



**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Meeting:** COUNCIL

**Date:** 7th December 2015

**Time:** 8.18PM

**Venue:** NORTH WEALD LIBRARY, 138 HIGH ROAD, NORTH WEALD

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors (11)** C Hawkins (Chairman), A Buckley, T Blanks, B Clegg, R Spearman, B Bartram, G Mulliner, Mrs Godwin-Brown, Mrs Grigg, Mrs S Jackman MBE, B Eldridge

**Officers in Attendance (2)**

Susan Deluca - Clerk

Adriana Jones – Principal Finance Officer

**Members of the Public (1)**

**Members of the Press (1)**

**C15.117 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (4)**

**NOTED** that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Adams, Stallan, Tyler and Bedford. Councillors agreed a 3 month leave of absence for Cllr Mrs Adams following a family bereavement.

**C15.118 OTHER ABSENCES (0)**

No other absences were recorded.

**C15.119 MINUTES**

Cllr Mrs Jackman reported that there was a small omission on page 8 of the minutes under item number C15.112 in that it should be stated that the District Council should complete the consultation with residents of the Blenheim Way area. This was supported by the Clerks email to Paul Pledger sent on 3rd November stating as such. Cllr Eldridge reported that Annual was spelt incorrectly on page 6. Subject to these amendments, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd November 2015 were **AGREED** and duly signed as a correct record. The Draft Minutes of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Committee Meeting held on 5th November 2015 were duly **NOTED**.

**C15.120 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Bartram, Hawkins, Blanks, Mulliner and Buckley declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 10 - Remembrance Sunday - by virtue of being members of the Royal British Legion. Cllr Spearman declared a Pecuniary interest in any item relating to either the Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan.

**C15.121 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions.

**C15.122 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Councillors **NOTED** the Clerks report as attached to the agenda.

Date	Reported By or Action Initiated	Regarding	Action	Further Action Taken
------	---------------------------------	-----------	--------	----------------------

	By		Taken	
Nov	PFO	Play Areas & Open Spaces	Ongoing	Asset Checks
Nov	Clerk & PFO	Neighbourhood Area Plan	Ongoing	Various Meetings & Actions
Nov	Clerk & Sen Admin Officer	Remembrance Sunday Events	Events	Liaising with RBL & various organisations / arrangements for lunch
Nov	Clerk & PFO	Local plan	Meetings	Various Meetings Local Plan
Nov	PFO & Clerk	H&S	Parish Hall	Various
Nov	Clerk	Planning Appeals	Various	Meetings/Appeals
Nov	Senior Admin Officer	Various Env/ Highway Matters	Continuing	Ongoing .
Nov	Clerk	Brent House Farm	Continuing	Liaising with EFDC Senior Officers
Nov	Cler/Cllr Buckley	Parade of Shops	Ongoing	Liaising with ECC
Nov	Clerk	Hast Vil Hal	Various	Details on PC Agenda
Nov	PFO	Accounts	Ongoing	For Budget
ITEMS RECEIVED WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST				
Various EFDC Agendas, North Weald Village Life, RRCE – Oyster Magazine				

The Clerk stated that she had received a letter from Mike Gammock at Epping Forest District Council regarding the possibility of an area of land that could be used as an open space or play area near the Blenheim Way development, and the Chairman had agreed he was happy for this to be included in the Clerks report, stating that due to the content of the letter it was prudent this was dealt with as a matter of urgency. A copy of the letter was tabled for Members. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that within the letter it suggested that the Parish Council would complete a consultation, however this has been clearly misunderstood by both Cllr Stallan and EFDC themselves, especially considering the email sent to EFDC on 3rd November. The possibility of a hub is their suggestion, and the Parish Council had responded stating they could not comment sensibly unless residents were consulted by EFDC. The Clerk handed Members a copy of the email sent to Paul Pledger. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she assumed the Parish Council would want the Clerk to contact EFDC to state they had misunderstood.

Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that perhaps EFDC would take the view that if/when the application for planning was submitted this would be the consultation that would be undertaken by EFDC. Cllr Blanks stated that it was worth mentioning the urgency with which this seems to have been happening and stressed by the Ward Councillors, however it appears that perhaps this isn't as urgent as it may seem. On the Webcast of the Cabinet meeting he viewed earlier today, it seems confused in terms of the year the possible move to this site would actually take place. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that it is extremely difficult to ascertain when this will progress, as there are very complex issues involving a number of parties with negotiations taking place, contracts needing

to be signed and agreements reached, however if these were agreed very swiftly then the District Council would need to be in a position to move relatively quickly.

Cllr Mrs Jackman asked if residents of the area had been consulted after the suggestion of a hub had been put forward, citing that the process should be democratic to ensure everybody has their say. Cllr Mulliner stated that it seems EFDC want to give us an area of land if this goes forward, and he felt the Parish Council should accept this offer in principal, as failure to do so could mean that the residents of the Blenheim Way area will ask why the Parish Council turned down such an offer. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that as far as she is aware there hasn't been any recent consultations, however the Parish Council has historically received requests from local residents for a play area on that particular side of the High Road, even prior to the Blenheim Way development. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that her understanding as a District Councillor was that the agreement would be an 'in principal' agreement, so it could be withdrawn at any time. She continued stating the site is designated as employment land, and that many years ago there was concern that a 'fat factory' would be sited at this location, and there were many successful objections to this. The piece of land has been vacant for many years, and if it's not used as a hub, there will probably be other employment uses on that area. Cllr Grigg stated that her point is that for many years the Parish Council has tried to get a play area around this location, the latest site being on the assault course which was subsequently denied, and that as District Councillors both herself and Cllr Stallan felt this was an opportunity to get a play area in this location, however the Parish Council would need to agree it in principal so that this could be factored in to any plans that were submitted. Cllr Buckley stated that he agreed, in that the Parish Council could choose at any time to withdraw their agreement, and the area would simply be parking.

Cllr Blanks asked Cllr Mrs Grigg whether or not an area of land already designated as employment land could be used as a play area, to which Cllr Mr Grigg stated that the District Council would need to alter the designation of any such area. Cllr Blanks queried whether or not the District Council could do that, stating that surely it would be much better to place an urgently needed medical centre on this site, and hub located on the airfield itself where there is much greater space for parking. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that she is not the Housing Portfolio holder and as such could not answer this question, however understands that the site has been looked at and agreed this is a better location rather than being on the airfield. The current situation with the NHS and associated services suggests that any medical centre would not come without a substantial amount of new houses in the Parish, at which time a CIL or Sec106 agreement would be used to facilitate such infrastructure.

Cllr Mulliner stated that if the Parish Council declined this offer, there may not be another opportunity. The Chairman stated that all residents would have an opportunity to express their view at the time of any planning application.

Cllr Mrs Jackman asked Cllr Mrs Grigg if, as the Portfolio Holder for Asset Management at District Council, whether or not she would be declaring an interest in this item at the next meeting, and express the views of this Parish Council. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated this would not come to Asset Management Committee to deal with, but

that it would go to Council, and that she would not take part in any vote at this meeting, and would take advice from the Monitoring Officer regarding her involvement at this meeting and her involvement at the Council meeting.

Cllr Clegg stated he felt it was wrong that the Parish Council were expected to do all the leg work for the consultation, when the District Council should be doing it. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that she felt EFDC would not separately consult with residents regarding this issue, but will use the planning application process as their consultation, however this is all subject to the Parish Council stating they support the idea in principal of an area of open space, as without this the District Council won't factor such a site into their planning application. Cllr Clegg stated that it was unfortunate the penultimate sentence in the letter from Mr Gammock was used, as it looks like the Parish Council are being blackmailed into making a decision.

Cllr Mrs Jackman raised a point of order with Cllr Mrs Grigg, stating that earlier Cllr Mrs Grigg has stated that both herself and Cllr Stallan had put forward this idea, however should the District Councillors put forward the views of the Parish Council without authorisation. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that she had been a Parish Councillor for a very long time, and that following the Vice Chairman and Clerks meeting with the District Council on this issue, this was an opportunity to secure a play area as previously requested by residents, and it would be a shame not to grasp such an opportunity. Cllr Mrs Grigg continued stating that if the Parish Council decline the 'in principal' offer, it will answer to any criticism. The Clerk reminded members that at the November meeting it was made very clear by both herself and the Vice Chairman that this was an in principal decision, and that this area of land was designated employment land.

Cllr Mulliner **PROPOSED** the Parish Council accept the offer 'in principal' of an open space area subject to the District Council completing a consultation either before or at the time of the Planning Application. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Spearman. The Chairman requested a vote was taken, the result of which was as follows:

7 - For

2 - Against

1 - Abstention (Cllr Mrs Grigg requested her vote was recorded).

It was therefore **AGREED** to accept the offer 'in principal' of an area of open space' on the area of land by Blenheim Way, and subject to the District Council completing a consultation either before or during any planning application for this land.

The Clerk confirmed that no rescinding of any previous decisions were needed as a decision had not been made regarding this issue.

The Clerk stated that she had received from Essex County Council a notice of closure of Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood from 15th December 2015 for 4 days between 9am and 5pm, however this was mentioned at the recent Parish Hall at Thornwood Committee meeting with closure times detailed as 8pm to 5am for the duration. The

Clerk had left an urgent message with ECC to clarify what the correct closure times were, however had not received a response at this time.

The Clerk stated that she had recently spoken to Cllr John Knapman, who had informed her that Council may be able to ask ECC to turn on every street light in the Parish, or every other street light, if the Parish Council were willing to pay the cost. ECC has provided a map, however a clearer map is awaited. ECC has been unable to confirm how much this would cost per street light, however it is hoped this information would be available by 21st December budget and precept meeting. Cllr Buckley asked if ECC could confirm how much the County has saved so far on turning the lights off, to which the Clerk stating that she was happy to put the question to them.

### **C15.123 REPORTS AND MEMBERS REPORTS**

- a) **Chairman's Report** – The Chairman thanked Councillors for erecting the lights, staff for the organisation of Remembrance Sunday events, Councillors for the donation of money towards the Norway House children Christmas party, and the Office Staff for their work over recent months. The Chairman reported that a small quiz night and Ploughmans had been held at the Parish Hall in Thornwood, with £480.15 being raised towards the Parish Hall. There was also a small Christmas event held on 6th December with £30 being raised towards a Defibrillator for Thornwood.
- b) **Vice-Chairman's Report** – Cllr Buckley gave an update on the green area project in front of the shops in North Weald reminding members that a £3,000 grant had been received from District Council, and that final measurements were being completed with ECC. The Clerk confirmed the newly updated license had been received. Cllr Buckley stated that the next step would be for the first week in January a meeting with the Environmental Committee to meet with a contractor to obtain costings for the work, and that hopefully work could start in the spring in time to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Airfield.
- c) **District Councillors Report** – All District Councillors had been invited to send a written report, however no reports had been submitted. Cllr Mrs Grigg gave a verbal report stating that a new operator will take over the running of North Weald Market from January 2016 (Saunders). With regard to an Operator for the Airfield itself, the District Council were looking to take this forward through a concessionary contract, and it was hoped the tender could be undertaken in house rather than using consultants. The Asset Management Committee meeting on 10th December will be discussing the possibility of an Airshow in 2017.
- d) **Councillors Reports** – Cllr Eldridge reported it is the winter of discontent in Hastingwood with residents stating they were unable to walk their dogs on the common due the wet weather and people driving onto the common churning it up and making it muddy and dangerous.
- e) **Environmental Issues** – Cllr Mulliner reported that there were no allotment issues to report. There had been a number of complaints regarding mud on the

road at the Woodside Gypsy development and at the development opposite the shops in the High Road, North Weald. There were reports of a Motorbike going over the North Weald Village Hall Green and Weald Common, normally around 5pm in the evening. The entrances to the Play Areas were extremely muddy on the common due to the wet weather.

- f) **Highway Report** - Councillors *NOTED* the highway report attached to the agenda. Cllr Mrs Jackman suggested a copy of this report was sent to ECC Cllr Eddie Johnson and the Leader of the Council Cllr David Finch stating how frustrated the Council are by the inaction of ECC Highways.

#### **C15.124 FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a) **List of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts**

The Clerk tabled a copy of the monthly accounts list, and Councillors *APPROVED* the payments made and income received and noted the bank balances for the period ending 30th November 2015. Cllr Blanks stated that before the Parish Council can make a decision on whether or not to fund the CCTV permanently, he would like to know if it's working and see what the images capture. It was *AGREED* the Clerk would obtain a copy of this information for Councillors to consider at the Budget meeting.

b) **Budget & Precept meeting**

Members were reminded that the date of Budget and Precept meeting was Monday 21st December at 6.30pm. Cllr Mrs Jackman gave her apologies.

c) **Financial Risk Assessment / Business Continuity Plan / Business Recovery plan**

Councillors *AGREED* the updated documents as attached to the agenda.

#### **C15.125 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLAN**

Members noted that following the distribution of the 2 page handouts throughout the Parish by Ward Councillors and also by the Residents in Thornwood and in Hastingwood there has been some interest in the Neighbourhood Plan, with approximately 40 residents expressing their interest and support. One of the three Information / Mopping Up Events have been held (Hastingwood) – two remain to be held in January. The event at Hastingwood was very well attended.

**The following two dates are:**

North Weald Village Hall – Saturday – 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2016 – 9.30am – 11am  
Parish Hall at Thornwood - Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2016 – 11.30am – 1pm

These have been advertised in Village Life and on the Parish Council Notice boards. The Clerks stated that the event at Hastingwood was extremely well attended, with many residents expressing their interest and support. Cllrs Mrs Grigg, Eldridge and Bartram also attended this event.

#### **C15.126 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY ANNAUL EVENTS**

Members *NOTED* that the events on the day were very successful with more people than ever attending both the event at the Debt of Honour and the Luncheon.

This year the Parish Council was also asked to take on the organisation and administration of the Royal British Legion Service at St Andrews Church, on behalf of the Royal British Legion. A Representative from the Royal Norwegian Airforce was able to attend the events (at very short notice), and Cllr Andy Tyler was able to step in as Host, his report was attached to the agenda. A dissemination Meeting will need to take place early in the new year and it may be necessary to look at the format of the service at the Debt of Honour, as a number of errors have taken place over the last few years in the Order of Service and it could be prudent to look at how this could be changed. The Chairman stated that the Community Wreath layer notification in the order of service was not very clear. Cllr Bartram stated that even though the President of the Royal British Legion had thanked the office staff in person, he also wanted to thank the staff for their help and support.

#### **C15.127 EFDC LOCAL PLAN WORKSHOPS**

Members **NOTED** that EFDC recently held Workshops to update Members regarding the Local Plan. Councillor Blanks, Cllr Mrs Grigg, Cllr Stallan, Cllr Mrs Jackman, the Clerk and the Principal Financial Officer have attended these event. Cllr Blanks stated that he attended two out of the three meetings, however was not terribly impressed, stating that it seemed to be more of a classroom exercise that any definitive input into the Local Plan. The Clerk stated that at the last event she had sat on the same table as Cllrs Mrs Jackman and Cllr Knapman, and that she too had the same impression as Cllr Blanks, stating that the facilitator on the table did not read out most of the important points raised on the table specifically about affordable housing for the elderly, and it will be interesting to see if this is included in the Local Plan. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she had asked a question of Cllr Bassett regarding the consideration of health aspects of the Local Plan, expressing her concern regarding when this goes to public inspection.

The Clerk, Cllr Tyler and Cllr Mrs Jackman, MBE, recently attended the Local Liaison Committee where the Police Commissioner Nick Alston was in attendance, as was a representative from Hastoe Housing.

#### **C15.128 WEALD COMMON**

##### **a) Damage to Shelter**

Following a meeting of the Environmental Committee where the matter of the damage to the shelter was discussed, Members agreed that the future of the Shelter should be discussed by full Parish Council. This shelter has been vandalised three times since its installation, with the Parish Council completing one repair on it. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that the youth shelter should be removed, and a notice placed in the Village Life magazine stating why the Council had taken this decision.

##### **b) Wooden Play Area**

The Old Play Area at Weald Common has become increasingly damaged due to both wear and tear and vandalism. During a recent asset check the amount of the damage and wear and tear brought concern to the Environmental Committee and it was agreed to place this matter on to a meeting of the full Parish Council for further discussion. The PFO stated that the Council needed to make a decision on a number of items of equipment in the old Play Area, either they need to be replaced

or removed within the next three months. The Chairman stated that the Environmental Committee agreed that any items of equipment that are no longer suitable for purpose should be removed rather than being replaced. Cllr Blanks **PROPOSED** the old play area should be removed. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Buckley. A vote was taken, the results of which were as follows:

8 - For  
0 - Against  
2 - Abstentions.

Cllr Mulliner asked if the area would just be left open, to which the Clerk confirmed it would be, however she could source funding in the new year for perhaps outdoor gym equipment or something else to fill the space. It was agreed to place this onto the Environmental Committee meeting for further consideration.

#### **C15.129 RESIDENTS CONCERNS – PARK AVENUE, HASTINGWOOD**

At the recent event held in Hastingwood, a local resident advised the Parish Council of concerns in relation to problems occurring in the vicinity of Park Avenue and London Road. A report had been drawn up for Members perusal, and was attached to the agenda. The PFO gave a brief update stating that during the recent notice board run, the bin was emptied and there was no rubbish evident. Cllr Bartram stated that during his rounds, this was the same. It was **AGREED** that the PFO would monitor over the next 2 months during the notice board runs.

#### **C15.130 100 YEARS OF NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD**

The Parish Council had received an email from Darren Goodey, the North Weald Airfield Manager, asking if the Parish Council has any plans to celebrate this Anniversary. The Chairman stated that at the end of 2014, the suggestion of a large marquee for all the local community groups on community day was aired, however this never came to fruition. The Clerk stated that at the 2014 community day the District Council provided an afternoon tea for all the dignitaries, and suggested perhaps this is the something the Parish Council could do. All that would be needed was hot water, tables and Chairs. The Chairman stated that it was his understanding that the 2016 event would be held on 7th September, and suggested that £1000 should be precepted for to kick start this project. It was **AGREED** to place this on the budget/precept meeting for full consideration.

#### **C15.131 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SIGNS**

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator has made a request to place Neighbourhood Watch Signs on various lamp Columns within North Weald, identifying various areas as Neighbourhood Watch Areas. Members **AGREED** this request.

#### **C15.132 EPPING FOREST LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL**

The Clerk has received a request asking that Parishes and Councillors start to put consideration into potential schemes which the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel can consider for funding in the 2016-17 financial year. Examples of what the LHP has funded in previous year include:

- A new footway
- Traffic calming measures
- Passenger Transport improvements including new bus shelters and flags across Epping Forest
- VAS/SID signs
- Additional signage
- Dropped kerbs with tactile paving
- Pedestrian crossings

Councillors have been asked to put some thought into where they feel an improvement could be made so that ECC Officers can undertake all of the necessary investigations ahead of the funding being allocated again at the March Panel meeting. It is important to note that criteria will need to be met for schemes to reach a stage where the panel can consider them for funding and also the support of the relevant Councillors is key. A copy of the scheme request form which all requests need to be submitted on was attached to the agenda. The Clerk stated that she had received an email from a local resident, who is a mobility scooter user, suggesting tactile paving and dropped kerbs would benefit residents. Cllr Tyler had submitted a request for traffic calming measures in the York Road area. Cllr Mulliner had also submitted a request for resurfacing of a number of public footpaths in the Parish. Cllr Buckley suggested something needed to be done regarding the Z-bends through Wheelers Farm Gardens.

Meeting closed 21.30

Signed .....  
Date .....