

**PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF MELDRETH PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes unApproved** of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30 pm in the Green Room of Meldreth Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr R Goddin- Chairman (**RG**) - Chairman, Cllr RA Searles- Vice Chairman (**RAS**), Cllr N Garner (**NG**), Cllr P Gilmore (**PG**), Cllr C A Land (**CAL**) and Cllr A Young (**AY**)

**In attendance:** S Walmesley (**Deputy Clerk/Proper Officer**) and District Councillor Philippa Hart  
1 Member of the Public

*Motion to exclude: In accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted at Agenda item 189/11/19 it is advisable in the public interest that the Public and Press be temporarily excluded from this meeting and they are herewith instructed to withdraw.*

**01/01/20 To receive any apologies for absence:** LGA 1972 sch12 para 40 – Quorate is one third but no less than 3 members  
LGA 1972 sch12, para 45

Apologies were received from Clerk/RFO J Damant, Cllrs Fallon, Cllr Pellatt and Cllr James. These were agreed and accepted by all. County Cllr van de Ven also sent her apologies.

**02/01/20 Councillors to disclose any Pecuniary Interests (disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) include interests held by a member's spouse, civil partner or similar) listed on the Agenda:**

There were no interests declared.

**03/01/20 Public Participation: [For up to 15 minutes members of the public may contribute their views and comments to the Parish Council - 3mins per item]**

There were no issues raised.

**04/01/20 To approve and sign Minutes of the Meeting dated 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019:**

The minutes were not yet available. They would be prepared ready for approval at the next Parish Council meeting.

**05/01/20 District and County Councillor Reports: Appendix 1**

Cllr Hart reported that she had attended a briefing on the forthcoming Greater Cambridge Issues and Options consultation which was to begin on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020. South Cambridgeshire District Council was trying to engage more people to respond this time. There were no specifics in the consultation but views would be requested on what the community wanted for the future.

The District Council was offering three free trees to parishes. It was noted that there would be a voucher for £60 to be redeemed at a local garden centre. The option could be to go for one larger tree which would have more chance of survival. It was suggested that this could be planted on the Recreation Ground. It was noted that the reason for the free trees was carbon capture, which during the growing phase was more effective, so planting three trees would be better than one. The Chairman advised that he was meeting with the village Tree Warden the next day to discuss plans for future planting. It would be helpful if she saw the Local Development Plan beforehand.

Cllr Hart was asked about the zero carbon grant application which was submitted by the village hall. Cllr Hart advised that she was aware that there had been a further £30,000 allocation. It was noted that the grant applicants would not be advised of the outcome until March 2020.

**06/01/20 Railway Issues:**

Councillors were not aware of any meetings or issues.

**Working Group Updates/Reports:**

**07/01/20 Meldreth Futures Working Group (MFWG):**

There was nothing to report. The next meeting of the working group would take place before the next Parish Council meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The Chairman was aware of a redefined proposed for the Mebourn Dynamo application for a goal.

**08/01/20 Meldreth Traffic Working Group:**

Notes had been circulated to Councillors.

Cllr Gilmore reported that the Local Highway Officer had put in a bid for resurfacing of Whitecroft Road in 2021.

Several people had reported a large pothole on Whitecroft Road and Cllr Gilmore was aware that several vehicles had been damaged. A discussion on the claim process was discussed.

Cllr Young stated that he had reported a pothole on the footpath outside Maycroft which was on the County Council website for around five hours, then acknowledged, where he was advised that the repair was part of a three year running repair scheme. The report was removed from the website with no remedial action to the pothole taken. Cllr Gilmore advised that there were no potholes currently recorded on the County Council website for Meldreth. The Chairman suggested that County Cllr van de Ven be asked to investigate.

Cllr Gilmore then advised that she was to attend the LHI 2020/21 Panel meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 to support the application. She was hoping to be able to meet with the Local Highway Officer at the same time.

The Chairman asked about the data gathered from the SIDs and whether this should be publicised in the village. Cllr Gilmore agreed to discuss with the working group and compile a list of bullet points which would then be put to the Parish Council for agreement. She added that the data collected should help in future with highway projects.

Cllr Gilmore asked Councillors where the group should concentrate their efforts next. Cllr Young requested that the High Street be given some attention referring to the speed of traffic. Cllr Gilmore confirmed that the Traffic Group had discussed this area before but there were no suitable solutions suggested that might work. It was acknowledged that there was an issue with the number of parked cars on the High Street, especially contractor vehicles from Maycroft. A discussion on possible traffic restriction options took place.

An update on the broken speed sign on Melrose was requested. Cllr Gilmore confirmed that she had spoken to County Highways but, as the sign had an electricity supply, it was the responsibility of Balfour Beatty to repair.

**09/01/20**

**Recreation Ground Working Group & Pavilion:**

Monthly Report from Cllr Fallon had been circulated.

The Clerk confirmed that the repair to the Witches hat was to be carried out by Wickstead but the Clerk was waiting for a further quotation for play equipment before this went ahead.

Cllr Fallon stated in her report that the basketballs were being used a lot.

Cllr Land expressed concern over the recently installed dog sign on the path from the High Street which could not be seen immediately. Councillors would have a look to see where it could be relocated.

The Chairman expressed his concern that the large area used by the football pitch on the recreation ground severely limited the space available for general community and recreational uses which were more relevant to today's community. He suggested that it might be an idea to investigate moving the pitch to another location, Mettle Hill, which would then liberate the existing recreation ground for other uses.

Cllr Young referred to the basketball posts suggesting that the area between them could be half tarmaced and the area fenced. It was agreed that a costing be obtained for this. **-Action Clerk**

**Planning:**

**10/01/20**

**Planning: (Town and Country Planning Act 1990 schedule 1, paragraph 8)**

(Full Planning Minutes are available via the Clerk, website or notice board).

19<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Ongoing Projects**

**11/01/20**

**Recreation Ground:**

This item had been discussed under Item 09/01/20.

**Administrative /Other**

**12/01/20**

**Correspondence and Clerk's Report:**

SCDC -Items Referred to Planning Committee. The Clerk had circulated a letter from Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council, advising that the process for determining which applications went before the Planning Committee would remain the same. This followed a letter to councils from a private company expressing concern that changes were to be made so that the decision on whether the application went to committee was to be down to a single planning officer.

The Clerk was asked to circulate the letter so that the two items of correspondence could be viewed together. **-Action Clerk**

**13/01/20**

**Cemetery -Pest Control**

The Chairman reminded Councillors that in the past the council had approved the control of rabbits in the cemetery by catching rabbits in nets. He had now been asked by the contractor if the rabbit holes could be filled in to identify in future if the rabbits were still active. This was agreed.

There was also evidence that deer were getting into the cemetery though the boundary. The contractor had not seen the deer but hedging and foliage had been eaten. He had asked for permission to shoot the deer, believed to be muntjac, if seen.

The Chairman asked for Councillor opinion on the request with the majority of Councillors stating that shooting was inappropriate in the Cemetery which was in a village location. Councillors agreed that they could investigate the damage and take appropriate steps with fencing etc to try and keep the deer out.

There was a proposal to allow the contractor to shoot, with no seconder, so a vote was not relevant. Councillors agreed that they were not prepared to allow to the shooting of deer in the Cemetery.

## Finance

14/01/20

To receive details of cheques to be drawn on the Parish Council's account as detailed or amended by late payments. To approve payments:

LGA Local Government Act; TCA Telecommunications Act; OSA Open Spaces Act; PHA Public Health Act; PCA Parish Council Act

1. Cheques/internet payment for approval and signature including any additional payments:

### Payments already made

	Gross	Vat		Power	
Staff salaries/PAYE/NI & pensions	3055.55	0	December 19 Salaries	LGA 1972 s112	Bacs & dd
D P Gardens	721.66	0	December Grass and verge cutting	OSA 1906 s9/10	Bacs

### Payments awaiting Approval

	Gross	Vat		Power	
SLCC	220.00		SLCC Membership	LGA 1972 s112	Bacs
E-On	65.42	3.12	Pavilion electricity	LGA 1972 s133	DD
Acacia Tree Survey	762.00	127.00	Tree Survey	OSA 1906 s9/10	Bacs
Local History Group	2560.00		Comm Ben Grant	LGA 1972 s137	Chq

Finances were proposed to be correct by Cllr Goddin, seconded by Cllr Garner, and agreed by all.

The Chairman advised that the Finance Working Group was investigating usage of the Pavilion as it was fair that users contributed to the running costs. A report, with proposals, would be available in due course.

15/01/20

### Budget/Precept 2020/21 -Agreement of Precept Amount

The Chairman advised that a note with recommendations had been circulated by the Parish Council Finance Working Group with a proposal for a precept of £66,000. He stated that the precept should cover the day to day expenditure of the council which was currently around £69,000. He added that the balance could be met by reserves.

A discussion took place on future increases and the possible additional expenditure which would be put on the council by both the District and County Councils. After further discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gilmore, seconded by Cllr Land, to request a precept of £66,000 for 2020/21. All Councillors in agreement. The Clerk to arrange the demand from South Cambridgeshire District Council.

**-Action Clerk**

16/01/20

### Village Tree Planting

As mentioned by Cllr Hart under Item 05/01/20, South Cambridgeshire District Council was offering three free trees to parishes. On a proposal by Cllr Young, seconded by Cllr Gilmore, it was agreed that the Clerk apply for the voucher with the intention of using for the purpose of one substantial tree. It was also agreed that the location of the tree would be decided once received.

The Chairman reported that there had been some criticism made by a resident in Meldreth Matters relating to the activities of the Parish Council. Cllr Gilmore stated that she felt personally upset by the comments as she, like other Councillors, committed a lot of time to projects in the village. A discussion took place on a response but it was agreed not to pursue. Councillors agreed that the village tree planting proposals had been successfully launched and therefore this particular item would now be closed. The Chairman added that he was to meet with the village Tree Warden the following day to discuss proposals for further trees in the village and this proposal would be discussed at the next meeting.

Cllr Searles advised that in the past if there had been any items relating to the Parish Council for inclusion in Meldreth Matters the council had been given the chance to comment before publication. It was suggested that the Editor be asked to arrange this in future.

17/01/20

### Annual Tree survey:

The survey had been received. The Clerk to copy to Councillors for discussion at the next meeting.

**Action -Clerk**

18/01/20

### Councillors' Reports:

**Cllr Garner** -expressed concern over the condition of the kissing gate, on footpath 9, which was now in a very poor state of repair. It was noted that Cllr van de Ven had spoken to the County Council who unofficially advised that the gate was not their responsibility. A discussion took place on repair/removal of the gate and a replacement barrier. It was then agreed, that before a decision was made on the appropriate action, the Clerk would consult the Rights of Way Officer to find out his view

on responsibilities.

**Action-Clerk**

**Cllr Land** -A request had been made for a dog waste bin near the War Memorial site. There was currently a litter bin nearby. As the policy now from South Cambridgeshire District Council was to install multi use bins the Clerk would consult the SCDC Team Leader for advice.

Cllr Land asked for an update on the historic finger post at The Stocks. Cllr Gilmore confirmed that the repair works had been ordered by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Some road signage posts were showing signs of decay. Cllr Land was requested to report the location of these on the County Council website. Cllr Gilmore urged other Councillors to do the same if they found any highway issues needing attention.

**Action -CAL**

**Cllr Searles** -asked if anyone else had received a letter regarding high speed Broadband in the village. The letter was believed to have been circulated to all residents. Cllr Searles agreed to copy to Councillors who may have missed seeing it.

**Action -RS**

**Cllr Gilmore** -referred to an article in Meldreth Matters which highlighted the contributions made by residents of the village to Meldreth Manor School and Maycroft Home. She suggested that the Parish Council might also contribute in some way. The status and funding of Meldreth Manor School was questioned. Cllr Young agreed to investigate whether the school was funded by Cambridgeshire County Council.

**Action -AY**

19/01/20

**Agenda items for the next meeting:**

Annual Policy Check on all current policies, risk assessment review update;

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.04pm. The next meeting will be on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at the Village Hall (Green Room)

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For the avoidance of doubt the only legally acceptable version of the Minutes of Meldreth Parish Council are those signed in Public

## Appendix 1

### Meldreth Parish Council January 2020 – District and County Councillors’ Report

#### **County Council**

**Potholes – of course:** We’ve had a new spate of potholes – thanks very much to residents for reporting them on line and alerting us to having done so. I’ve asked Highways to please prioritize the one at the Whitecroft Rd junction. We continue in a reactive mode with emergency repairs with no prospect of any significant change.

**County Council new premises – first spade in the ground:** The first spade went into the ground for the County Council’s new Civic Hub (HQ) in Alconbury Weald, which is advertised as being in synchrony with new transport links, though it’s unclear as to what these are. The site is notable for its lack of public transport. The Shire Hall site will be developed into an hotel and office space by Brookgate, the CB1 and Cambridge North developers.

**New Archives Centre, Ely:** The archives held in Shire Hall basement have now being moved across into the repository of the new building, where they will be stored in environmentally controlled storage for the first time. Archive boxes are scanned by the archive team’s barcode scanning unit. The barcode system matches a historical document’s entry on the online database to that specific document’s location, thereby enabling staff to locate a document within seconds no matter where it may be stored in the new centre’s amazing seven miles of shelving! We’re awaiting precise information on an opening date.

#### **Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation – closes 31 January**

Please do read and respond to the County Council’s Climate Change and Environment Strategy:

<https://consultcambs.uk.engageinthq.com/climate-strategy>

**County Budget meeting** is next month and we are still awaiting papers, so details on this year’s ‘difficult decisions’ still to come.

#### **District Council**

**Green Belt:** It is disappointing that some negative campaigning during the election included a number of lies stating the District Council is promoting greenbelt sites to developers. This is obviously untrue. South Cambs has just been independently assessed as being the most successful council in the region for promoting the environment in all our activities and operations; and Leader Bridget Smith is in the hugely privileged position of being the political lead for the environment for the Oxford Cambridge Arc. This shows people well outside of our district have confidence in us to deliver a zero-carbon region in which we do everything we can to protect and enhance the countryside. It is not the business of the Council to ‘promote’ any sites. What has happened is that in preparation for the next Local Plan landowners have been invited to submit sites for development to the Council for consideration. Less than 10% of those sites will make it into any Local Plan; and this is a process that happens for every Plan period.

**Empty Houses:** There are currently 648 unoccupied houses in South Cambridgeshire – that’s quite a large village-worth! The Council gives advice and assistance to get property back into use – get in touch if you’d like to know more.

### **Transport**

The Combined Authority will this month be approving the new Local Transport Plan, following public consultation. A10 cycle path is seeing some major vegetation cutback this week and next, thanks to a grant sought by the A10 Corridor Cycle Campaign and provided by AstraZeneca.

Cam Vale Bus User Group meeting 22 January, 2PM, The Limes Bassingbourn.

Shepreth Level Crossing: The Rail User Group will be meeting Network Rail to look at the administration of level crossing barrier downtimes at the end of this month.

Community Rail Partnership: We’ve invited our MP to visit the stations and learn about our key priorities, including accessibility at Meldreth, and have an appointment to meet in March.

### **Other issues for information**

**Opportunity to work with children and young people with disabilities:** The Community Support Service and CamPlay provide short breaks to children and young people with additional needs, aged 0-18 years, as part of the Cambridgeshire Local Offer for children and young people with disabilities.

“We offer support in the home and community, Saturday clubs, community clubs and holiday clubs throughout the county of Cambridgeshire. We are always looking for enthusiastic staff to join our team.

“We are currently recruiting for both services on a relief contract basis. The flexible nature of the job provides a way of ‘topping up’ hours in holidays, after school, weekends and evenings. We also provide a comprehensive training programme and support in working with children and young people with a wide range of learning and physical disabilities, which are skills that can be brought back to your existing job. We are based in Huntingdon but have work available across Cambridgeshire.

“If you would be interested in applying or have any questions, please get in touch on [Community.SupportServices@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Community.SupportServices@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or 01480 379 800. We have ongoing recruitment with regular interviews, and you can visit [www.publicsectorjobseast.co.uk](http://www.publicsectorjobseast.co.uk) to apply.”

**Helping the Forces:** A new mobile app has been launched to signpost members of the armed forces community in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to support and advice in their area. The free ‘Forces Connect’ app is aimed at serving personnel, veterans, and their families who can now find local services and organisations offering support in just four clicks. To download the app, search “Forces Connect” in Apple’s App Store or the Google Play Store.