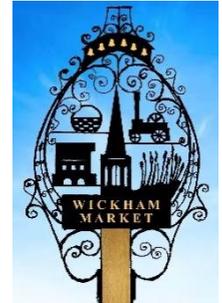


# WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR: IVOR FRENCH

## FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE

CHAIR: DAVID CHENERY



**MINUTES** of the meeting of Wickham Market Parish Council Finance & General Purpose Committee held on Monday 6 March 2023 at 19:00

- 1 **Present from the Council**

Cllr Chenery (Chair)  
Cllr French  
Cllr Cooke  
Cllr Dempsey-Gray  
A. Besly (Clerk)
- 2 **Present from the Public**

One
- 3 **Open Public Forum session**

As the member of the public wanted to comment on item 14, this item was brought forward on the agenda at the Chair's discretion.
- 4 **Apologies for Absence:**

None
- 5 **Declarations of Interest:**

None
- 6 **Approve the draft minutes** of the F&GP Meeting of 9 January 2022  
Draft minutes of 9 January 2022 were approved as a correct record: **All Agreed**
- 7 **Chair's Report:** Nothing to report beyond the agenda items
- 14 **Village Hall Carpark charges review.**

The member of the public presented concerns over the principle of charging with a written statement which is attached at annex 1. These concerns created a significant discussion over the merits of a charging system. While it was agreed that the Village Hall free car park was abused, it was not agreed that introducing charges was necessarily the best way forward. This resulted in the following action:  
The Clerk will ask for usage and revenue information for the Percy Mason car park for the most recent year and for the year immediately prior to the new charging structure. If necessary, this can be submitted as a Freedom of Information request

  - 14.1 Proposal to agree the principle of introducing parking charges for the village hall car park. [High level brief published](#). It was proposed that this is put on hold pending the receipt of further information. **All Agreed**
- 8 **Finance update including Bank Reconciliation –** Review of draft report to be presented to March full Council: [Published](#) There were no questions
- 9 **Payments Approval:** It was proposed that the payment authorisation schedule published, which includes expenses for Cllr Westover and the Clerk, be authorised. **All Agreed.**

Cllr Westover winter planting expenses £241.24 [Circulated](#) Cllr Chenery reported that Cllr Westover had requested that thanks be minuted for Cllr Poulter (ESC) for the enabling grant.  
Clerk's Expenses [Circulated](#)  
Payments Authorisation Schedule: [Published](#)  
Replacement of children's play slide authorisation: quote to replace this part has not yet been received
- 10 **Payments Schedule:** It was proposed that the draft schedule is approved for presentation to March full Council. **All Agreed**
- 11 **Update of PC storage issues.**

A late proposal from Wickham Market Partnership could not be formally debated at this stage. However, it was informally discussed and the committee felt that it was a positive and workable solution. This will be put to the full Council on 20 March

  - 11.1 In the light of the proposal at item 11, this proposal was retracted. **All Agreed**
- 12 **Consider charge from Wickham Market Partnership** for Resource Centre interview room  
In the light of the proposal at item 11, this proposal was retracted. **All Agreed**
- 13 **Village Hall Carpark access potholes:** Agree a way forward for repairs  
It was proposed that the Clerk be given authority to engage a contractor for emergency repairs and advise the Council and the Village Hall CIO of the cost. **All Agreed**
- 15 **Consider Parking issues at the youth football club:** There have been complaints regarding on road parking and it is noted that the club carpark has large potholes.  
It was proposed that the Clerk was given the authority to spent up to £1,000 on the purchase and delivery of materials and that he contact the Youth Football Club (YFC) with the following suggestions. **All Agreed**
  - Avoid parking on the road outside the playing field because of complaints from other road users
  - Request to be allowed to park at the school
  - Parish Council offer to provide up to 10 tonnes of road plannings if the YFC can provide the manpower to spread over their carpark to make it more useable.

- 16 Governance:** There was an audit issue for 2021-22 where the risk assessment had not been approved. The documents in items 16.1 and 16.2 were reviewed and it was proposed they should be presented to the full Council on 20 March for approval. **All Agreed**
  - 16.1** Review risk assessment for approval at March Full Council: [Draft Published](#)
  - 16.2** Review Internal Control Statement for approval at March Full Council: [Draft Published](#)
- 17 Freedom of Information Act:** Consider best practice guidance from the ICO regarding Official information held in private email accounts. [ICO Document published](#)
  - 17.1** It was proposed that the Clerk should manage changes to the Website Domain and implement dedicated council email addresses for the new council in May 2023. **All Agreed**
- 18 Reporting items for the next meeting.** The next meeting should consider:
  - Training requirements for Councillors and employees
  - Confirmation of acceptance of Precept
- 19 Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 19 April 2023

Signed.

**Cllr David Chenery, Chair.**

Date.

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## Annex 1: Statement regarding the Village Hall Car Park

Regarding item 14 on the agenda.

### Proposal to agree the principle of introducing parking charges for the village hall car park.

I would like to put the following questions to the PC:

1. Can the PC legally do this, as the PC and VH CIO are currently operating under the March 2001 lease, which gives the VH CIO control over the whole site?
2. The report considers charging all car park users. That potentially includes the Clerk and all Parish Councillors who are likely to stay longer than whatever free period is determined. Therefore all Parish Councillors will have to declare a pecuniary interest in the matter, and not speak or vote (unless they have been granted a dispensation by ESC's Monitoring Officer).
3. The VH car park has always been available for users of all the various facilities on the VH site. Is the PC aware of the massive list of people who use the hall and how long they use it for?

There are:

Exhibitions and parties (for half or full days), the Village Hall Show, Gardening Club Show, various sales, and the Quilting Club (all for full days);

The leaders or those people who attend the following potentially will go over 3 hours:

Bingo, the Community Club, the Archive Centre, the Men's Shed, Dance classes, Health Clinic, Babies and Toddlers group, WM Movies, Women's Institute, the Football Club, visiting football teams, the Bowls Club, visiting bowls teams:

The following will probably be on site for less than 2 hours:

Fitness classes, Zumba, guitar lessons, users of the MUGA, users of the Children's play area, users of the skate park, users of the bottle bank, dog walkers, etc, etc, and shoppers at the Co-op will still use it for less than 2 hours.

4. How will the PC ensure that all these hundreds of car park users **don't** pay charges if they are here for more than 3 hours?
5. If all these hundreds of car park users are **not** going to pay, who will end up paying? Does the PC think that it will raise £1,000 a month in paid charges, to cover the operating and enabling costs?
6. If the PC **charges** all these hundreds of car park users, they will a) not be popular, and b) drive people to park elsewhere, just as ESC has, by the imposition of the ridiculous charges on the Percy Mason car park.
7. I suggest that for all the above reasons you drop the idea, and don't waste any time debating it.