



MINUTES

Meeting: ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMITTEE

Date: 5 July 2013

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: THORNWOOD COMMON VILLAGE HALL, WEALD HALL LANE, THORNWOOD

PRESENT:

Councillors (5) G Mulliner (Chairman), C Hawkins, B Eldridge, B Bartram, A Buckley

Also in Attendance (2)

Susan De Luca, Clerk to the Council
Joanna Tyler, Administrative Officer

Members of the Public (0)

E13.13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (2)

NOTED apologies received from Cllrs B Clegg, Mrs E Godwin-Brown

E13.14 OTHER ABSENCES (1)

NOTED no apologies had been received from Cllr G McCormack

E.13.15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED there were no declarations of interest.

E13.16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2013 were **CONFIRMED** and signed as a true record.

E13.17 PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORT

Members *NOTED* that a quarterly inspection of each Play Area within the Parish had been carried out by Councillors Mulliner, Hawkins and Bartram, together with the Finance and Administrative Officer, on Friday, 14 June 2013.

The following points were considered:-

a. School Green Lane Play Area

“Rub down, treat and repaint top bar to flat Swing and Cradle Swing. Priority 3”. Councillor Hawkins stated that this work had now been carried out, however, he had requested that the work be redone as it was not of a good standard.

b. Thornwood Common Play Area

“Backfill the pot hole in the grass surface in front of the goal on the Monster Ball Games Wall”. Councillor Hawkins confirmed that this had now been completed, however, the situation will require monitoring on a regular basis due to rabbits burrowing.

c. Thornwood Common Play Area

Members **NOTED** that, during the inspection, a number of bags filled with dog faeces had been thrown into the rubbish bin inside the perimeter of the play area. The Clerk suggested that a laminated note is placed on the bin, requesting dog owners not to place dog faeces in the play area bin, but to use the dog bin situated in the playing field.

E13.18 ASSET CHECKS

An up to date Asset List was distributed at the meeting. Comments were made as follows:-

- a. Bench at Flood Meadow – the Clerk advised that she had instructed Thornwood Grounds Maintenance to carry out the repairs.
- b. Notice Boards – Hastingwood – Cllr Eldridge confirmed that he would carry out the checks.
- c. Bronze Statue – The Chairman of this Committee confirmed that he had completed this check and that he would be checking the Rose Arbour today.
- d. Hastingwood Allotments – Cllr Bartram confirmed that he would check these following completion of works to the drainage ditch.
- e. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that the trip hazard by the swings had now been rectified. Yellow lines had been spray painted onto the steps at Thornwood Village Hall and to the trip hazard leading to the play shelter at Thornwood Play Area. Cllr Hawkins also stated that the picnic table and the bench had now been cleaned.
- f. Cllr Eldridge mentioned the memorial plaque, that had been attached to one of the benches that had to be removed from Hastingwood last year. The Clerk and Administrative Officer stated that it was being held at the Parish Office and arrangements would be made for it to be fixed to the remaining bench.
- g. The Chairman of this Committee asked whether or not the Parish Council owned the bench located by Dukes Close. The Clerk stated that this bench was not owned by the Parish Council.
- h. Street Lights – The Clerk confirmed that this was a separate check carried out by an independent company.
- i. Weald Common Sign – The Chairman of this Committee stated that the sign is overgrown with weeds/grass. The Clerk confirmed that she would arrange for Thornwood Grounds Maintenance to cut around the sign.

The Administrative Officer stated that the Community Assets Lists for Thornwood and Hastingwood were still outstanding. The Clerk asked if these could be forwarded to the Finance and Administrative Officer once completed. Cllr Eldridge mentioned Crabbs Farm in Hastingwood and whether or not it should be included on the list, he stated that it was about to be pulled down and that it is a listed building. The Clerk stated that all assets, such as Common Land can be included on the list. The Chairman of this Committee said that anything that makes it worthwhile living in the parish should be included.

E13.19 THORNWOOD ALLOTMENTS NATURE AREA

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had received confirmation from Kevin Mason of

Epping Forest Countrycare that they have now completed the work which was being carried out on the Thornwood Allotments Nature Area. The works included diverting the top ditch into the nature reserve and digging out a small pond. Countrycare have created a dead hedge behind the bench and used the spoil from the ditch to create an embankment along the ditch line, which should make the site safe. The hedge on the recreation ground side has been reinstated and made bigger, the recreation ground side has been left as Countrycare found it. The footpaths through the nature area have been cut and raked and any overhanging trees and branches removed, there is now lots of colour from the wild flowers. Countrycare have confirmed that they will cut the whole site later in the year, once the flowers have finished.

E13.20 INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2013/14 WINTER SALT BAG PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Members *NOTED* that the Clerk had received correspondence from Essex County Council inviting the Parish Council to participate in the 2013/14 Winter Salt Bag Partnership Scheme. The Clerk stated that last Winter the scheme was promoted by Essex County Council and Essex Radio and the Parish Office received a large number of calls from residents wanting to know why the Parish Council were not involved. The Clerk advised Members that if the Parish Council were to participate, consideration would need to be given to where the salt would be stored and who would volunteer to distribute it. Cllr Hawkins stated that, considering the problems experienced with the distribution of the salt two years ago, he did not think that it would be appropriate for the Parish Council to take part in the scheme this year. All Members *AGREED* that the Clerk should respond to Essex County Council advising that the Parish Council will not participating this year.

E13.21 DOG BIN – SKIPS CORNER

Following a request to locate a dog bin at Skips Corner, the Clerk advised Members that a response had been received from Peer Group, stating that they would agree to the proposal subject to the following:-

1. Agreement about location.
2. An indemnity in respect of any claims, costs, actions, etc., arising from its installation, maintenance or removal.
3. A requirement that Peer Group could call for its removal at anytime and for any reason.

Once the location has been agreed, Peer Group will arrange for their solicitor to prepare a licence, for which they will not make a charge.

The Chairman of this Committee asked whether or not the bin could be located anywhere else near the location, without the involvement of Peer Group, the Clerk stated that if a bin is to be located there, the Parish Council would either have to contact Highways or Peer Group for permission. All Members *AGREED* that the Clerk should proceed with arranging for the licence to be prepared.

Councillor Hawkins asked the Clerk if she had any further information regarding the request to site a dog bin a Bluemans End. The Clerk said that she was still awaiting a response, however, she would contact Epping Forest District Council regarding their agreement.

E13.22 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Clerk advised Members that she had received an enquiry from Piggotts, who had prepared a presentation regarding a Christmas lighting scheme for North Weald High Road, details of which were tabled at the meeting. The Chairman of this Committee stated that the Horticultural Society have found problems with this in the past. Councillor Hawkins stated that he would be concerned about what the local residents would say with regard to the cost, bearing in mind that there have been rumours of turning off street lights in the past. The Clerk suggested that the local shops may wish to contribute, a Member of this Committee could approach them. Following further discussion, Members **AGREED** that this item should be included on the Precept agenda for next year.

E13.23 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Following the success of the weekly Allotment Sub Committee Meetings, Members **AGREED** that the Environmental Committee Meetings could revert back to being held on a three monthly basis. The next meeting will be held towards the end of September, following the quarterly play area inspections.

E13.24 ANY OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Councillor Buckley asked whether or not the flower beds to be located near the pedestrian crossing were still going ahead. The Clerk stated that Essex County Council Highways had been prepared to issue the Parish Council with a licence, following further investigation. The Clerk stated that she had passed this to Cllr McCormack, in order to provide a map of the exact location, however, Cllr McCormack had advised the Clerk that NAPs had decided that it would not be right for the area. The Clerk suggested that Cllr Buckley may wish to speak to Cllr McCormack for further details.

Meeting closed: 10.45 am

Signed
Date