**BOTTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of meeting Tuesday 4 May at 7.45pm, held online due to coronavirus restrictions**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr Jon Ogborn- Chair. Cllrs Buchanan, Chetwynd, Clarke, di Lorenzo, O’Dell, van Someren, Wilson and Winkcup

D/Cllr Cane

**APOLOGIES**:

Cllrs Marsh, Martin, O’Dell

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM:** Mr Andrew Clarke spoke on behalf of the Bottisham Early Morning Swimming Club. He explained that having had use of the pool at Bottisham Village College for three mornings per week for 1.75 hours at a cost of £60 per month, in August 2019 the Club received notice that the charge was being increased to £600 per month. Whilst recognising that the previous rate was below the prevailing market rate, the new charge is substantially above it. Based on the Club’s membership, the monthly cost would be £35 per member. This compares with £19.60 per month paid by adult members of the Sports Club and which gives access to other facilities besides the pool. Mr Clarke explained that the Club was responsible for unlocking for their sessions, organising their own lifeguard cover and insurance which would be inclusive for Sports Club members. The BEMSC has appealed to the Chair of Governors over the increase, but the appeal has been rejected. He asked the Parish Council to consider whether it was prepared to make representations to the Governors, bearing in mind the health benefits to the local community offered by the Club. Cllr Ogborn advised that the Council would consider this at its next meeting in June.

**16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**17. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOLLOWED BY SIGNING OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:** Cllr Clarke took the Chair for this item. Having heard from Cllr Ogborn that he was prepared to stand again, Cllr Clarke proposed him for the role. This was seconded by Cllr Winkcup and Cllr Ogborn was duly elected

**18. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR:** Cllr Ogborn took the Chair. Cllr Clarke was proposed by Cllr Buchanan, seconded by Cllr Wilson and duly elected

**19. RESERVED BUSINESS:** Vacancy - Co-option of Parish Councillor (The Public were excluded from the meeting for this item). Cllr Ogborn introduced Mrs Nadene Cundell who had submitted an application for co-option onto the Council. Her co-option was proposed by Cllr Wincup, seconded by Cllr Buchanan and agreed unanimously

**20. APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING of 6 April 2021:** Amendments to minute 12 Play Area Working Group from Cllrs Ogborn and di Lorenzo were proposed.

Acceptance of the minutes incorporating these amendments was proposed by Cllr Winkcup and seconded by Cllr Wilson. This was agreed unanimously.

**21. MATTERS ARISING FROM APRIL MEETING**

**a) Installation of bollards on the Triangle:** Meads have said they will be able to do the work in about six weeks time. Cllr Martin will meet them at the site to agree the position of the bollards

**b) Removal of graffiti from the Bus Shelter:** This has been carried out by Mr Neal. The light has been repaired but a query has been raised about it being on all night.

**ACTION:** The Clerk has asked for contact details of the Electrician, to ascertain whether the time settings can safely be changed by a non-electrician

**c) Overgrown hedge on lane in Jenyns Close:** D/Cllr Cane advised that a letter has been written to the leaseholder of the property

**ACTION:** Clerk to advise the resident who raised the concern

**d) Representation on Wicken Fen Liaison Group:** Cllr Buchanan asked for information to be sent, so that she can explore the possibility of a contact she knows undertaking this role on behalf of the Council

**ACTION:** The Clerk to send details of the Group to Cllr Buchanan

**e) Location of bench being donated to the Council:** Cllr Chetwynd had sought suggestions for location of a new bench. As the Council owns little land, any location would have to be agreed with the owner of publicly accessible land. The location most favoured was the Dirt Hills, where parents often wait with younger children at the end of the school day.

**ACTION:** The Clerk to contact the donor and the Park Estate

**f) ECDC Consultation on Single Issue Review of the Local Plan:** Cllr Buchanan has responded confirming that the Parish Council supports the Single Issue Review

**g) Proposed Training Session on Planning for Councillors:** CAPALC have responded saying that a session could be provided for £350

**ACTION:** Cllr Ogborn & the Clerk will seek clarification of the course content and identify possible times for the session

**h) Overgrown tree at eastern end of Beechwood Avenue:** This was reported to the County Council, who responded that the tree was on private land and was not affecting the highway

**ACTION:** Cllr di Lorenzo will look out archived information regarding ownership of the land on which the tree is situated

**22. PLAY AREA WORKING PARTY:** Cllr di Lorenzo said that the Working Party had last met in 2019 and a planned consultation with Ancient Meadow residents had been postponed because of the pandemic.

**ACTION:** Cllr di Lorenzo will reconvene the Working Group to plan how to recommence this consultation

**23. ELECTIONS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES:** Cllr Ogborn advised that the only formally constituted Committee with decision-making powers is the Finance Committee. He thanked Cllr Buchanan who is stepping down after many years of service. It was proposed by Cllr Buchanan, seconded by Cllr Wilson and unanimously agreed that the Committee membership should be: Cllrs Clarke (Chair), Ogborn, Chetwynd & Winkcup.

Cllr Ogborn explained that the Planning Working Party is not delegated to make decisions, but makes recommendations to the full Council on any planning applications received. He paid tribute to Cllr Buchanan, who is stepping back as Chair of the group, for her contribution and commitment to planning issues for the Council since 1976. It was proposed by Cllr di Lorenzo, seconded by Cllr Chetwynd and unanimously agreed that the Group membership should be: Cllrs Wilson (Chair), Buchanan, Marsh & Martin

**24. COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES:** Cllr Winkcup is a member of the Bottisham Local Charity, which distributes funds allocated to it by the Bottisham United Charities. This body is currently seeking a further representative from Bottisham. Cllr Clarke sits on the John Salisbury Charity which distributes funds to Bottisham and Lode. Cllr Buchanan is the representative on the Bowls Club, reflecting the fact that some of the land used by the Club is on a long lease from the Parish Council

**25. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT:** D/Cllr Cane reported that D/Cllr Alan Sharp has been elected chair of the District Council, replacing Liz Every. D/Cllr Cane is on the newly formed Audit Committee and is joined on the Finance and Assets Committee by D/Cllr Trapp. D/Cllr Trapp remains on the Planning Committee and joins the Operations Committee. She noted the failure of the High Court action to allow remote Council meetings to continue after 7 May, in the context that the Grange in Ely is difficult to operate in a Covid-secure manner. D/Cllr Cane’s full report is attached to these minutes.

**26. CHAIR’S REPORT:** Picking up on the issue raised by D/Cllr Cane, Cllr Ogborn said that he and the Clerk were visiting the Poppy Room at the Social Club, to assess how Parish Council meetings could take place safely. Given the numbers who attend the Annual Parish Meeting, the Poppy room would be inadequate and he will investigate the possibility of using the main hall of the Club.

**ACTION:** Cllr Ogborn to bring a proposal about how to run the meeting to a future meeting of the Parish Council

**27. PLANNING:** Cllr Buchanan said that the Working Group had considered the applications received and concluded that there were no concerns arising from them.

**28. ENVIRONMENT:**

**a) Update on areas of responsibility:** Cllr Chetwynd reported that of the items reported by Council members ,the most concerning was that an adult riding a bike on the path between Beechwood Avenue and Ancient Meadows had hit a child. There was some discussion about possible solutions to prevent a recurrence including No Cycling signs and kissing gate to prevent bikes being able to move at speed around the blind corner.

**ACTION:** The Clerk will write to ECDC with a copy to D/Cllr Cane highlighting the problem

The small green bin has gone missing from the Cemetery.

**ACTION:** Cllr Chetwynd will enquire from Cllr O’Dell whether he has information about its disappearance

**b) Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project Community Working Group:** Cllr Wilson attended the inaugural meeting of the group and circulated a report to Council members. He was disappointed that there was no discussion of the suitability of the site, when local villages have stated the view that the need to move from the present site has not been demonstrated. He identified three concerns arising from the implementation of the project: odours carried by the wind; increased traffic (both during construction and when the site is operational) and the visual impact on the local landscape, including the visibility of stacks in local conservation areas.

**29. FINANCE**

**a) Repair and replacement of inoperative streetlights:** The Clerk explained that he had sought three quotations given the likely cost of the works. One contractor was only able to do minor repairs and can’t replace columns. The second contacted seemed reluctant to quote, saying that Balfour Beatty is the main provider in the area – they failed to respond when sent information on the work required. In that context, the Clerk asked the Council to waive the Standing Order requirement for three quotations and to accept the quotation of £3,379+VAT from Balfour Beatty. Cllr Winkcup proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded a motion to this effect which was carried unanimously

**b) The following payments were approved:**

May £

Items for approval

Jonathan Giles – Salary, Pension, PAYE and NI 749.60

I Swift – Litter picking (4 weeks) 52.50

K Levitt – Litter picking (4 weeks) 52.50

Wave (Anglian Water) – Cemetery 13.12

Haven Power – Streetlights 44.48

S Neal Carpentry – Renovation of Bus Shelter 450.00

**c) Finance Committee Meeting 20 April 2021:** Cllr Clarke highlighted the key issues discussed. He welcomed Cllr Chetwynd’s appointment to the Committee, reflecting the significant expenditure on Environment matters. He reported that the Cambridge Building Society Account had been opened and that we are working to overcome some teething problems with the operation of the account. Referring to the financial results for 2020-21, he noted that the limitation on activity caused by lockdown meant that the Council’s expenditure had been reduced. The reserves stand at £138,000 as at 31 March 2021 which is an increase of £23,000 over the year. Given the commitments around future expenditure on a play area and the cemetery these reserves are justified.

The Clerk said that, as our current insurer was refusing was refusing to meet the claim for the damaged streetlight, he had sought quotations from other insurers for the period commencing 1 June 2021. These quotations are awaited and the decision will need to be made before the end of the month on a cost that could be up to £700.

Cllr Winkcup proposed and Cllr Buchanan seconded the proposal that the decision be delegated to Cllrs Clarke and Ogborn after consultation with the Clerk. This was agreed unanimously.

**ACTION:** Clerk to consult Cllrs Ogborn & Clarke for decision on insurance

30. DECISION ON NEW PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE AND EMAIL: Cllr Winkcup outlined the key points of his report. He proposed using the standard template for Councils offered by “My Parish Council”, as it was well tested in practice by other Councils. The changeover would cost £612 and the ongoing costs would be £270 per annum – the latter figure includes the automatic download from the District Council Planning Portal. Given that our current provider charges £671, the cost of the changeover would be recouped in a couple of years. In response to a question about updating the site, he believes that 80% could be managed within the Council. Creating new pages is much less complex than with the current system. He proposed that the work be commissioned as soon as possible, with the aim of going live in September. This would enable 3 months notice to be given to the current provider.

Cllr Ogborn proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded that Cllr Winkcup be authorised to place the order for the new website with My Parish Council. This was agreed unanimously.

31. NEW CEMETERY WORKING GROUP: Cllr Ogborn advised that representatives of the National Trust would be meeting with the Consultants, the Clerk and the working party on 19 May.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 7 June at 7.45 pm in the Poppy Room, Bottisham Social Club

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| **Minute** | **Action** | **By whom** |
| 21b | Obtain contact details of the Electrician to ascertain whether the time settings can safely be changed by a non-electrician | Clerk |
| 21c | Advise the resident who raised the concern about the overgrown hedge in Jenyns Close of action taken by ECDC | Clerk |
| 21d | Send details of the Wicken Fen Liaison Group to Cllr Buchanan | Clerk |
| 21e | Contact the donor and the Park Estate about potential location of bench | Clerk |
| 21g | Seek clarification of Planning course content from CAPALC and identify possible times for the session | Cllr Ogborn & the Clerk  |
| 21h | Look out archived information regarding ownership of the land at E end of Beechwood Avenue on which overgrown tree is situated | Cllr di Lorenzo |
| 22 | Reconvene the Play Area Working Group to plan how to recommence consultation with residents of Ancient Meadows | Cllr di Lorenzo |
| 26 | Bring a proposal about how to run the Annual Parish meeting to a future meeting of the Parish Council | Cllr Ogborn |
| 28a | Write to ECDC with a copy to D/Cllr Cane highlighting the problem of cycling on the lane between Beechwood Avenue and Ancient Meadows | Clerk |
| 28a | Ask Cllr O’Dell whether he has information about the disappearance of the small green bin from the Cemetery | Cllr Chetwynd |
| 29 | Consult Cllrs Ogborn & Clarke for decision on insurance | Clerk |

## District Councillors’ Report to Parish Councils May 2021

The Council Meeting on 29 April, delayed by a week because of the period of official mourning from the original changed date, was the only District Council meeting last month, except for Planning.

At this meeting, appointments on committees for the next year were confirmed. Alan Sharp was elected Chair, and Dan Schumann Vice-chair, of Council. Charlotte and John remain on the Finance & Assets committee; Charlotte is a member of the newly formed Audit Committee. The proposal by Charlotte that the opposition party should have a majority and the chair of this committee, as is the case on many other Councils, was not accepted and the committee is heavily establishment; the Chair of the Audit Committee will be Liz Every, who is the outgoing Chair of Council, Dan Schumann is Vice-chair of this committee (as well as Vice-chair of Council), and the third member is Alan Sharp, the Chair of Council. John remains on the Planning Committee, and he is a new appointee on the Operational Services committee – it’s not that John is power-hungry, but that his colleagues have more commitments, and so he has stepped in to help.

Following the decision by the High Court that virtual meetings would not be an acceptable alternative to face-to-face meetings after the 7th May, and that the Government had refused all-party requests from the Local Government Association and the National Association of Local Councils to extend the current arrangements, Council discussed means of enabling its business to carry on with the involvement of Councillors and the public, as the only alternative was to have the Chief Executive make decisions. Council decided that it would hold Zoom meetings as in the previous year, and that the results of any voting on motions or resolutions would advise the Chief Executive what to enact. Counsel’s opinion was that this was possible, and legal for the Council.

Earlier in the meeting a motion, seconded by Charlotte, had been put forward for the Council to make a very strong statement to the Government about the very positive aspects (e.g., more public participation, less travel saving both time and money, more inclusivity) of virtual meetings and for their continuation in the future. This motion was defeated by *en bloc* voting by the administration. The government consultation, for enabling virtual meetings in the future for Local Council meetings, is now online at  <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-authority-remote-meetings-call-for-evidence>.

A motion for lending money to the East Cambs CLT by the Council so as to enable affordable housing on the former MOD site at Ely was presented to the Council. Analysis of the terms on which the CLT would be offering these so-called affordable houses revealed that they would be sold at full market value, even though the CLT was buying them at a discount from the East Cambs Trading Company, and the only affordable element was that the new owners would only part own the properties, with the CLT owning the rest; there would be rent paid on the non-owned share, as well as possible service charges, so it was questioned whether there would be any saving for the owners after paying the extra charges; a request for members to be informed of the extra charges was denied. Despite these grave reservations, the motion was carried, to enable those who had signed up for buying these houses, and who had committed sums of money for surveys and other expenses, to be able to complete their purchase.