



Wickham and Knowle Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the above Council held at Wickham Community Centre, Mill Lane, Wickham PO17 5AL on Thursday 12th October 2023 at 7pm.

Present: Craig Manuel (Chair), Robert Broad (Vice-Chair), Sheila Chambers, Kathryn Holladay, Nic Holladay, Mike Little, Loraine Rappe, Malc Burt, Leah Greenbank, Sandy Phillips-Lee

In attendance: District Councillor Chris Chamberlain, 8 members of the public, Locum Parish Clerk Tracey Molloy

1. **Apologies for absence:** County Councillor Patricia Stallard
2. **Declarations of interest:** Councillor Little declared an interest in Agenda Item 11C

3. Public Session:

Two members of public were in attendance to discuss concerns arising from work to Tanfield Park hedge in 2022. Residents of Tanfield Park believe an agreement was made whereby the Parish Council are responsible to ensure the maintenance of the hedge is carried out on a yearly basis. Councillor Manuel confirmed the Council as a whole were unaware of this work until recently when emailed by residents. Councillor Manuel confirmed that the previous clerk with the agreement from the Chair of the Council at that time made arrangements to have the hedge cut so the golf club could maintain it as they should as the owners of the hedge. It appears the golf club have not honoured this, and Councillor Manuel has requested a meeting with the golf club to work out a way forward. The Locum clerk will investigate what happened in 2022 with regard to payments and works done and report back to the next Full Council.

Two members of public were in attendance to discuss Agenda item 16 – Grants.

4. **Policing reports/concerns from the community:**
Councillor Little reported since the PCSO assigned to Wickham and Knowle Parish left and the replacement PCSO is on another task, PCSO Sarah McCulloch is the current point of contact for safety concerns.
5. **Report from County Councillor:** Report circulated prior to meeting.
6. **Reports from District Councillors:** Councillor Chamberlain provided a verbal update, which included an update on the parking meters in Wickham, Buckland Development Ltd (Welborne) and the Statement of Community Involvement consultation is now open for 6 weeks.

7. Chairman's announcements:

Councillor Manuel updated the meeting, Nicki Oliver's last day was the 4th October and the Council wish her well in her semi-retirement.

Tracey Molloy, was welcomed as the locum Clerk and RFO. Tracey will be providing part time support to the Parish Council until permanent replacements are made.

Councillor Manuel also welcomed Councillors Sandy Phillips-Lee and Leah Greenbank to their first Full Council.

Councillor Manuel reported that due a challenging handover, there has been delays in service in a number of areas due to not being able to access items such as the website, the bank and the phone system/internet. The phone line and broad band is now on order, and access to the bank has been sorted.

8. Minutes of Full Council held 27th July 2023

RESOLVED: Minutes approved and signed as a true a record
Proposed Councillor Manuel, Seconded Councillor N Holladay
9 in favour, 1 abstain

9. Minutes from the Extraordinary Full Council 22nd September 2023

RESOLVED: Minutes approved and signed as a true a record
Proposed Councillor Manuel, Seconded Councillor N Holladay
7 in favour, 3 abstain

10. Minutes from the Extraordinary Full Council 6th October 2023

RESOLVED: Minutes approved and signed as a true a record
Proposed Councillor Manuel, Seconded Councillor Rapper
9 in favour, 1 abstain

11. Recreation Committee

- a) Minutes of meeting held 5th September 2023: Noted
- b) Proposal to use a professional market research company to conduct the final Mill Lane consultation. **RESOLVED.** Proposed Councillor N Holladay, Seconded Councillor Manuel. All in favour
- c) Proposal from Nicola Coleman to run a community café at the Knowle Village Hall. Deferred.

12. Planning Committee

- a) Minutes of meeting held 14th September 2023: Noted

13. Conclusion of Audit for the Year Ended 31 March 2023 and External Auditors

Report: Noted

14. Internal Auditor for the 2023/24 financial year

RESOLVED: LightaTouch appointed for an initial financial assessment at a cost of £200, and for the audit for the 2023/24 financial year at a cost of £800.
Proposed Councillor Rappe, Seconded Councillor N Holladay
All in favour

15. Grounds Maintenance Contract

RESOLVED: Request from current Grounds Maintenance Contractors, Siam Landscapes Ltd and Paul Collins to extend their contract for 1 year from March 2024 noted. Locum clerk to do some analysis around the costing on the contracts as well as the additional work undertaken. To be reviewed at the next Recreation Committee where a decision will be made to either extend the current contract by 1 year or retender.
Proposed Councillor N Holladay, Seconded Councillor Manuel
All in favour

16. Grant Requests

RESOLVED: The following precepted grants were approved:

- a) Knowle Christmas Event: £500
- b) Wickham Christmas Event: £2415

Proposed Councillor Manuel, Seconded Councillor Little
All in favour

17. **Payments** – deferred, no payments have been made due to difficulties getting into the bank accounts .

18. Date and locations of future council meetings

RESOLVED: Locum clerk to check availability of Wickham Community Centre and Knowle Village Hall to see what rooms are available for 2024, include the Annual Assembly on either the 16th or 23rd May 2024.

Proposed Councillor Manuel, Seconded Councillor N Holladay

All in favour

19. Date of next meeting:

20. Motion for Confidential business

Complaints regarding the hedge in Tanfield Park was discussed as part of the public session. No further decisions were required as confidential business. Councillor Manuel has requested a meeting with the golf club to work out a way forward. The Locum clerk will investigate what happened in 2022 with regard to payments and works done and report back to the next Full Council.

Meeting closed 8.40pm

Signed.....

Date.....23/11/23.....