

Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Parish Councillors

Mrs A Mickelsen (Chairman)
I D Wardrop (Vice-Chairman)
H M Bass
P J Bates
I S F MacGregor
R Mundell
S J Nicholas
J Williams



Winner Best Kept Village 2009, 2015
3rd Place Essex Village of the Year 2015

www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org

Parish Clerk

Mrs L J Rowland PSLCC
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MINUTES of Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Friday 24th November 2017 at 11.33am in the Village Hall Boardroom	
Item	Subject
17/206	Those Present and Apologies for Absence In the Chair: Cllr Mickelsen Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, MacGregor, Mundell, Nicholas and Wardrop; the Clerk; one member of the public. There were no apologies received from Cllr Williams.
17/207	Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework There were no Declarations of Interest.
17/208	Public Forum There were no comments from the member of the public present.
17/209	Planning Applications and Decisions There were no applications for consideration by the Council. The decisions made by Maldon District Council were noted. There were no recommendations made by the Clerk, or decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate, to note.
17/210	The Removal of the Parish Trigger by Maldon District Council (MDC) The Chairman stated that the District Council had recently decided to remove the parish trigger, and explained that the meeting had been called to give residents and the Parish Council the opportunity to decide what, if anything, it should do in response. Councillors were critical of finding out about the change via the press and expressed disappointment with the lack of direct communication and any consultation, and highlighted how the reduction in local council participation appeared to go against the ideals of Localism. Councillors also suggested that the outcome would be poorer planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and queried how the revised process would work in practice. Councillors noted the recent letter received from the Chief Executive of MDC, and expressed dissatisfaction with the tone and contents. As District Councillor, Cllr Bass acknowledged that the change had been poorly communicated and that the Chief Executive's letter was unhelpful. The District Councillor apologised to the meeting for both errors, and explained that there was a need to increase the number of decisions made by Planning Officers, to meet requirements from the DCLG and auditors. Cllr Bass pointed out that parish and town councils were not statutory consultees and the parish trigger - unique to Maldon district - resulted in many decisions being made by committee. This had been a driving factor in the change. Councillors noted that MDC's planning committees often overturned the recommendations of its Planning Officers and suggested this data could establish whether the decisions were being improved by the committees' involvement.

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	<p>As Ward Member, Cllr Bass asked that he be copied on all the Parish Council's recommendations to the LPA, so that he has opportunity to call-in the application to committee. Cllr Bass was not prepared to agree to notify the Parish Council when his, and the Parish Council's opinions, differed, but suggested that this would be infrequent if the Parish Council continued to express material planning considerations. In response to a concern that Officers might make a decision before the Ward Member is aware of a need to call-in the application, Cllr Bass agreed that a fail-safe in the process was needed.</p> <p>Resolved: that the Parish Council would write to the District Council, copying the letter to other parishes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - setting out its dissatisfaction with the change and the method in which it was introduced; - seeking clarification of the process and requesting that a fail-safe be added. <p>Proposed: Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Nicholas.</p> <p>Action: <i>The Chairman and the Clerk to draft and circulate the letter prior to sending.</i></p> <p>Action: <i>The Clerk to re-circulate the Parish Council's adopted Use of Email policy.</i></p>
17/211	<p>Dates of Next Meetings</p> <p>Tuesday 5th December 2017 Parish Council Meeting at 7.00pm</p> <p>Friday *15th December 2017 Planning Committee Meeting at 11.30am <i>if required, *revised date</i></p>
17/212	<p>Close of Meeting 12.27pm</p> <p>Items for future agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget and Precept for April 2018 to March 2019 (December) - Appointment of internal auditor (December) - Annual review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (January)