

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF
WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL**

On Wednesday 31 March 2021

at 7.00 pm via Microsoft Teams

Action

41/21 Attendance and apologies

To receive and accept any apologies.

Cllr Neil Gordon-Lee – Chairman
Cllr Celina Francklin
Cllr Philip Ivens
Cllr Alan Cartwright
Cllr Andrew Edmondson
Cllr Marcus Rixon
Cllr Ian Howett
Valda Clapham - Clerk
Ten members of the public

42/21 Members' interests

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Wicken PC Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

Nothing declared.

43/21 Streetlighting

To review the results of the questionnaire concerning the nine remaining streetlights in Wicken.

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and began the discussion by summarising the result of the survey and how this was to be taken forward. Approximately one third of residents had preferred the heritage light and approximately one fifth the contemporary light. Taking due note of this the Council's working assumption was that each of the nine remaining lights would be replaced with a heritage light.

He proposed at this meeting to look at each light in turn, considering any relevant points, with a view to arriving at a recommendation for the successor Council to take forward. It would be for the new Council to set out an implementation plan and agree on funding.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all village residents for their response to the questionnaire and asked that if members of the public had specific points following the discussion at this meeting they should submit them by email to the clerk.

Cllr Francklin challenged why it was necessary to consider each light separately as the village had been strongly in favour of heritage lights, and suggested the Council should just go ahead with implementation. The challenge was not supported by other Cllrs. As the Chairman pointed out, adaptations had already been made with the contemporary lights to accommodate resident concerns. The questionnaire had elicited a large number of anonymous comments from residents, some of whom might be directly affected by the new lights, which suggested that further adaptations might well be required.

Corner of Quarry Green Close

Cllr Ivens reported that some local residents were against having a light at all, despite this not coming through on the questionnaire responses.

Council recommended that a heritage light be installed subject to investigating residents' concerns.

Trial light

Council recommended the heritage light be retained with the lamppost adapted accordingly.

Cllr Howett suggested relooking at the lens positioning to see if the light could be better directed onto the road.

Centre of Church Close

Council recommended that a heritage light be installed. However, as it was not clear that all those affected had responded to the questionnaire it would be sensible to check if any adaptation was needed to accommodate any specific resident concerns.

Corner of Church Close/Church Lane

Council recommended that a heritage light be installed. There were no nearby residents.

Sports Club entrance

Council recommended that a heritage light be installed. Again, there were no nearby residents.

Cllr Howett wondered if a greater intensity of light was needed to adequately light the junction and Cllr Cartwright advised that the lens pattern needed careful design to focus the light in three directions. Technical advice would be sought.

Rectory corner

Council recommended that a heritage light be installed.

There was already a plan to re-site this light but Cllr Francklin proposed that the possibility of re-siting the light on the grass verge opposite be explored. Council agreed to investigate the cost and if appropriate to confirm there were no resident concerns.

Corner of Wicken Park Road/Deanshanger Road

The Chairman observed that the positioning on a bank meant the standard pole would give a much higher light, potentially shining into nearby houses. Cllrs considered whether the existing light (already more efficient than most) could be retained or the alternative contemporary light installed as the questionnaire had not yielded a strong preference either way, but ultimately recommended that a heritage light be installed.

Council proposed that all local residents should be consulted and, additionally, the option of a shorter lamppost be explored.

Pound Close

There was no clear preference for either type of light and questionnaire comments had queried if both lights were necessary, especially as one had been out of action for many months without any adverse reaction. Also, the effectiveness of the light adjacent to No 1 was impaired by its situation in a laurel bush.

Council recommended that two heritage lights be installed and that the cost of

moving that adjacent to No 1 be investigated to minimise the impact of the laurel bush, with the latter kept at a size so as not to impede the effectiveness of the light.

Summary of recommendations

Resolved

The Chairman summarised Council's recommendations:

All nine lights would be replaced by heritage lights and lampposts with the possible exception of that in Quarry Green Close, which depended upon nearby residents confirming they had no overriding objection.

In cases where local residents could be impacted there would be further consultation to ensure that any necessary adaptations were made. And for all lights, technical advice as to the most appropriate lens fitting to focus light effectively would be sought. As Cllr Ivens observed, each site was individual and needed an individual technical approach.

The costs of moving the light at Rectory corner to two possible new locations and the light at No 1 Pound Close would be investigated.

The possibility of a shorter pole for the light at the corner of Wicken Park Road and Deanshanger Road would be explored.

Timetable

Cllr Cartwright

Some work was required to get to a final detailed plan and costing, which Cllr Cartwright was invited to lead on as he had carried out the earlier negotiation. Cllr Francklin suggested setting up a committee under Cllr Ivens to manage implementation but other Cllrs thought this unnecessary. Cllr Ivens offered to support Cllr Cartwright if required.

Until the cost was determined, including the impact of phasing, it was not possible to determine whether the project could go ahead in one tranche or needed to be spread over several years

Retendering

Given the time which had elapsed the previous quotation was unlikely to be valid. Hence it was agreed that three new alternative quotations should be obtained to ensure value for money. They should all be based on using the same heritage light.

Publication of next steps

These draft minutes including Council's recommendations would be published on the website as normal once agreed by Cllrs.

Details of the final costing and any implications on implementation timing would be published on the website when the necessary further work had been completed.

Concluding remarks

The Chairman acknowledged that reaching a democratic decision had been a difficult process, and he thanked all Cllrs for the effort and time they had devoted to this issue, and wished them a Happy Easter.

Cassandra McNeir offered her thanks to Cllrs on behalf of village residents, particularly to any Cllrs proposing to retire at the forthcoming election.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

Chairman's Signature

Date

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Chairman's initials

3

31/03/2021
