



**MINUTES**

**Meeting:** ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMMITTEE

**Date:** 21st September 2016

**Time:** 10.30 am

**Venue:** NORTH WEALD LIBRARY, HIGH ROAD, NORTH WEALD

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors (9)** G Mulliner (Chairman), C Hawkins, B Bartram, A Buckley,  
Mrs E Godwin-Brown, R Spearman, B Clegg, Mrs S Jackman, T Blanks

**Also in Attendance (2)**

Susan De Luca, Clerk  
Adriana Jones, Principal Finance Officer (PFO)

**Members of the Public (1) - Press**

**E16.13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Eldridge.

**E16.14 OTHER ABSENCES**

Cllr Mrs A Grigg.

**E16.15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**NOTED** there were no declarations of interest.

**E16.16 MINUTES**

Members **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 1st June 2016.  
**PROPOSED** Cllr Buckley, **SECONDED** Cllr Bartram.

**E16.17 BUS SHELTER - HIGH ROAD THORNWOOD COMMON, JUNCTION  
WITH UPLAND ROAD**

Councillors **NOTED** that confirmation has been received from the Insurance Company that the Bus Shelter can be replaced up to the value of the original shelter - £10,500. The original shelter was not a 'closed in shelter' and it has been suggested by a ward councillor for Thornwood that a closed in shelter may be more practical – due to its close proximity to the road. Additional costs to achieve this type of shelter would amount to just under £2000, which would have to be paid for out of the Parish Council funds. Site surveys have been carried out and there is sufficient room to place a closed in shelter on the site.

The Clerk went through details of cost. Cllr Clegg stated that due to a dip in the road at this location, water tends to pool in the road when wet which subsequently gets splashed onto those waiting at the bus stop, however he felt that the additional cost may not be warranted, suggesting that the Council should purchase the best possible shelter within the costs agreed by the insurance company. The Clerk confirmed she would contact the insurance company to establish if the £10,500 was excluding VAT. After discussion, the Committee **AGREED** that a replacement bus shelter should be wooden at the back without any glazing, however appropriate plastic glazing should be on one of the side panels to ensure waiting residents are able to see approaching

buses without having to exit the shelter. In addition it should be pitched roof if possible and works to take place on a Sunday. In addition, it was **AGREED** that if necessary an additional £1,000 could be used to secure the best shelter, and that Cllr Clegg and the Clerk could agree the final shelter, with Cllr Clegg reporting to full Council.

#### **E16.18 ALLOTMENTS**

##### **a) Hastingwood B Allotment Site**

It was **AGREED** that this item should be moved to closed session at the end of the meeting, the Committee believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed. The minutes of this discussion are recorded as a confidential item, and are not available for public inspection.

##### **b) Queens Road Boundary**

Following concern regarding access to the rear of Queens Road Allotments, it was agreed at a previous meeting that consideration should be given to the planting of blackberry bushes along the rear perimeter of the site. Cllr Mulliner stated that he visited site last week, and it seems that the vegetation already along this perimeter has grown substantially and now already forms a good natural barrier. As such, the planting of blackberry bushes at this time did not seem necessary. Cllr Bartram reiterated that he had tested the concrete bollards making up part of the fence at this location, and whilst leaning slightly, they showed no movement at all and were solid. It was **AGREED** to monitor this situation over the next year or so.

#### **E16.19 BULB PLANTING**

Cllr Buckley had requested copies of the photographs from the 2015 planting showing their locations which were tabled at the meeting. Cllr Buckley ran through the locations at which planting had already taken place, stating that planting around the road and village signs in semi-circles looked very good, and asked for suggestions for future planting sites. The following sites were put forward as possible locations:

- School Green Lane Road Sign
- Elm Gardens Road Sign
- Outside Library where new notice board was to be erected
- The garden outside the parade of shops in North Weald
- Trough under the village sign, North Weald
- Cllr Hawkins will liaise with volunteers to plant in Thornwood
- Cllr Eldridge to put forward any suggestions for Hastingwood

Cllr Hawkins stated that 1,600 bulbs had been ordered, and that planting should take place over the next few months when the ground is a little wetter.

It was also **AGREED** that Councillors could use the Hastingwood Village Hall annual event on 20th November to ask for suggested locations in Hastingwood at which to plant daffodils in 2017.

#### **E16.20 GARDEN BY THE SHOPS**

Cllr Buckley gave a summary of the works that have taken place, taking the opportunity to thank the Clerk and Happy Grow for the food and organisation for the

opening event. Cllr Buckley also requested thanks were recorded to Cllr Mulliner and his wife Margaret, Midi Deluca, and Mrs Buckley for the work on a volunteer basis with weeding and maintaining the garden. There were currently 4 sponsors of the garden, all of which have had plaques erected and have paid their sponsorship money. There was also one further potential sponsor - the North Weald Bassett and District Rural Preservation Society - and Cllr Buckley is current liaising with them regarding this. The project came in under budget, with approximately £3,000 remaining. It was suggested that these funds should be earmarked for another community project falling under the remit of the Environmental Committee. Cllr Buckley stated that a further weeding session is required, and that the Preservation Society had offered their services with the maintenance of the garden.

With regard to the wall at this location, it remains unfixed and has in fact been damaged further. Cllr Buckley will continue to liaise with the owner regarding the need for this work to be completed.

Cllr Buckley also reported that Essex County Council had stated that the missing Belisha Beacon at the Zebra Crossing outside the garden was a work in progress with arrangements needing to be made for a traffic order to be put in place to allow the work to be completed. A date is not yet available.

The Clerk confirmed that the installation of railings alongside the zebra crossing adjacent to the garden had been postponed by the Local Highways Panel to the 2017/2018 financial year. Cllr Jackman reported that she had attended the recent LHP meeting, however was unable to speak, vote or contribute in any way to the meeting, and as such questioned how productive her attendance could actually be. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write to Cllr Knapman, Chairman of the LHP for Epping Forest, to express this Committees concerns regarding the lack of opportunity to be involved with the LHP meetings.

Cllr Jackman stated that the zebra crossing needed to be repainted, as it was not clearly visible.

The Committee asked that thanks were recorded for Cllr Buckley's exceptional effort and commitment to this project.

#### **E16.21 WEALD COMMON**

Members **NOTED** that a tree had recently fallen directly across the path between Weald Common and Tempest Mead, completely blocking what is a well used access, especially with dog walkers. As the ownership of the tree could not be clearly defined, it had been agreed that the Parish Council would pay for the removal of the tree for the benefit of local residents, rather than begin a prolonged period of correspondence to establish ownership. The Committee **AGREED** this was the correct decision to make.

#### **E16.22 PLAY AREAS**

Members **NOTED** that during a recent inspection, the gate at the field entrance to the School Green Lane Play Area was found to be closing very quickly. After visiting

site to inspect the gate, the PFO had requested the Councils handyman chained and locked the gate urgently to ensure no injuries were caused. This was completed the same day. Cllrs noted that there is no requirement to have two operational gates to a play area, and that the ground underneath this gate gets extremely wet and muddy during the winter months. It was therefore **AGREED** to leave this gate locked at this time, and to review again in 2017.

It was also **NOTED** that a new bin had been ordered for the Weald Common Play Area at a cost of £107, as one of the current bins was cracked and broken.

Cllr Bartram asked when the bench at School Green Lane Play Area would be installed. The PFO stated that this had been agreed in the budget, and that a bench would be installed this financial year.

**E16.23 FLOWERS BY VILLAGE SIGN**

Members **NOTED** that the Flower Trough and Flowers were now in situ, and it was **AGREED** that thank you letters are sent to the local resident and Cllr Spearman for their help in this matter.

**E16.24 CEMETERY BUDGET**

The Committee **AGREED** that any surplus income over expenditure relating to the Cemetery should be held in the Cemetery Earmarked Reserves each year.

Meeting closed

Signed .....

Date .....