WIGGENHALL ST GERMANS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER 2024 at 7.30PM, CONVENED IN THE MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL.

Present:
Parish Councillors: David Rust (Chair), Scilla Ash (Vice Chair), David Harrison, Tony Park, David Johnson, Robert Ward, Robert Rawlings and Paul Bridge (Co-opted at item 67/24).
Parish Clerk: Mike Inder.
Borough & County Councillor: Cllr Brian Long.
Apologies: N/A
Public: 3.

62/24 **Opening & apologies for absence:** Cllr Rust opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

63/24 **Declarations of interest for items on the agenda:** None.

64/24 **To hear reports from officers:** Cllr Long provided both a Borough and County Council report and apologised for his non-attendance as he had been extremely ill but had recovered and was back in action.
Borough Council – the Local Plan (LP), its Major Modifications and impact for the Parish and wider community was explained; there is no direct change to Wiggenhall St Germans in terms of additional allocation requirements. The large West Winch growth area, whilst significant will not meet the new Government's overall growth target of c1100 homes a year required and the concentration of new developments through the life of the emerging Local Plan to 2036 will be on brown field sites along the A10 corridor and concerns regarding supporting infrastructure would create a significant challenge.
County Council – Cllr Long stated that he has been appointed as Chair to the Police and Crime Panel, Norfolk Strategic Safety Partnership and Select Ctte for Adult and Child Welfare Services; all challenging roles with tight budgets. He announced that the 'County Deal' with an elected leader has been scrapped by the new Government and there is a review on how that might be re-birthed with a joint Norfolk and Suffolk deal. The QEH rebuild is back on the agenda.
He fielded questions on the ramifications for Wiggenhall St Germans of the LP and the South Gates area regeneration, options for which are still being developed.

65/24 **To hear from the public**: A resident stated that their particular interest was in the 'White Gates' and asked if she could comment once the update was heard, the Chair agreed.

66/24 **Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd Jul 24:** Having been previously circulated, the minutes were proposed by Cllr Park, seconded by Cllr Harrison, and agreed as a true reflection of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the chair.

67/24 **Co-option to fill a Cllr vacancy**: Mr Paul Bridges having previously expressed an interest declared that he was qualified, and not disqualified, in accordance with the LGA 1972 and was proposed for co-option by Cllr Ward, seconded by Cllr Rawlings and voted unanimously in favour. He signed the declaration of office witnessed by the Proper Officer and was informed of the requirement to complete a Declaration of Pecuniary Interests for submission to the Borough Council Register.

68/24 **Finance**:

a. To approve payments: Cllr Rust queried the recent trend of higher electricity invoices at the Pavilion, the clerk explained that the increased use of floodlighting and hot food and drink at matches was the probable cause, Cllr Rust also mentioned that the hot water heater had been left on between matches. The RFO had made mention in budget planning for the future, anticipating the need for recharge of the electricity or increased annual rent, he will factor this into the budget setting to be presented at the next meeting and inform the FC Chair of the intention and rationale. The circulated payments list was proposed by Cllr Johnson, seconded by Cllr Rawlings and approved (Annex A).

b. Reconciliation of accounts: Cllr Rust conducted a sample check of invoices and the bank statements and countersigned the reconciliation summary (Annex B).

c. The banking mandate amendment to add Cllr Harrison has not been confirmed by the bank and the Clerk will check if it has been completed and if so, Cllr Harrison will need to instigate the setting up of Internet banking.

69/24 **Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR)**

a. The external auditor notice of conclusion has been received and the relevant report and notices published on the PC website.
   i. The reported a transposed number entry in Sect 2 box 3 was restated at the July meeting.
   ii. A further matter was raised with regards to the lack of sufficient explanation of variances in box 3 and 6, the RFO explained that the differences between years had been explained as far as reasonably practicable and that given that the accounts and bank statements reconciliation was accurate to the penny then any variances are what they are, and further explanation was not possible. Cllr Ash proposed that the matter was noted and that the fiscal controls and accounting was sound, seconded by Cllr Harrison and agreed.

70/24 **To appoint an Internal Auditor**: The clerk explained that the current auditor was retiring and that he had made enquiries to identify a suitably qualified internal auditor with capacity to take on the role; this had proven as difficult as usual other than a new service being provided by Norfolk ALC in response to the sector shortage. They have trained a number of auditors and maintain a register of auditors who can be appointed to Councils who subscribe. The service provided is a more comprehensive, through-year process as well as the AGAR element and the RFO would welcome a fresh set of trained eyes to scrutinise the accounts and governance and to receive constructive observations and recommendations. The cost would be c£250, and although a significant increase it was recommended as a value for money, and it could be evaluated after a year. Cllr Ash proposed appointing using the Norfolk ALC service, seconded by Cllr Rawlings and agreed.

71/24 **Play Park Project**: The clerk reported that the PPSG had selected the preferred equipment list, a further quote to match that list has been requested and is expected in approx 4 weeks, after which a company can be selected as the preferred contractor and the grant application process started. Advice from the BC on whether planning permission has been sought and advice is pending. The target remains on track for opening in July 2025.

72/24 **Planning**.

a. Applications to consider:
   i. 24/01493/AG| Agricultural Prior Notification: Agricultural building (30 meters by 12 metres), with a lean to the southern elevation (30 metres x 6 metres). A hardcore/matted area will surround the building. The door to the eastern side will be 5 metres tall and 4.5 metres wide. The land will be accessed by an existing field access from the highway. No consultation comment required.
   ii. Late Planning: None.

b. Decisions notified by Borough since last meeting:
   i. 24/01230/AG| Agricultural Prior Notification: Agricultural building (30 metres by 12 metres), with a lean to the southern elevation (30 metres x 6 metres). *Refused as Full Planning Application is required*

c. To consider implications of Major Modifications to the Local Plan to the Parish. The Clerk had provided a summary of the parts pertinent to the Parish when forwarding the email and advised cllrs to make individual comments to the consultation process after reviewing the LP.

73/24 **Clerk and Cllr updates on actions from previous meetings:**

a. Wiggenhall Woodland Creation updates: Cllr Johnson provided a comprehensive report and the updates were circulated in the agenda pack. He asked for the car parking option using the LTPF overflow car park to be put on the next agenda for formal agreement.
b. Update on development of proposal for wildflower verges. Cllr Harrison reiterated the following locations as potentially suitable: Edinburgh Close, Allen Close, Queens Close, Sluice/School Road junction and the riverbanks either side adjacent to the bridge and public house. The area would be c2,500 SqYds and a quote from Emorsgate Seeds based on that area was presented as c£500 for the better quality mix. Permissions in writing from the relevant landowners need to be sought.
c. Tree survey: Cllr Ash had sought alternate contractors to conduct the survey, having experienced similar difficulties to those encountered by the clerk she was only able to offer one quote from Golden Trees for £690 inc VAT. However, the level of service offered was very comprehensive and would provide the Council with a clear plan for works required for planning of work for a few years. The Chair stated that given the serious implications of not carrying out a survey and necessary work was important and should not be further delayed seeking quotes. Cllr Ash proposed accepting the quote, seconded by Cllr Harrison and agreed. The clerk will let the contract.
d. Remembrance service: the Chair stated that he would attend, to represent the Council and lay a wreath, the clerk will purchase the wreath as pre-approved in the budget setting.
e. Update on Memorial Hall car park. Cllr Ash reported that in addition to phase one having been completed that the CIL bid to fund the second phase to complete the project had been awarded and the work would commence in the near future.

74/24 **Traffic and Highways Issues:**

a. The SAM2 reports have not been forwarded to the clerk since May. Two further attempts to obtain reports had not been responded to. The Chair asked if there were any volunteers to take on the role as SAM2 manager, Cllr Bridges volunteered, and Cllr Rust undertook to call
b. Cllr Harrison reported that Highways are reviewing options for fencing/posts/banking to deter anti-social behaviour driving on the grassed area of Sluice/School Rd
c. To report on the school road safety initiatives progress. The refreshed PPS bid will be submitted in Oct and a decision is expected in Mar 25, Cllr Rust clarified for a public query that the installation would then happen in Apr 25 as the project is under the control of the Council to schedule.

75/24 **Leonard Towler Playing Field matters:**

a. LTPF Fire Risk Assessment: The signs in accordance with recommendations have been received and will be put up in coming days.
b. The Annual Fire eqpt inspection and PAT was completed and with the exception of needing a new water extinguisher (which was authorised for £55 as an emergency purchase on the day with the overall invoice) everything else was ok.
c. LTPF Land Registration – Cllr Rust visited the solicitors and managed to get them to confirm that they hold the Deeds from 1908, and copy has been sent to the clerk. The document is difficult to read as a scan and is in legal language that would benefit from updating and explaining. The Solicitor offered a land registration service for £750; this was discussed, and Cllr Rust proposed that the Council proceeded with this offer and to asked them to decipher and provide a plain English version of the Lease, seconded by Cllr Rawlings and agreed.
d. The Bowls Club has requested permission to install a new storage container, the proposed location and alternate both caused concerns with complexity, blocking of CCTV coverage or

potential need to remove large numbers of branches. It was agreed that a site meeting was required and that any siting involving tree work should wait until the tree survey was completed to better inform the decision.

76/24 **Memorial Hall playing field:** To determine actions to improve ground conditions**:**

a. To agree to mole control options and quotes. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Rust that the SJA Pest Control Option A (£120 job by job basis) to get an immediate effect should be carried out, followed by a review in the Spring with a view to a monthly contract until the issue is resolved. It was clarified that the field belongs to the MH and that it should be done in conjunction with them, also that once under control that the field could be repaired to remove hazardous holes.
b. Review of grounds maintenance scope. It was discussed that the grass cutting might improve once the mole problem is resolved and the weather this year has no doubt disrupted the planned fortnightly schedule. It was agreed to defer reviewing the scoping of the grass cutting until the moles were under control. The suggestion from Cllr Harrison to consider purchasing a second hand mower for c£600 to cut the grass with volunteers was cautioned against by the clerk, there being a myriad of factors that would have to be fully researched before any decision should be taken, this view was supported by Cllr Rawlings who stated the Council had researched and dismissed this option in the past as not practicable.
c. To review the annual play equipment inspection report and determine action required based on the top ten issues identified. This was not transacted and will be forwarded to the next agenda.

77/24 **Council email migration to .Gov.UK system:** The clerk asked for a show of hands for which Cllrs had migrated successfully and those that needed further assistance. The clerk will assist as required.

78/24 **Correspondence:** The following correspondence has been received and was circulated by email for consideration:

a. Bowls Club HMLR and lease query for their rates correspondence – covered in item 75/24.c, the outcome provided the answers that the Bowls Club required.
b. Bowls Club enquiry to site a container for storage. Covered at Item 75/24.d.
c. Community Cycle Storage Grant hastener. The clerk explained that the Borough Council's process and expectations on how this would be progressed and administered had led to a misunderstanding and that there was now insufficient time to complete the project to claim the grant. Cllr Johnson proposed that the PC ended their interest in the project, seconded by Cllr Ash and agreed.

79/24 **Items for the next agenda:** Cllr Johson asked for the use of the LTPF car park in the Woodland project to be on the agenda. Cllr Harrison asked whether the Council could address the apparent lack of escort vehicles for large agricultural vehicles and the concern was supported. It was agreed to research legislation and decide the best course of action at the next meeting.

The Chair thanked those present for their contributions and closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Signature: ……………………………………….

Chair ………………………………………….

Date …………………………………………………

Prepared by Mike Inder, Clerk to Wiggenhall St Germans Parish Council.

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Annex A

Payments for Authorisation since last meeting.

DATE	PAYEE NAME	DETAILS	REF NO	CHEQUE NO / BACS	GROSS AMOUNT
24/07/2024	IDB	Drainage Rates 2024/25	40	BACS	102.60
26/07/2024	Norfolk ALC	Gov.uk email subs 2041	41	BACS	14.40
31/07/2024	Play Inspection Co Ltd	Annual Play Eqpt Inspect #70785	42	BACS	99.00
01/08/2024	PJ&B Jones	Grass Cutting SI-949	43	BACS	285.60
15/07/2024	EE	CCTV Sim V02246855403	44	DD	13.48
13/08/2024	Tamar Telecommunications	Virtual Phone 4031143	45	DD	6.94
13/08/2024	Cozens UK Ltd	Streetlight Maintenance 8500	46	BACS	120.00
13/08/2024	SLCC Enterprises	Autumn Conf BK217110-1 &09-1	47	BACS	6.00
18/08/2024	HMRC	PAYE Mth 5	48	BACS	258.80
31/08/2024	M Inder	Salary Mth 5	49	BACS	399.03
15/08/2024	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Ext Audit SB20240832	50	BACS	378.00
15/08/2024	WelMedical Ltd	Defib Pads S273375	51	BACS	80.28
28/08/2024	Wave	Water Rates 13882281	52	BACS	65.93
02/09/2024	WelMedical Ltd	Defib Battery I279299	53	BACS	279.54
15/08/2024	EE	CCTV Sim V02256649675	54	DD	13.48
21/08/2024	EDF	LTPF Elec KI423638A5-0001	55	DD	76.30
02/09/2024	EDF	LTPF Elec KI423638A5-0002	56	DD	65.40
02/09/2024	PJ&B Jones	Grass Cutting SI-965	57	BACS	261.60
09/09/2024	Safety Signs 4 Less	LTPF Signage 145721	58	BACS	73.52
10/09/2024	Tamar Telecommunications	Virtual Phone 4046365	59	DD	6.94
18/09/2024	HMRC	PAYE Mth 6	60	BACS	258.80
30/09/2024	M Inder	Salary Mth Sep	61	BACS	399.03
11/09/2024	Cozens UK Ltd	Streetlight Maintenance 8676	62	BACS	120.00
					3,384.67

Income Since the last meeting

02/09/2024	Barclays	Interest 3 Jun - 1 Sep	3	Direct	201.11

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Annex B

Wiggenhall St Germans Parish Council Reconciliation

	Cash in Hand at		**01-Apr-24**
	Community Account		£1,000.00
	Business Premium Account		£34,502.99
	Less unpresented payments		£1,479.92
			£34,023.07
	Add Receipts		27,813.41
	Subtract Payments		10,089.83
A	Cash in Hand at	30-Aug-24	**£51,746.65**

Cash in Hand per Bank Statement dated	**30-Aug-24**
Cash	£0.00
Community Account	£1,000.00
Business Premium Account	£51,818.15
	£52,818.15

Less Unpresented Payments

31/08/2024	M Inder	Salary Mth 5	49	BACS	399.03
28/08/2024	Wave	Water Rates 13882281	52	BACS	65.93
02/09/2024	WelMedical Ltd	Defib Battery I279299	53	BACS	279.54
02/09/2024	EDF	LTPF Elec KI423638A5-0002	56	DD	65.40
02/09/2024	PJ&B Jones	Grass Cutting SI-965	57	BACS	261.60
					1071.50

Add Unpresented Receipts

				£	0.00

B	Adjusted Bank Balance	**£51,746.65**
	Error A - B	**£0.00**

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