

# MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Emma Harris, email: [mepalparishcouncil@msn.com](mailto:mepalparishcouncil@msn.com) tel 07842 499377  
Chairman: Mrs Elizabeth Stazicker, email [eliz.stazicker@gmail.com](mailto:eliz.stazicker@gmail.com), tel 01353 778129

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**NOTICE OF MEETING:** Full Parish Council Meeting  
**TIME:** 19.30  
**DATE:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017  
**VENUE:** Mepal Village Hall, School Lane, 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	5
VACANCIES	2
QUORUM	3

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

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## MINUTES

**040/17 TO RECORD APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
Councillor Paul Edmenson

**041/17 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
None

**042/17 MEMBERS' REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**  
None

**043/17 TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF:**

a) **Full Parish Council Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017.**

The minutes were amended at items;

025/17 Mr Malcolm Peacock attended the recreation ground inspection at his own request.

027/17 Site Access – paragraph should end; 'The junction with Sutton Road was itself already dangerous'

The minutes were signed by Mrs E Stazicker, Chairman.

**044/17 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

- District Councillor Mike Bradley gave an update on the drainage work recently done in Mepal and it is reported that water levels have dropped by 8 inches in that area. Mike reported that Anglian Water have completed a sewerage system capacity assessment in response to the Local Plan and the result for Mepal is that our sewerage system will require enhancement to treatment capacity. Mike mentioned road safety and the recent video of a car colliding with horses in Witcham which has been viewed and shared on the internet by thousands. Mike mentioned the A142 road incidents and Councillor Peter Durose thanked Mike for a speedy response to a recent email he had sent about the A142.
- County Councillor Lorna Dupre mentioned the upcoming elections; Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority - Election of Mayor and Cambridgeshire County Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017. Lorna reported that the County Council drafted their 2017-18 budget on the 14<sup>th</sup> February and it was decided to add a 2% cost within the Council Tax to fund adult social care. Lorna mentioned the A142 and that the road safety study is about to commence and will be reported at the end of June. Lorna explained that the East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) highways team are reviewing all the grant applications for the highways improvement plan and Mepal's application is included in the review. Lorna also reported that the East Cambs Connect bus service is due to start on the 4<sup>th</sup> April. It is a flexible door to door minibus service connecting all in the local community which will be available Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm. Journeys will cost £4 each way (£8 return) and concessionary bus pass holders will receive 50% discount. Lorna gave the Clerk a handful of leaflets which will be displayed on the village noticeboard and passed onto the local groups that may find the service useful. Lorna

explained due to the pre-election period she will not be holding her usual monthly 'Meet my Councillor' meeting.

#### **045/17 OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Concerns were raised on the condition of the road and pathways in Brick Lane. A resident was not happy that after previous discussions at parish council meetings nothing had been done to improve the road surface, kerbs, footpath and the request for a sign to be erected to alert motorists to children playing had not been arranged. It was mentioned that at a recent parish council meeting it had been suggested that Brick Lane was an 'Un-adopted Road' (a road not maintained by a highway authority as defined by Highways Act 1980). It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate the status of the road with the local highways officer.

#### **046/17 PLANNING**

##### **TO BE CONSIDERED:**

##### **a) APPLICATION 16/01772/OUM - Land Adjacent 43 Mepal Road, Sutton**

Hybrid Planning Application consisting of a full scheme for a detailed scheme for the construction of 77no. dwellings, with associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure (phase 1) and an outline scheme for up to 350 dwellings with access (phase 2).

After discussion, it was agreed that whilst the council was not opposed to the development of phase 1 (outside the Parish of Mepal) there was concerns regarding the impact on local infrastructure which would affect the residents of Mepal. The development would mean more traffic on the A142 which will cause increased congestion at the Sutton roundabout heading to Ely and potentially an increase in traffic cutting through Mepal and Witcham to avoid the roundabout at Sutton. The increased pressure on the doctor's surgery in Sutton which is used by many Mepal residents is a concern. It was discussed that the development could potentially benefit Mepal & Witcham Primary School as it is the only school in the area with capacity at the moment but improvements to the crossing of the A142 would have to be made. The agreed extension to comment is 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017 so the Clerk will submit this immediately.

##### **b) APPLICATION 17/00184/FUL - Site West of Broadmead, Witcham Road, Mepal**

Construction of 2no. bungalows

After discussion, it was agreed that the parish council would object to the proposed development on the grounds that it lies distant from all the village amenities and does not represent sustainable growth. The plan shows a crowded development for a rural site with unnecessary double access entrances from the Witcham road. The development is outside the village envelope and it is believed to be contrary to the Local Plan. The agreed extension to comment is 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 so the Clerk will submit this immediately.

##### **c) APPLICATION 17/00281/FUL - Land Adj Springleys Paddock, Witcham Road, Mepal**

Construction of four bed dwelling.

After discussion, it was agreed that whilst the council had no concerns for the actual design of the dwelling, it objects to the development on the ground that it lies distant from the village amenities and outside the village envelope. It was agreed that the Clerk will comment by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

##### **PLANNING UPDATES:**

**a) MICK GEORGE LTD: Witcham Meadlands Quarry-** It was reported that the presentation by Mick George Ltd on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February had been very informative and had given those who attended the opportunity to raise a variety of concerns, which had been well answered. The Parish Council extended their thanks to Mick George Ltd for consulting in this manner, and looked forward to reading the application. A copy of the presentation is available electronically from the Clerk upon request.

**b) FUTURE APPLICATION** - The council has been informed that a major application is going to be submitted by Urban & Civic for approximately 6,500 dwelling, situated on the edge of the village of Waterbeach. Mepal Parish Council will be given the opportunity to comment on the scheme once the proposed application has been submitted.

##### **c) APPLICATION 17/00066/TPO - St Mary's Lodge, 7 Bridge Road Mepal**

Tree preservation order E/16/99 - T1 & T2 WILLOWS x2 - Fell due to subsidence (to be replaced with 2 Maple Trees). The ECDC has consented to the work.

##### **d) APPLICATION 16/00877/DISA & 16/01275/DISA - Site East of Grove House Bridge Road Mepal Cambridgeshire**

To discharge condition [4] (Contamination - Envirosearch historic map) of the decision dated 17 November 2016 for the erection of bungalow, garage and new vehicular access.

- e) **APPLICATION 17/00032/FUL – Side extension and relocated vehicular access, 34 New Road, Mepal**  
ECDC have approved the application

#### **047/17 RECREATION FIELD MAINTENANCE**

It was reported that a meeting to discuss the Recreation Field drainage had been held on the 9<sup>th</sup> March with Chairman Elizabeth Stazicker, Councillor Alan Catley and Councillor Paul Edmenson. The aim of the meeting was to investigate the council's position as to the potential claw-back provisions in the grant contract between the Football Foundation and the Parish Council, and whether the drainage work undertaken at the inception of the project by the Parish Council's FA-nominated consultant (responsible to contract design, tender advice and contractor oversight) had possibly been insufficient or misguided. Files had been retrieved from archive and examined in detail at the meeting.

- Drainage work. The files evidenced that questions about the drainage work (consultant specification and contractor contract fulfilment) had been considered in detail in 2011 at a site visit and investigation at which Jim Hill of Cambridgeshire Football Association was present. Mr Hill was satisfied that the work had been carried out properly.
  - It was agreed that the Parish Council take no further action upon the suggestion of legal action to claim damages against the consultant or the contractor and that the consultant should be invited to attend as soon as possible a meeting to comment upon the problems. After advice from the consultant, advice will be sought on proposed course of action.
- Football Foundation Contract. It was confirmed that the Football Foundation acceptance of grant contract, signed for the Parish Council on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2005, includes a clawback period of 21 years from the date of signature. The use of facilities is monitored by the Foundation through an annual feedback form, which relates to the business plan set out in the application.
  - It was agreed that the Parish Council will review copies of the annual feedback forms and necessary further communication with the Football Foundation will be considered.

It was requested by the Senior Football Club Secretary that she could be provided with a copy of the report following Jim Hills attendance in 2011. It was agreed that the Chairman would retrieve this report.

#### **048/17 STREET LIGHTING**

The Clerk explained her difficulty in getting a quote from Balfour Beatty for reinstatement of a street light in New Road. It was suggested that the Clerk contact the County Council to get contact details for Balfour Beatty.

A concern was raised about the street light on the corner of School Lane and the High Street. The light is covered by a large tree from the garden of the house on the corner. It was also mentioned that the hedge was also a concern on this corner as it is bulging into the pathway causing an issue when walking on the path in pairs or with a small child and a pushchair. It was agreed that the Clerk contact the owners of the garden in question and ask them to cut the tree and hedge back.

#### **049/17 HIGHWAYS MATTERS**

- a) **High Street 'no entry' signs** – The chairman explained that she is in contact with the design engineer and that the Parish Council should receive an estimate for the work required in moving the signs very soon.
- b) **Reinstatement of double yellow lines** – It was explained that the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the yellow lines is not linked to the one-way system (a). The quote of £1,000 for amending the TRO (including admin costs, notifications and publications which would all be necessary) was discussed and it was agreed that the Parish Council could not justify spending public money for the benefit of creating only one or two parking spaces. It was agreed that the yellow lines should be re-painted.

#### **050/17 LOBBY DAY**

Lobby Day is aimed at promoting parish councils in Parliament. Lobby Day 2017 will take place in Parliament on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The Councillors confirmed that they would not want to take part in this.

#### **051/17 NEW DRAFT CAPALC MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) is an association that supports and advises parish councils. Mepal Parish Council are members of CAPALC. CAPALC have drafted a new Membership Agreement is open to consultation. An online survey is open to all Councillors and Clerks of Member Councils for 4 weeks from 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017. The Clerk sent this to all councillors to complete on the 27<sup>th</sup> February. It was agreed that the Clerk would re-send the link to the survey to all councillors.

#### **052/17 TIMEBANK**

The benefits of a Timebank in a community was discussed, the biggest benefit being that it allows a community who are reluctant to ask for help to ask. Feedback from the public was that local larger villages had set up a timebank found it hard to get volunteers and it was deliberated that a small village like Mepal would find it even harder to get support. Everyone liked the idea but was concerned that it would not be as popular as thought. The Chairman asked if a working group could be put together to discuss it further but an unanimous decision of the councillors agreed that it would not be worth it. The thought of a village register of people who can and who are happy to help others may work. It was decided that an advert would be placed in the next edition of Mepal People for a general help scheme within the village.

#### **053/17 MEADOW WAY RESIDENTS REQUEST TO PURCHASE LAND**

The owner of no. 22 Meadow Way had contacted the Parish Council to enquire, on behalf of himself and two other local owners, about the possibility of purchasing land behind their houses to extend their gardens. The Parish Council discussed this request and it was agreed that the Parish Council owned land in question is part of a community woodland with a bridleway within it and it would be setting a precedent that the Parish Council do not wish to set. The Parish Council agreed that the reply would be no and it was agreed that the Clerk will contact the resident to inform them of the decision.

#### **054/17 LILIBET WOOD - MAINTENANCE**

The Clerk explained that she has been in contact with the contractor who has recently cleared and removed overgrown brambles and trees at the wood behind Meadow Way to request another quote for further work north of the footpath bridge. The contractor explained that due to work pressure and seasonal birds nesting the work could be done in July. The Clerk is waiting for a written quote for this work.

It was discussed that spraying of the area already cleared could be a good form of prevention and it was requested that the Clerk go out quote for this work to be done as soon as possible. It was agreed that an advert would be placed in the next edition of Mepal People to ask for volunteers to clear the area of loose materials before the spraying is started.

#### **055/17 MEPAL PLAY AREA**

The Clerk explained that the Parish handyman attended the Routine Play Inspection Course RPII in February and passed the RPII certificate exam which was run by the City of Ely Council. The handyman and Clerk meet to discuss the feedback from the course and it was explained that they had worked together on a presentation to report back to the councillors on what work needs doing to the play area.

It was agreed that the handyman takes on the responsibility of weekly documented inspections of the play area which will be kept on file by the Clerk for 5 years.

Five priorities were discussed and it was agreed that the handyman can take on the following jobs over the next few weeks;

1. Arrange for play area signage to explain that public play on the play area at their own risk.
2. Current signage to be relocated at a higher level.
3. Hire a rotavator to rotate the bark and order more to top up exposed areas.
4. Cut back the bramble growth within the trees to expose some of the play area but to keep the feel of being in the woods for the children's play experience.
5. Clean the safety surface of moss, mould and grass, with advice from Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)

Some other areas of concern were raised and it was agreed that these issues may be picked up in the annual inspection that is arranged for April 2017; safety of the Igloo climbing frame, missing handles and foot pedals of the springers, the wear and tear on the baby swing and birds nest swing. It was agreed that the handyman could see if it is possible to improve the tension on the zip wire and the Clerk agreed to explore the possibility of getting separate recycling waste bins for that area.

#### **056/17 MEPAL RECREATION PAVILION**

The Clerk explained that her recent visit to the Pavilion had given rise to concerns about Health & Safety. It was agreed that the working group for the pavilion would get together with the Clerk to ensure that all relevant Health and Safety procedures are in place and duly incorporated in the management agreement with the Junior Football Club. A meeting with club representatives would be necessary to ensure that everyone involved is aware of who is responsible for what. It was agreed for the Clerk to take this forward.

## 057/17 FINANCE

### a) PAYMENTS made since last meeting

- Simon Batchelor – wages for February £126.48 BACS
- Emma Harris – wages for February £677.34 BACS
- HMRC – Payroll liabilities for February £32.61 BACS

### b) DIRECT DEBITS paid:

- E.on – Street Lighting 01/01/17-31/01/17 £22.81 (DD 11/2/17)
- Opus Energy – Gas at Pavilion 19/1/17-15/2/17 £41.64 (DD 03/3/17)

### c) PAYMENTS to be made:

- Tesco Mobile (Clerk's mobile March payment) £7.50 (DD 15/3/17)
- E.on – Street Lighting 01/02/17-28/02/17 £20.60 (DD 11/3/17)
- Simon Batchelor – Expenses for February (mileage) £9.00
- Emma Harris – Expenses for February £46.04
- Balfour Beatty – Power socket to column on the green £408.32
- N&C Glass – Bus Shelter panel £207.60

### d) PAYROLL

- The Clerk explained that the new Cambridge Acre payroll service contract for 2017/18 (from 1<sup>st</sup> April) is comparable to the current year and it was agreed that the Parish Council are happy for the contract to be renewed.
- The NJC (**National Joint Council** for Local Government Services) pay scale changes effective from April 2017 were discussed. The Parish Council staff on the payroll progress automatically through the salary scale by annual increments subject to satisfactory performance and the salary scales are reviewed annually by the NJC to allow for any cost of living increases. The Clerk informed the council that is not an automatic procedure and it would be the Clerks responsibility to contact the payroll company to inform them of any increase. It was agreed that the Clerk should investigate the current staff salary positions.

### e) QUOTES

- The quote received for 2017/18 grass cutting contract was discussed. The quote is similar to the current financial year with a slight inflation rise explained by the contractor. The Parish Council agreed to renewing the contract.
  - A member of the public asked if the footpath from Brick Lane and Brangehill Lane (Lilibet Wood) was included in this contract. The Chairman confirmed that it is not and that the footpath comes under the responsibility of the County Council's Footpath team and is done twice per year. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Footpath team to confirm this work is planned for the coming year.

## 058/17 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FROM MEPAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.

The Neighbourhood Watch Group applied for a grant last month which was reviewed at the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> February (037/17). It was requested that the group provide the Parish Council with more detailed breakdown of budgeted expenditure so that an informed decision can be made. The Neighbourhood Watch Group wrote to the Clerk prior to the meeting and the letter was read out at the meeting by the Chairman. The group explained what they do and asked for a grant to cover office consumables, torches, high viz clothing, signs, stickers and some personal attack alarms to offer to vulnerable residents. The Parish Council agreed to a grant of up to £660 for financial year 2017/18 and asked that the Neighbourhood Watch Group representative arranged purchase of some of the items with the Clerk. It was requested that the group report back to the Parish Council regularly on what they are achieving.

## 059/17 MEPAL PEOPLE

The next edition of Mepal People is due for April/May and it was mentioned that two individuals have shown interest in becoming editors for the publication. The Chairman agreed to contact them.

## 060/17 COUNCILLOR VACANCIES AND TRAINING

It was explained that adverts for new councillors have been put on the noticeboard in the village and on the Parish Council website. It was agreed that it would also be included in the next edition of Mepal People.

The Clerk had looked into training available to the Parish Council team. A Councillor Course is available for new and long standing councillors in various approaches; an organised course at a separate venue to enrol on, a 'bespoke' course for a single council in a chosen venue or a 'bespoke' course for a group of councils combining together in a chosen local venue. It was suggested that the Clerk find out if any other local councils are looking into training at this present time.

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she is attending a two day 'New Clerks' course starting 16<sup>th</sup> March and that she potentially may be interested in attending the 'Health and Safety for Parish Councils' course run by the Local Council Public Advisory Service (LCPAS). The Parish Council agreed that this would be a good idea.

**061/17 ACTIONS completed and outstanding (report for information)**

- **GRANT APPLICATION (007/17) - Highways improvement plan.** Waiting to hear if application successful and should hear middle of March 2017.
- **INSTALLATION OF NEW DOG BIN ON FOOTPATH BEHIND MEADOW WAY** - bin ordered
- **REPAIR OF TWO CURRENT DOG BINS** - the bin at the cemetery will be repaired and the bin at Bridge Road will be replaced and is on order.
- **POWER SOCKET TO BE ADDED TO THE COLUMN FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING (035/17)** - payment of invoice to be made prior to work being completed. The Parish Council requested that the Clerk agree a date for fitting in writing prior to payment being made.
- **BUS SHELTER REPAIR, BRIDGE ROAD (036/17)** - new panel fitted 6/3/17 and invoiced received.

**062/17 DIARY DATES**

- **To note that the next Full Council Meeting will be held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7.30pm.**
- **To note that the next Mepal Litter Pick will be held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 10am.**

The meeting closed at 21.45.

..... 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
Emma Harris, Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

..... 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
Elizabeth Stazicker, Chairman