

DRAFT1

Widford Parish Council



**Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 4th October 2022 at 7.30pm in Widford Village Hall**
Note: this replaced the September 13th meeting postponed upon the death of QEII

PRESENT: Cllr Mike Allen (MA); Cllr Ian Collins; Cllr Michael Ripsher (MPR); Cllr Mark Rome(MR)

Five members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

ACTION

22.076 To receive and approve apologies for absence

1. Councillors: Cllr Babs Edwards (away) **Approved**
2. Others: PCSO Leon De Bruyn, Gilda Deterding

22.077 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

1. Interests

As noted on the agenda: Cllr Babs Edwards: an interest and a dispensation in respect of Playing Field matters, her husband being Treasurer of the PFMC. Cllr Mike Allen has an interest and a dispensation in re Playing Field matters, being a trustee. Cllr Ian Collins has a dispensation for the remainder of the electoral term in respect of his wife having the Closed Churchyard maintenance contract.

22.078 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th July 2022 were a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

Clerk/MA

Draft Minutes of the 5th April 2022 Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate were not available to be received.

Clerk

22.079 Police report

1. Crime report: No crimes reported in Widford.
2. Benningfield Road junction parking update: Ongoing concerns were raised about unaddressed dangerous parking at this location and elsewhere in the village.
3. Drivesafe update:

The following had been received from Vicky Mortley, People & Workforce Development, Hertfordshire Constabulary:

Following receipt of the Drivesafe Petition for Widford Village I have now completed checks and the onsite assessment for the location requested for monitoring to take place. Junction to Daintrees, location assessed 3rd September 2022, locations considered on both sides of the road however neither provides a clear line of sight to enable time for volunteers and equipment to effectively read the necessary information needed from offending vehicles. Other locations were considered outside of Bell Lane, however whilst this location provides good space to house equipment this location is too close to a bus stop and therefore cannot be used. I'm sorry that on this occasion I will not be able to process the application further.

22.080 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman expressed admiration for the late Queen Elizabeth's longevity and devotion to duty throughout her long and outstanding reign.

The Ashview verges are beginning to look in need of some attention again. The cost of arranging this to be considered.

A letter from a parishioner has raised a number of issues that will be addressed this evening in various agenda items.

2. Concerns about delays in planning applications being determined: This was covered above with Cllr Eric Buckmaster's report (22.081).

MA

22.083 Finance

1. Report of the Council's accounts

Finance Summary to 31st August 2022

	£
Opening cashbook balance 1st July	40,661.18
Plus: income to 31 st August	578.26
Minus: expenditure to 31 st August	<u>2,998.35</u>
Balance available to Council at 31st August (cashbook balance)	38,241.09
Plus unrepresented cheques/payments	<u>0.00</u>
Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement at 31st August	<u>38,241.09</u>

RESOLVED: that the Accounts Statement to 31st August 2022 be approved.

2. Bank reconciliations

Copies of the bank statement were presented. **RESOLVED: to agree the bank reconciliation as presented.**

3. Performance vs budget at 31st August 2022

The Clerk's detailed report on the financial performance vs budget to 31st August was received. There were no untoward transactions to note. Income for the year to date totalled £9,937 against a budget of £17,155. Expenditure for the year to date totalled £8,015 against a budget of £25,243.

It was noted that £7,500 is held in reserves for the Playing Field play area equipment grant, to be paid when the play area funding is resolved.

RESOLVED: that the financial performance report to 31st August 2022 be accepted as presented.

4. List of payments.

4.1. RESOLVED: to approve the list of payments as presented by the Clerk

All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence.

Clerk

		Gross	VAT incl
TP Jones LLP	Payroll July-September	58.50	9.75
Clerk	Expenses August-September	17.75	
Jo English	Litterpicking: September 6 of 12	125.00	
Clerk	Salary September	407.25	
HMRC	PAYE September	101.80	
Buckland Parish Council	MS365 annual licence share 1/4th	20.00	
Unity Trust Bank	Quarterly service	18.00	
Recoverable VAT included			£9.75

5. Audit: Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22

External auditor PKF Littlejohn accepted the Parish Council's exempt status and therefore there will not be an external audit or fee. The Parish Council will not hear from the auditor again unless there was a request from a parishioner during the period of Public Rights that closed on 22nd July.

Clerk

22.084 Correspondence: The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:

- Parishioner (16/7): complaint about dog owners not clearing up their dog's mess (22.086.3.2)
- Parishioner: Vehicular Damage to Nether Street railings (22.086.2.4)
- Parishioner: Concerns at long delays etc in EHC Planning determining applications (22.082.3.3)
- Parishioner: Road safety concerns on Ware Road by Greenacres (22.071.2.3)
- Parishioner: Safety concerns re Lilly Bridge (22.086.2.5)
- EHC: Proposed change to Litterpicking grant policy (22.083.8)
- Parishioner: Broken kissing gate FP18/Bridleway16 (22.086.1.2)
- Parishioner: Dog walkers on BOAT22/Permissive Path (22.086.2.6)

- Parishioner: Unclear wording on defibrillator signs; crab apples on Benningfield footway; bus stop bench (22.086.3)
- Parishioner: Ware Road flooding after rain (22.086.2.7)

22.085 Village Reports

1. Village Hall

Report sent by Cllr Michael Ripsher following 12th September Committee meeting:

Remain solvent with good cash balances

Bookings remain below pre pandemic levels but they are booking fundraising events in. Harvest supper, Quiz night and pub night...Race night to be held in New year.

They are also looking at having a clothes bank installed, it would be placed next to the village hall, is a good cause and they earn some money from it.

Pavilion vote: Greg needs to put flyer together for village and liaise with Ian regarding electoral roll.

Bingo afternoon and additional soup/roll afternoon to offer people a warm space over winter being considered.

Now on instagram !

Cllr Ian Collins said he met the VH Chairman after the last PC meeting and was ready to help and liaise, but as yet had not heard anything further.

IC

2. Playing Field

Cllr Mike Allen gave the following report on proposals and the Biffa grant:

In 2019 the WPFC put a recruitment drive together and gathered a small group of willing participants to begin a drive towards improvement of both the income and facilities. Ideas flowed and many suggestions put forward in an effort to start the ball rolling. A masterplan was discussed to try and encapsulate some of the ideas being put forward for improvements to the playing field, including but not limited to, replacement of current play equipment, community garden, additional seating (both covered and uncovered), new goal posts and nets, adult training equipment, walking/ running path and carparking.

Several funding options were considered such as Sport England, Lotto, East Herts and Biffa. A few grants were sought via East Herts for the upgrade of benches and repairs to existing equipment, however these were small amounts and insufficient to make a real difference. Biffa landfill sites are required to support local charities and facilities to ensure that a proportion of profit is returned to the local area in the form of a grant up to £75k with local support at 10% (Thanks to the PC). This was by far and away the best option for upgrading the play equipment.

Events such as Halloween, summer picnic, car boot sales and walking trails were all undertaken as part of a drive to secure some additional income. Amazon Smile, Give As You Live and East Herts Lottery were all engaged to add to the regular income for the playing field's maintenance and upkeep as well as trying to add to a play equipment upgrade fund. As you will be aware the PC has generously agreed to support the playing field with £1,000 per annum to assist with maintenance activities and it is much appreciated.

The Biffa application was the option agreed to pursue however the support information is extensive, and many pieces of information were required prior to the application being submitted. This process was long and required many days of input, a big mention here, to the current chair Alison Woodley whose efforts must not go unnoticed. Along with several other people in the committee, the masterplan, play equipment quotations, village consultation, local group consultations and various letters of support were gathered as evidence.

When the final pieces of evidence and support were being put together a line in the application requested the applicant needs to either have ownership of or a long lease over the land for the funds to be released if successful. At this time the nation was in lockdown and obtaining information was difficult and protracted, suffice to say, the net result is due to the nature of the charitable status in which the playing field is held prevents the ownership or lease situation to be clear and distinct according to Biffa's requirements therefore the application is void. A very disappointing end to what is a