

Melchbourne and Yelden Parish Council

Chairman: Mrs. Helen Bone Clerk: David Brough Tel: 07870108315

MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 15th July 2020 at 8pm using Zoom video conference

- 1 **Present:** Cllrs Helen Bone (Chairman), Simon Paynter (Vice Chairman), Craig Young, Peter Wilkinson, Paul Alexander, Sam Edwards.
Apologies: Cllrs Robin Mackonochie, Frank Morgan, Cllr Towler (Borough Councillor).
- 2 **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda** – Cllr Paynter declared a pecuniary interest in Planning Application 18a and will be placed in the waiting room for the duration of the item.
- 3 **Requests to grant dispensation for declared interests** – No dispensations requested.
- 4 **Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting** held on 15th January 2020.
Resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 5 **Matters Arising (Clerk's report on the Action List)**
 1. New website: Initial setup complete (www.melchyeld-pc.gov.uk) and documents transferred.
 2. Melchbourne pumping station overgrown hedges: RKR Estates carried out the work.
 3. Online banking: Lloyds account has been created and the funds from the old Natwest accounts were transferred and the account closed. Councillors are now familiar with approving payments online.
 4. Yelden bench was delivered to Cllr Paynter for installation.
- 6 **Correspondence (requiring council attention):** (Names always withheld for Data Protection)
 - *Parishioner contacted the clerk about cutting back the trees overhanging Church Lane.* Clerk passed this to Bedford BC Highways who are contacting the landowners on health and safety grounds.
- 7 **Crime report**
Sanitised crime reports covering 7th January to 30th June showed one "Assault without injury" (Melchbourne 12/01), "Burglary – Residential" (Church Lane, Yelden 15/01), "Harassment without violence" (Melchbourne 17/01), "Cannabis possession" (Melchbourne 21/01), "Interference with a motor vehicle" (Melchbourne 17/01 and 09/01), "Burglary – Residential" (Church Lane, Yelden 29/02), "Assault without injury" (Yelden 31/05)
No recorded actions.
- 8 **Future meeting dates**
To agree future council meeting dates.
Dates to remain, as in previous years, the third Wednesday of every other month: 16th September 2020, 18th November 2020, 20th January 2021, 17th March 2021, 19th May 2021, 21st July 2021. Locations to be confirmed at a later date, depending on government Covid-related guidance.
- 9 **New Trees**
Agenda item proposed by Cllr Alexander: To consider the planting of new trees in the villages, including the types and the locations.
Clerk to meet Cllr Alexander for a site visit on Yelden High St, in order to create a proposal for the potential location of new trees (**Action Clerk**). Clerk to obtain tree costs and recommendations from the borough council for native North Beds trees (**Action Clerk**).
- 10 **Speed feedback signs conversion**
Agenda item proposed by Cllr Bone: To consider the options for ensuring the longer-term viability of the speed feedback signs, which currently require the batteries to be replaced on a regular basis. Potential options include reconfiguring the signs to fit solar panels, or to draw power from the streetlights to power them. Morelock can convert the current signs at a cost.
To be discussed again when Cllr Morgan is present – responsible for the speed feedback signs. Yelden

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councillors have offered to take charge of the Yelden signs, to assist Cllr Morgan.

11 Annual meeting of the parish council

To decide whether to defer the annual parish council meeting until 2021, in-line with coronavirus-related government legislation.

Resolved not to have an annual parish council meeting until May 2021, in line with government legislation.

12 Streetlights at night

To consider whether to install photocells to the 16 PC-owned streetlights to turn them off from midnight to 5am at a cost of £37.50 (Exc Vat) per streetlight.

See also item 19.3. Agenda item to be put on hold while the council considers upgrading the lights to LED, given an increased urgency caused by: a) the borough council's requirement for maintenance, and b) the scarcity of replacement parts for the existing lights.

13 Streetlights electricity

To consider using The Utility Supplier to find a cheaper energy provider for the PC-owned streetlights. The Utility Supplier estimates a 18/19 pence p/kwh compared to the current EON cost of 22.1 pence p/kwh. Estimated cost savings to be around £130 a year.

Resolved to change supplier to make the savings.

14 Grass cutting

To agree an approach to the grass cutting for the coming year, and to ratify the decision to accept the quote from RKR Estate Services for the cutting for 2020.

Resolved to ratify the decision to appoint RKR Estates to carry out the grass cutting for the coming year.

Yelden councillors agreed to consult with RKR Estate Service to find areas of grass verge that could be left in a more natural state, for the benefit of wildlife/biodiversity – this is in line with the current approach of the borough council. Melchbourne councillors are satisfied with the current method of cutting in Melchbourne.

15 Ward Boundary Review

Clerk attended a recent briefing by The Local Government Boundary Commission for England, who have initiated a Ward boundary review to address the "poor levels of electoral equality in Bedford borough". This review will determine: 1. Total number of councillors, 2. Total number of wards, 3. Ward boundaries, 4. Number of councillors elected to each ward, 5. Names of each ward.

Order of review process. Timeline was pre-Covid disruption, but left in as indicative durations:

- Consultation on warding patterns: 25 February 2020 to 4 May 2020*
- Consultation on draft recommendations: 4 August 2020 to 12 October 2020*
- Followed by a further period of consultation on the draft recommendations*
- Final recommendations are expected to be published in January 2021*

The new electoral arrangements will come into effect at the local elections in 2023.

Noted by the council and will be reviewed during the Consultation on Draft Recommendations.

16 Planning process

To consider whether to change the current process the parish council follows when deciding on planning applications between council meetings.

Council is to form a planning committee for Melchbourne and one for Yelden. Committees to hold planning committee meetings in public, and with delegated powers, where a planning decision is required between council meetings. Clerk to create a draft Terms Of Reference for the planning committees for approval at the next meeting (**Action Clerk**).

17 Annual Parish Council Risk Assessment as part of the Risk Management process

To approve the Risk Assessment. The Risk Assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that enables the parish council to identify potential inherent risks. The parish council, based on this recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

Resolved to approve the Risk Assessment, which was circulated over email and reviewed by councillors prior to the meeting.

18 Planning

New applications

- a) *APPLICATION NO: 20/01212/FUL Full Planning Application*
PROPOSAL: Conversion, extension and part rebuild of former Warden's shelter to form residential dwelling
LOCATION: Rifle Range Farm High Street Yelden Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 1AW
Cllr Paynter was moved to the Zoom Waiting Room for the duration of this item due to a declared pecuniary interest.
Resolved not to object to this planning application.

Monitoring of applications and enforcement

- a) *APPLICATION NO: 20/00191/FUL Full Planning Application*
PROPOSAL: Erection of single storey dwelling
LOCATION: Land At The Paddock Knotting Road Melchbourne Bedfordshire
MYPC: Resolved previously to object. Application has now been withdrawn.
- b) *Reference: 18/00949/FUL TYPE: Full Planning Application (Amended)*
Location: The Chequers Inn High Street Yelden Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 1AW
Proposal: Proposed extensions & alterations to Public House & residential development of 4 dwellings consisting of 2 three bed & 2 four bed dwellings with associated parking and access.
MYPC: Resolved not to object with a number of conditions (July 2019).
Outcome: BBC Planning Officer's recommendation to the BBC Planning Committee was to refuse planning permission (full details circulated to councillors). Planning Committee meeting resulted in a request for a survey for protected species and the decision was deferred. No known further action.
- c) *Reference: 18/00253/UNAUTU (Previously 14/00103/UNAUTU)*
Location: Lot 3 at Tall Oaks Farm, Melchbourne Road, Riseley, Beds.
Details: Unauthorised use investigation and Enforcement Notice served by Bedford Borough Council. Enforcement Notice works to be completed by 13 May 2019. Awaiting County Court hearing for permanent injunction to: Prohibit residential occupation, further caravans or motor homes other than original white touring caravan & installation of new entrance gates exceeding 1m high (unless planning permission achieved) but not existing ones.
3rd September court hearing did not happen as interested party is no longer available to attend court. Temporary injunctions will continue to be raised until a permanent injunction can be achieved – it is not currently clear how this will happen with the absence of the interested party. Entrance gates works are still be monitored by BBC. (BBC Contact: White)
- d) *Reference: 18/01284/FUL (East Northamptonshire Council)*
Location: Poultry Buildings & Farm, North east of Westwood AD Plant, Bedford Road. Rushden.
Proposal: Construction & operation of a broiler rearing unit with six linked poultry buildings & ancillary structures...
MYPC: Concerns expressed.
ENC Decision: Pending – extension until 31st December 2019. This has not yet gone to a planning committee meeting.
- e) *Reference: 14/00392/UNAUTU*
Location: Hill Farm, Melchbourne Road, Riseley.
Details: Permission for erection of agricultural machinery store. Investigation re right to live on land. Planning Enforcement Notice served. Appeal to Planning Inspectorate ref: APP/K0235/C/18/3192535 – decision 21/5/18 – Appeal dismissed & Enforcement Notice upheld.
Matter currently remains with BBC Legal (Human Rights). (BBC Contact: White).

19 Councillors' Reports and Updates:

- 1) Ward Councillor – Cllr Martin Towler
Report circulated to councillors.
- 2) Chelveston Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Trust – Cllrs Mackonochie & Young
No CBF meetings are presently being held.

3) Highways – Cllrs Mackonochie & Paynter:

General:

- Melchbourne T-junction: White lines on junction requested to be repainted. This has now been carried out **(COMPLETE)**
- 40mph speed limit “buffers” for the entrances to both villages: These were all installed, but council noted that the Yelden buffer (from Melchbourne) direction was a much shorter section than agreed. Also one post in Melchbourne was not straight. Both items have now been rectified **(COMPLETE)**
- Horse warning signage: Request to BBC Highways from MYPC for horse warning signage at either side of the approaches to Rifle Range Farm where there are stables. BBC Highways have re-ordered the signs following a mix-up in locations. **(COMPLETE)**
- Anti-social behaviour relating to Rights of Way, Church Lane, Yelden – BBC Highways have now installed a step-over horse-friendly gate. The landowner has received the keys and is content with the gate **(COMPLETE)**.

Drains:

- Melchbourne: No known issues.
- Yelden: No known issues.

Streetlights:

- *BBC Streetlights team have requested to know the council’s approach to ensuring electrical and structural safety of the PC-owned streetlights.*

See agenda item 12.

4) Report from meetings attended by councillors:

Cllr Bone received the details of Mayor Hodgson’s briefing to parish councils on the borough council’s Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan. Noted by the council – no actions to take.

5) Report on Speeding (VAS) – Cllr Morgan:

Cllr Morgan was not present.

6) Flooding

- Yelden Flood group – Cllr Alexander working with Bedford BC to have two blockages removed – requires coordination with the riparian owners.
- Melchbourne – Jon Shortland (BBC Chief Officer – Planning & Highways) confirmed to Cllr Bone that there is an agreement to install a new drainage pipe in Knotting Road to resolve the blockage/flooding issue. To be funded by BBC’s “2020/21 Capital Drainage Budget”.

20 Finance

1. *To approve the following payments and note receipts of £3071 for VAT refund, £3682 1st installment of precept income and £3324 for the grass cutting grant from Bedford BC:*

Resolved to approve the payments. Receipts were noted.

				Payments
Date	Category	Payee	Description	Gross
24 March 2020	Election charges	BBC	Election recharge	39.71
24 March 2020	VE75 Poppies	D Brough	Poppies from RBL (32 @ £3)	96.00
24 March 2020	Staff Costs	D Brough	Clerk Salary	677.40
24 March 2020	Clerk Expenses	D Brough	Stamps	12.72
24 March 2020	New website	Eyelid	Creation of website/transfer of documents	420.00
24 March 2020	Streetlights: Elect & Maint	EON	EON Maintenance - cost of parts for repair	28.16
24 March 2020	Payroll fees	Ladywell	Payroll fees	48.00
26 March 2020	Hedge cutting	Yelden Growers	Yelden allotment hedge cutting	72.00
30 March 2020	Bench	Furnitubes	Yelden bench	742.80
30 March 2020	Maintenance	RKR Estates	Melch Pumping Station - Overgrowth removal	420.00
09 April 2020	Streetlights: Elect & Maint	EON	EON Streetlight maintenance (Qtrly to March)	68.93
09 April 2020	Streetlights: Elect & Maint	EON	EON Streetlight electricity (Qtrly to March)	235.43
04 May 2020	Insurance	BHIB	Annual insurance	238.03
19 May 2020	Staff Costs	HMRC	HMRC PAYE	135.40
19 May 2020	Staff Costs	David Brough	Salary	542.00
19 May 2020	ICO - Annual Data Protection	David Brough	ICO Annual Payment	40.00
03 June 2020	Internal Audit	KJ Betts		135.00
06 July 2020	Grass Cutting	RKR Estates	Part 1	766.74
06 July 2020	Streetlights: Elect & Maint	EON	EON Streetlight maintenance (Qtrly to June)	68.93
15 July 2020	Staff Costs	David Brough	Salary	542.00

2. The following account balances were noted, and a review of the P&L variance to budget showed no variances of concern:

		£
Natwest Current Account	Current Balance (Forecast)	33,993
TOTAL at Bank		33,993
Funds allocated		29,217
General Reserve (estimated)		4,776
TOTAL Funds		33,993

3. *To approve the 2019/20 Accounts before sending them to the external auditors. Internal audit was passed with no issues raised.*

Resolved to approve the 2019/20 accounts.

- 21 **Any Other Business** – None
- 22 **Public Open Session** – No parishioners were present.
- 23 **Date of the next meeting:** Wednesday, 16th September 2020 at 8pm – Location TBC.