

CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 11 December 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs J Hughes (Chairman), J Bliss, R Feeney, J Hayes, P Owen, S Potter, A Sparrow, Cllr D Roy (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), four parishioners

097/23-24 Apologies for Absence

Cllr M Summers (FDC)

098/23-24 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman informed the meeting of the passing of Christchurch resident Richard Guilford, former editor of The Heron.

099/23-24 Public Time

A resident enquired about the process and timescale for one of the planning applications considered at the previous meeting. The Clerk clarified the process and explained the likely timing of a decision.

Mr Sutton informed the Council that he was pleased to lay the wreath at the Remembrance Sunday service and would do so again in the future if required. He commented on the number of people who had attended. He noted that both street lights on Church Road outside The Croft were no longer working. The Clerk explained that these lights were part of the development and therefore Crown property. In order to repair them it would be necessary for the Parish Council to adopt them. Members asked the Clerk to pursue this.

Mr Benjamin reported several issues. The Anglian Water website shows an incorrect route for the diversion around the forthcoming closure of the Sixteen Foot Bank. The Clerk will notify them. The broken BT Openreach inspection cover at the junction of Upwell Road and Fen View has still not been replaced. The Clerk will contact Openreach again. The dog bin in Green Lane is regularly full. This may be because it is being overlooked during the routine bin emptying visits.

100/23-24 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

101/23-24 Matters Outstanding

- a) Pavement outside Field Lodge, Upwell Road - No further update
- b) Affordable housing proposal - The residents' survey is about to be distributed.
- c) Household items outside property in Upwell Road - No further update.
- d) Wayside Estate pedestrian safety - The Clerk has been unable to arrange a meeting with the Local Highways Officer to discuss possible solutions.
- e) Parishioner engagement - Cllr Sparrow reported that a number of surveys have been returned and he is collating the results and comments for the next meeting.
- f) Santa Run - This will take place on Saturday 16th December from 6.00pm. Several members and the Clerk volunteered to collect donations. Half of the money collected will be retained by the Council and members will consider an appropriate use for the funds.
- g) Bowls Club donation - The Clerk advised members that a donation had been received from the former Bowls Club with a request that it be used for a project to

benefit the community in the name of the Bowls Club. Members discussed possible uses for the funds and agreed to await the feedback from the survey before making a final decision.

- h) Play equipment inspections - Cllr Sparrow will add the new benches and gym equipment to the checklist.

102/23-24 Police Report

The Clerk reported that no meetings had taken place.

103/23-24 County & District Councillors Reports

Cllr Roy reported that Cllr Taylor submitted a motion to full Council to encourage people to purchase locally-sourced food to support local businesses. It is hoped that the need for land for local food production might influence future planning decisions.

At a recent drainage board meeting, Cllr Roy asked the board to investigate enforcement of riparian responsibilities to reduce flooding. There is a need to educate and encourage residents and landowners to undertake their responsibilities and for enforcement where necessary. Some developers are also failing to address their responsibilities in this regard.

104/23-24 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on correspondence received, including the County Council's Be Winter Wise toolkit, the District Council's small grants to improve forgotten corners, Shared Prosperity Fund grants for local businesses, an invitation to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Council's AGM and Keep Britain Tidy's Buy Nothing New Month in January.

105/23-24 Members and Residents Issues

- a) Proposed closure of Manea Fire Station - Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is proposing to close Manea Fire Station as part of a forthcoming reorganisation. This will impact response times to incidents in Christchurch. Members asked the Clerk to write to the Fire service and to Steve Barclay expressing their concern regarding this decision. Cllr Roy reminded members that the Fire Service offers home safety visits to vulnerable residents and it was agreed that this should be advertised in The Heron.
- b) Use of social media - Cllr Feeney has set up a Facebook page for the Council which will be used to pass on information received from other agencies as well as Council news.
- c) Motor vehicles on byways - Cllr Hayes reported that several vehicles had become stuck whilst attempting to use byways around the village. The Clerk will discuss enhanced signage options with Highways.
- d) Dog fouling and unsupervised dogs - members reported an increase in dog fouling around the village and dogs running loose. The Clerk encouraged members to report unsupervised dogs to the Fenland Dog Warden. The District Council's Street Scene team oversees dog fouling issues. The Clerk was asked to contact them and ask them to visit the village.

106/23-24 Recreation Ground Extension

Cllr Hughes reported that more hedging has been delivered and planted. He is awaiting a quote for fencing, weed clearance and grass seeding. The proposed bridge onto Crown Drove may not be achievable, so the Highways Bridges Officer has suggested that the bridge be relocated into the Recreation Ground, possibly adjacent to the skatepark.

107/23-24 Highways

Members discussed potential projects for the Local Highways Improvement application for 2024/25. Temporary speed restrictions and enhanced parking restrictions outside Townley School, or solid white lines and enhanced signage at the junction of Upwell Road and Sixteen Foot Bank were discussed. Members agreed to pursue the Upwell Road/Sixteen Foot Bank scheme and Cllr Hughes offered to prepare the application. The Clerk will discuss a possible extension of the zig-zag lines outside Townley School with Highways.

108/23-24 Planning

Application F/YR23/0572/O for up to 3 dwellings adjacent to 52 Church Road will be considered by the District Council's Planning Committee on 13 December. Members considered their previous submission for this application and agreed that no further comment was required.

109/23-24 Finance

a) The management accounts as at 30.11.23 showed income of £26,048.80 and expenditure of £13,586.34, resulting in a surplus of £12,462.46 and total funds held of £53,780.72.

b) The Clerk reported that he is still trying to resolve issues with the Barclays Bank accounts.

c) Members approved the following accounts for payment:

Clerk salary and home office allowance	£	467.13
Christchurch Recreation Ground Charity (re youth group)	£	82.50

d) The Clerk presented a draft budget for 2024/25. Members agreed the following additional items of expenditure:-

Street light replacement	£	10,000.00
Recreation Ground extension	£	5,000.00
Local Highways Improvement contribution	£	1,500.00
Bus shelter improvement	£	500.00
War Memorial cleaning	£	500.00

Members resolved to finalise the budget at January's meeting.

110/23-24 Policies and Procedures

Members considered the draft Safeguarding Policy prepared by the Clerk and resolved to adopt it.

111/23-24 Matters for Next Meeting

Budget for 2024/25, Local Highway Improvement application for 2024/25, Bowls Club donation, Santa Run collection.

112/23-24 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 8 January.