

## **MARKYATE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF MARKYATE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY ON TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MARCH 2021 AT 7.30 PM.**

**Present:** Cllr. P. Bunyan, B/Cllr. H. Chapman, Cllr. S. Pilkinton, Cllr. R. Peterson, Cllr. C. Ononye,  
Cllr. D. Kao

**In attendance:** 5 members of the public at this meeting.

#### **226/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies: Cllr. P. Styles.

#### **227/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr. Peterson declared an interest in planning application 21/00456/FUL – 50, High Street. At the point of discussing this item, Cllr. Peterson was transferred to the virtual 'waiting room'.

#### **228/20 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Markyate Parish Council Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 as circulated, be received as a true record and were signed by the Chairman. This was proposed by Cllr. D. Kao and seconded by Cllr. R. Peterson.

#### **229/21 MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 as circulated, be received as a true record and were signed by the Chairman. This was proposed by Cllr. R. Peterson and seconded by Cllr. S. Pilkinton.

#### **230/21 MINUTES OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Budget and Finance Council Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 as circulated, be received as a true record and were signed by the Chairman. This was proposed by Cllr. S. Pilkinton and seconded by Cllr. R. Peterson.

#### **231/21 PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 1 (c to j) Standing Orders were suspended**

An attendee at the meeting spoke about the land SW of Frindles, Cheverells Green, raising strong objections. This application supersedes an earlier application, in relation to which the Parish Council resolved to object at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020. That application was subsequently withdrawn. The present application is very similar to the earlier application. The main difference is that now the proposal is for 4 detached houses, instead of 2 terraces containing 6 houses. The field is accordingly part of the valuable surrounding rural and open landscape, bounded on two sides by the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("AONB") and on a third side by the open common land on Cheverells Green. The attendee requested that the Council should continue to appeal against this development.

Cllr. Timmis then proceeded to speak about the same application, also raising strong objections, much the same as above, adding that this field is frequented by a large number of people and is an important piece of land. This development would degrade the village and more importantly, is a designated wildlife site and the development would affect the green environment adversely, causing light and noise pollution. It is a rural greenfield site and outside the village boundary. Developers are offering a piece of fenced-off common land inside the field to compensate for the loss of Common land taken out of Cheverells Green - an empty offer and totally impactable.

Another attendee, also objecting, stated that the Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed new development makes no reference to the fact that the development will be visible from the High Street, through the wide access driveway, which will have a negative impact on Markyate's conservation area. She stated that her home, which is a listed building directly overlooks this driveway and no reference has been made to this listed building or neighbouring properties of the same listing.

#### **Standing Order were reinstated**

#### **232/21 TO RECEIVE REPORT AND UPDATES FROM C/CLLR. TERRY DOURIS**

Cllr. Douris spoke briefly, stating that the works on the A5183 are now completed and the proposed new bus shelter will be installed in the next couple of weeks.

He reported that the Secondary school allocation letters were sent out on the 1<sup>st</sup> March. In Hertfordshire, 99.4% of all applications were made on-line and the total number of children was approximately 14,700.

## 233/21 PLANNING DECISIONS FROM DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

1	20/01843/FUL	Demolition of Garage/Outbuildings and construction of a detached house and carport.	93-95, High Street	Refused
2	20/03739/FUL 20/03740/LBC	Construction of two new detached dwellings and new boundary wall.	64, High Street	Refused
3	20/04008/FHA	Two storey rear extension	New Lodge Dunstable Road	Application Withdrawn

## 234/21 TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS BELOW

1	21/00318/LDP	Single storey rear extension with insertion of roof lights Materials: Facing brickwork, plain roof tiles, UPVC Windows, UPVC or aluminium doors	18, Pickford Road	No objections.
2	21/00051/LBC	Removal of internal wall.	Starlings, 13 Albert Street	No objections.
3	21/00441/OUT	Outline planning application with all matters reserved except access for the development of 4 dwellings on land north of Pickford Road	Land SW Of Frindles, Cheverells Green	Objection. More and more housing being proposed for the village of Markyate. We will have less and less greenland as a consequence of all these building applications. The existing footpath would have to remain. Extending the boundary of the village. Last application allowed for affordable housing – this does not.
	21/00317/FHA	Construction of new crossover and driveway	20 Wesley Road	No objections. Please ensure that this wall is not listed.
5	21/00456/FUL	Conversion and construction of 6 dwelling houses on brownfield site.	50, High Street	The proposed houses are too big and very high. There is not enough parking and no parking has been allocated for no. 50. This is an overdevelopment of site. Blind turning when you come out, making it very dangerous. Infilling in a listed building area and in an area of natural beauty. Strongly object.
6	21/00480/FHA	Hip to Gable Extension and Rear Dormer Window to Facilitate Roof Conversion.	49, London Road	No objections.
7	21/00545/FUL	Change of Use (in small part) of existing grassland to the approach to St Johns Church Markyate to hard landscaped Car Parking. Removal of existing Trees x3 of Non Arboricultural Significance, clearance of existing Grass & Shrubs to a 6 x 12 meter area of current grassed area at the entrance to St Johns Church Markyate. Landscape with Permeable Block Paving, install French Drain, replant with new screen shrubs, erect new brick pillar to match existing and erect 12 meters of 1200mm close boarded timber fencing to provide 5 x (2.4x4.8m) Car Parking Spaces for the exclusive use of residents to the newly created dwelling houses situate adjacent at The Factory Church End	St Johns Church, Church End, Markyate	No objections.
8	21/00519/FHA	Ground Floor Flat Roofed extension.	A And B Sports, The Promotional Centre Church End	The Parish Council object to this proposal and feels the applicant should not be allowed to apply for retrospective planning. The developers have not stuck to the original plans and we propose that the Enforcement Officer be asked to look into this to establish if the conditions are being abided.
9	21/00518/NMA	Non Material Amendment to planning permission 4/01042/19/FUL (External changes to an industrial unit, additional 3 dormers to the southern elevation, raising of the ridge, 3 new single doorways, 3 replacement rooflights on northern elevations and other alterations to Fenestration).	A and B Sports The Promotional Centre Church End	
10	21/00510/NMA	Non-material amendment to planning permission 4/01042/19/FUL (External changes to an industrial unit, additional 3 dormers to the southern elevation, raising of the ridge, 3 new single doorways, 3 replacement rooflights on northern elevations and other alterations to Fenestration.)	A And B Sports The Promotional Centre Church End	
11	21/00695/TCA	Works to Trees	25 High Street	No objections.

## 235/21

To approve the signing of cheques for payment and the signing of the Accounts Schedule as of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021, as circulated. It was **agreed** unanimously to approve the schedule for payment outside of meeting. **RESOLVED:** that the schedule of payment be signed as circulated, noting that cheques have been signed as and when required by approved signatories, during the coronavirus pandemic lockdown.

The schedule of accounts listed the balances of the Parish Council's accounts as follows:

As at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021

MPC Current Account	£6,720.09
HSBC [Precept Account]	£57,994.68
MPC Investment [NS&I]	£21,434.38
Petty Cash	£54.60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£86,203.75</b>

**236/21 TO RECEIVE AND SIGN BANK RECONCILIATION.**

Deferred. To be signed by the Chairman in due course.

**Action: PB**

**237/21 TO RECEIVE AND AGREE RESPONSE TO THE HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE LOCAL DRAFT PLAN CONSULTATION – 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021-19<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021**

To be agreed.

**Action: All**

**238/21 TO RECEIVE UPDATE AND AGREE ACTIONS ON COVID-19 IN LINE WITH NEW GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES**

Guidelines remain the same. Limited hirers at the halls at present.

**Action: Clerk**

**239/21 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE CHANGING STANDING ORDERS/FINANCIAL REGULATIONS TO INCLUDE EMERGENCY EXPENDITURE UP TO £1,500.00**

This was discussed at length and a unanimous decision was made that the limit for emergency expenditure should be raised to £2,000.00.

**Action: Clerk**

**240/21 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE RESTORATION OF VICTORIAN LAMP POSTS**

As previously explained by Cllr. Douris, these are very expensive to restore. Cllr. Douris clarified that if the lampposts were deemed to be unsafe, they would be removed by HCC at their expense. HCC have concluded that these lampposts do not require re-painting, so if the Parish Council wishes to have this work carried out, then they would have to pay for this. It was agreed that Cllr. Ononye would pick out a more recent lamppost and a much older one, in order to have them individually assessed for lead paint. This will then give the Council a clearer idea of cost, due to the high expenditure involved, should lead paint be detected.

**Action: CO**

**241/21 CLERKS REPORT**

The Clerk reported notification of the death of Councillor Graham Sutton. Graham Sutton had been a councillor since 2003. He represented the Leverstock Green ward and was Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure and a Cabinet member. He was also affiliated to the Leverstock Green Village Association and Hemel Hempstead Town Partnership. A letter expressing the Council's heartfelt condolences will be sent.

Secondly, the Clerk reported vandalism in Peggy's Field. A very upset parishioner contacted the Council advising that broken glass bottles were all over the play area and smeared dog excrement on the ground, which unfortunately made it unusable for children, due to the danger. This is not the first time in recent months that the play park has been vandalised. A clean up had been carried out.

**No action**

**242/21 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE FUTURE MEMBERSHIP OF HAPTC**

It was agreed that HAPTC would be contacted to establish if there is 'room for manoeuvre' on their renewal fee. The Council are concerned that funds have been severely depleted during lockdown and money needs to be saved wherever possible.

**Action: Clerk**

**243/21 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

The Clerk circulated the list of general correspondence which was duly noted.

#### **244/21 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE GDPR MONITORING**

Following the departure of the GDPR Officer; in line with other Councils, the Clerk was appointed as Data Processor on behalf of the Parish Council.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **245/21 TO RECEIVE UPDATE REGARDING 2021 CENSUS**

This is mostly being carried out on-line, however all householders will have received a letter giving the opportunity to take part on paper.

**No action**

#### **246/21 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON BAGS OF KINDNESS FROM HCC**

The Bags of Kindness have been collected by a member of staff and arrangements will be made in due course for distribution to those who need them most.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **247/21 TO RECEIVE UPDATE REGARDING MEMORIAL CIRCULAR BENCH AND TREE**

The Estates Surveyor at Dacorum has agreed to the planting of a small tree; which will become the responsibility of the Council. The circular bench however is a little more complicated and would incur a £500 charge for a licence fee. Again, the Parish Council would be responsible for the upkeep. It was agreed to ascertain if this fee would/could also cover for all benches in the future. Ongoing.

**Action: HC/Clerk**

#### **248/21 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE OPTIONS FOR THE VILLAGE CLOCK**

All present were in favour of opting for the less expensive option, which is to have an electric movement fitted at a Cost of £2,859. This was proposed by Cllr. Bunyan and seconded by Cllr. Pilkinton.

This choice will bring down the cost of service which would only need to be carried out bi-annually. However, in line with minute F08/21, the work will be scheduled at a later date as will storage of the 'old works'.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **249/21 TO DISCUSS AND FORMULATE ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN MARKYATE MONTHLY**

To be agreed.

#### **250/21 TO APPROVE THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2020/21**

Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations imposes a duty on local councils to ensure "that the financial arrangements of the body are adequate and effective and that the body has a sound system of Internal control". Local councils are required, at least once a year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control. An effective system of control has three elements:

1. Identification of the Potential Risk (Risk Management)
2. Controls of Procedures in place to mitigate the risks identified (Control Systems)
3. System for testing the adequacy of internal controls (Internal Audit).

##### **1. Risk Management**

The Parish Council updates the Financial Risk Assessment annually.

The Parish Council carries out a yearly inspection of the Parish Councils assets. The information obtained in the inspection enables the Parish Council to plan for any maintenance work required and to update the Asset Register.

##### **2. Control Systems**

The Parish Council reviews its Bank Mandate yearly (if not needed sooner) and all amendments are authorised by the Parish Council.

Some internal controls are listed in the Financial Regulations document (this is approved/updated yearly), however, the Parish Council's system of controls go beyond the Financial Regulations document and are listed below.

Cash Book/Bank Reconciliations

- The cash book is kept electronically, maintained up to date from original documents.
- The cash book is reconciled to the bank statement monthly.
- A summary sheet with budget against actual expenditure and income is presented at each Parish Council meeting.
- All payments are reported at each Parish Council meeting before they are made. Unless the RFO/FO has dispensation to make the payment outside the meeting, in which case it will be reported at the first meeting after the payment was made.

Payment Controls

- Payments are listed in cheque number order in the cash books and in account files.
- All invoices for payment are listed and presented at the council meeting the expenditure is to be

authorised for payment.

- All original invoices are available to the parish councillors signing the cheques VAT Repayment Claims
- The RFO/FO ensures that all invoices are addressed to the Parish Council
- The RFO/FO maintains a VAT account to show that the correct amount of VAT is reclaimed.

#### Income Controls

- The RFO/FO ensures that the amount of the precept received is correct in accordance with the precept requested from

Dacorum Borough Council.

- The RFO/FO ensures that the precept instalments are received when due.

#### Payroll Controls

- The Clerks/FO are paid under PAYE as employees.
- The Clerks/FO salary is set as per their contracts and noted annually at the Budget & Finance Meeting.

#### Office and Clerks expenses

- Expenses are paid by cheque/petty cash and the expense summary treated as an invoice for accounting purposes.

#### Asset Control

- The Clerk/FO maintains a full asset register.

### **3. Internal Audit** (of which there are 5 areas to consider)

Scope: The Internal Audit covers the internal control processes identified by the Parish Council as well as matters directly related to the Annual Return.

Independence: The Internal Auditor has direct access to the Clerk/FO and reports in own name to the Parish Council. The auditor has no other role within the Parish Council and the reporting is unbiased and objective.

Competence: The internal audit is carried out by an accredited accountancy company who is familiar with governance processes and accounting regulations for Parish Council. There is no evidence that internal work has not been carried ethically, with integrity and objectivity.

Relationships: The Clerk/FO is consulted on the internal audit arrangements.

Audit Planning and Reporting: The Internal Auditor has access to the Parish Council's documentation of its internal control processes, financial risk assessment, health and safety risk assessments, insurance schedule, asset register, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Accounts and policies under the Publication Scheme as well as to previous Annual Returns and relevant information. These inform the internal auditor.

The internal audit is an opportunity for discussion about new developments in the audit service, risk management and corporate governance.

The internal audit is relevant for the completion of the Statement of Assurance at Section 1 of the Annual Return as well as being essential to the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report.

The Report is reviewed and noted at the next Parish Council meeting and any necessary actions resolved.

The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officers have no recommendations to make to the Parish Council in light of the review.

The Parish Council approved and noted this report.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.45 pm

**Next meeting: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_