the size needed for a full-size artificial pitch, as the costs of this are in excess of the entire pavilion and field project that message worked so hard for with the previous Parish Council.

It was felt that perhaps a better idea might be to sort the natural grass pitch out, get football back, find some support to encourage other sports, and look at a smaller artificial 'court' or small pitch for 5 a side, basketball, netball, tennis etc that could be enclosed and even rented on a token basis. The costs of a smaller artificial surface area were quoted at below £100,000 which might be a more manageable project size for us in the future.

Councillor Williams reminded everyone that no decision had been made, this was simply a report from her on the part of the project that she had offered to run, ie what is the remedial solution to the uneven surface and could the project also benefit the allotment flooding issue and do any preparatory groundwork to level out the spoils heap.

Councillor Brown said that she hoped to be able to get the third quote for artificial pitch installation now that lockdown was easing.

Councillor King said we also need to have a record of the maintenance costs of all options so that we know what our annual commitment is. We also want to try to run the drop-in as soon as we are able to do so, BUT Councillor Williams said that if we want to try to get a football team back playing by Autumn 2021 target date, then we will need to make some decisions possibly before we are allowed to run events such as a drop-in, so we will have to consider how we do this.

140720/13

GROUNDS AND MAINTENANCE AND HANDYMAN/CARETAKER ROLE

It has become clear from the parish maintenance and grounds work over the last 12 months that the current handyman role is not working as well as it could, and that a lot more supervision is required in order to be able to complete necessary work. We currently also pay Truelink and other contractors a substantial amount annually, with little control of what actually gets done when. With any work to reinstate sport and activity on the recreation field, there will be further annual maintenance to consider, and so a proposal is on the table to appoint a new Groundsman and Maintenance officer to handle all non-skilled work (ie would include basic plumbing and building work but not electrical or gas work). They would also be responsible for the parish grass cutting and general maintenance and the overall workload would be around 13 hours per week.

One option is to completely revise the current Handyman role and advertise the new role for 13 hours per week, and the other is to reduce the handyman role to 3 hours per week and appoint a groundsman and maintenance officer for 10 hours (similar to other local parishes) who would supervise the handyman as well. This would have the benefit of having 3 hours per week with two people for any larger jobs.

Councillor Brill pointed out that this would require more management and paperwork and Councillor King asked whether this would require purchase of equipment.

Further investigation of options and costs would now be evaluated, with advice from other Parish Council locally who have the same role as to how they handle the management and risk assessments.

140720/14

FINANCE

a) **Payments Made:**

SLCC - Membership Renewal	£126.00 BACS
Container People	£39.78 BACS
Truelink	£619.74 BACS
Post Office Shop - Stamps	£20.90 OC
Office Supplies - USB and Plasters	£46.93 OC
Public Works Loan Repayment	£448.92 BACS
Wages, NI, Tax and Expenses	£1654.86 BACS
Cambc CC - PFHI Scheme Mepal Signing	£380.69 BACS
Stationary	£20.60 OC
Bannolds - Bark and soil	£371.33 BACS
Redact - website	£360.00 BACS

b) Direct Debits Made:	
Opus - Gas 18.04-18.05.2020	£22.03 DD
EON - Street Light Energy	£35.01 DD
Plusnet - Parish Mobile	£7.00 DD
ICO Renewal	£35.00 DD
Opus Gas	£17.48 DD
c) Income received:	
Allotment Fees	£30.00 BACS

140720/15 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

140720/16 DIARY DATES - Next Full Parish Council Tuesday 15th September 2020

The meeting closed at 20.01

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Karen Peck
Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Mepal Parish Council
15th September 2020

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B Rollason
Chairman
Mepal Parish Council
15th September 2020

