

WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL Meeting 11th January 2011.**Meeting Commenced at 7.00pm.**

Present: Mr. P Ivens (Chairman), Mrs. L. Clark (Vice Chairman), Mrs. C Franklin, Mr. R. Edmondson, Mr. J. Williams, Mr. B. Clapham, Mr. J. Maloney, Mr. A. Cartwright, Cllr. D Aaronson.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr. A. Walker

2. Minutes of previous meeting November 2010.

Minutes were not correct in the Finance Section regarding a Donation to St. Johns Church. Also the misspelling of Pat Kettley's name. Clerk to correct.

3. Items raised by members of the Public.David Apperly Ref: Wicken Village Hall.

A letter from David Apperly was passed around amongst Councilors for circulation. It is nearly four years since the present Management took over the responsibility of the Village Hall. It has been noted that most of the use of the Hall comes from outside of the Village and not its residents. The Hall faces the prospect of substantial external repairs, that could be in the excess of £100K and the Committee cannot see what / who they would be doing this for. Alan Cartwright asked if this is total amount or would more money be required? David Apperly reported that £100K was not set in stone but that this amount of money would keep the Village Hall in a certain standard for some time. The windows and stone work in particular is very costly. Mrs. C. Franklin asked if the Committee had tried to obtain a grant for this work? Answer, No. In order to do this it would be very time consuming and would need somebody with more time to dedicate themselves into undertaking this task. The Chairman commented on what a fantastic job the current Committee have done and that we must do all we can to keep the Village Hall going and not to fall at the first hurdle. Chairman stated that the local Pub, Sports Club and Village Church all depend on people keeping them going. It was suggested that maybe the Village Hall needed some new people on board. Chairman to draft letter to the residents of the village asking them to support the Village Hall. David Apperly will advise when the next Village Hall AGM is in the hope of getting new Management on board. At present there are six people on the Village Hall Committee. It was noted that there has been underlying problems that goes back to 2007 from residents regarding the Village Hall and its use. Bookings are growing making a small surplus of £1,200.00 a year. Reserves in the Village Hall Account are currently at approx. £3,500.00.

Mr. J. Williams has put forward a proposal that the Village Hall be let for Commercial purposes over a period of 3-5 years to secure the Village Hall's future. It could be let for a fair rent. The windows would survive this length of time with maintenance. The money from the rent would revert back to the Village Hall for its maintenance. Cllr. D. Aaronson reported that Village Halls in general aren't surviving and it's a very sad fact.

Mr. J. Williams also reported that the Committee had approached various people for financial help but the Village Hall doesn't have a big enough Ethnic Group so lots of avenues are closed with regards to ideas of where they could get help / funding. Again, Mr. D. Apperly will advise us of AGM date and Chairman will draft letter for residents of the Village in order to try and get new people on board.

Housing Officer Laura Welsh from South Northants Council

Laura gave a short speech as to what her job role and aim is within her capacity at South Northants. In short, Laura is preparing a survey to be sent out to all residents in the Village to assess housing needs in the Parish confines and to determine whether the Parish would benefit from some more 'affordable housing'. Clerk to Liaise with Laura on this. Survey to go out by 31st January 2011 and comments to get back to her by February 28th 2011.

4. Matters Arising.

HS2 – Cllr D. Aaronson reported that this could still concern Wicken but doesn't have any further news at the moment.

Traffic Police Re-routing – Mr. A. Cartwright wrote a letter to them and was asked in return to contact the Environment Office. So far he's not had a response but will chase this up and report back as soon as he hears.

5. Planning.

29 Deanshanger Rd – Current plans were circulated. Clerk had email from the Enforcement Officer on 24th November 2010 regarding a window the Proprietors had been asked to change.

6. Matters of Repair & Administration.

Leckhampstead Rd – Mr. A. Cartwright reported that the drains had been pumped opposite Red Stacks but that they need digging up and some serious work being carried out as the drains are blocked again. He will chase up Contractors.

Pat Kettly has written to the Parish Council thanking them for their donation to St. Johns Church.

Pot holes – It was agreed to wait until winter is fully over before the Parish Council chases up about road repairs.

New Notice Board – outside Village Hall. This is thanks to Mr. J. Williams.

Anglia Water – have still not seen to leak near Pightle Farm. Clerk was assured by Anglia Water that this work was completed on 18th November 2010. Clerk to chase up again. Clerk to chase them also as to when they will collect left over signs from works completed on St. Johns Lane.

8. Finance.

Chq No. 00462 Eon £70.83 Street Lighting.

Any other Business.

Triangle of grass on Larks Lane – It was reported that this is a dangerous spot and would be better for all if this was removed. Clerk to contact Helen Howard at South Northants Council. There was an accident there over Christmas 2010 as there is no room for passing cars.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Next meetings - Weds March 2nd at 7pm

Signed _____ **Dated** _____
Chairman.