



DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 5th December 2016

Time: 7.30PM

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

PRESENT:

Councillors (13) C Hawkins, A Buckley, B Eldridge, D Spearman, G Mulliner,
B Clegg, Mrs S Jackman MBE, T Blanks, B Bartram, Mrs A Grigg,
D Stallan, N Bedford, Mrs E Godwin-Brown

Officers in Attendance (2)

Susan De Luca, Clerk
Adriana Jones – Principal Finance Officer

Members of the Public (8) - Inc EFDC Cllrs C Whitbread, H Whitbread, and R Morgan
Members of the Press (0)

C16.101 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)

NOTED that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Tyler.

C16.102 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

None.

C16.103 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th November were **AGREED** and duly signed as a correct record. The Minutes of the Environmental Committee meeting held on 10th November, and the Notes of the Local Plan Discussion Meetings held on the 13th November and 28th November 2016 were **NOTED**.

C16.104 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Spearman declared a Pecuniary interest in items referring to the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan. Cllr Stallan declared a Non Pecuniary interest in agenda item 15 by virtue of being the Housing Portfolio Holder at the time the decision was made. Cllrs Bartram and Mrs Godwin-Brown declared a Non Pecuniary interest in agenda item 14 by virtue of being trustees of the Queens Hall Charity.

C16.105 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman introduced Darren who had asked to address the Council. It was noted that this item was not on the agenda, and as such no decisions could be made regarding the content of Darren's address. Darren thanked the Council, and introduced himself as a regular hall hirer (non profit making company, with all proceeds going to charity) of the North Weald Village Hall. His organisation regularly attracts 150 attendees, which can and does cause issues with parking. Attendees try and park on the field at the Village Hall, however the cars get stuck in the wet weather. Darren stated there had been a number of disputes recently regarding parking at North Weald Village Hall, and that he would like to create a firmer surface on the green onto which cars could park when there was a large function - some sort of ground reinforcement. Darren showed Councillors details of the type of surface he was looking at, stating that it created a solid grass mesh onto which cars can park.

This is not a permanent parking area, and is only opened and used when there are large functions in the Village Hall. There has already been a pledge of £3,000 towards such works. Darren stated that he had liaised with Epping Forest District Council legal department who has provided a suggestion in terms of a sign that could be erected to prevent people parking overnight, and to prevent any long term problems. Darren stated that the North Weald Village Hall would be looking for a donation from the Parish Council of £6,000 towards the cost of the car park works.

The Chairman invited any questions from Councillors. Cllr Mrs Jackman asked if the Parish Council owned any of the parking spaces at this location, to which it was confirmed there were 8 owned by the Parish Council. Cllr Grigg stated firstly that this item should have been placed on the agenda, to which the Clerk stated that the item was not raised in time to be placed on the agenda. The Chairman confirmed that Darren was aware no decision could be made at this meeting, but wanted to address the Council to explain the idea. Cllr Grigg stated that the suggested sign tabled for members stated that only Village Hall users and Play Park users are permitted to park at this location, and asked Darren to clarify if this includes users of Weald Common itself, as this is what the parking spaces are for. Darren stated it was his understanding this was just park users, however this could be amended if necessary.

Cllr Bedford asked if the suggestion £6,000 was a donation, or were the Village Hall expecting to repay this amount, to which Darren confirmation a donation was being sought.

Cllr Mulliner declared an non pecuniary interest as a member of the North Weald Village Hall Committee, and stated that in his opinion this suggestion had not yet been fully discussed by the Trustees of the North Weald Village Hall Committee. Cllr Bedford confirmed the same interest.

The Chairman thanked Darren for his time.

C16.106 EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL DRAFT LOCAL PLAN RESPONSE

An updated copy of the Draft Local Plan response, with the latest amendments highlighted in blue, was tabled for members information. This was following agreement at the 28th November Local Plan discussion meeting at which Councillors had been asked to forward any suggested amendments to the draft response to the PFO by Sunday 4th December so that these could be included at this meeting. Members were asked to formally **AGREE** the revised response. The Clerk confirmed she was also happy to hear any comments from members of the public regarding the suggested response.

Cllr Stallan stated that it is possible he may have missed it, but he could not see details regarding the 'old radio station' site in the draft response. This Council supported the Officers decision to remove this area for proposed development from the Draft Local Plan, and after further discussion it was **AGREED** that the statements included within the draft response regarding this site should be strengthened with an additional paragraph stating why areas south/south-east of the Village were unsuitable for development.

Cllr Mrs Godwin-Brown supported the response, and mentioned the email from Trevor Archer that had been previously circulated to Members asking if any of the points made should be incorporated into the Parish Councils response. Cllr Clegg stated that he too felt that Trevor Archers response was valid, but that many of the points made in his response had already been covered in the Parish Councils response, and there were no additional points that warranted further amendments to the Parish Councils response at this time. The PFO stated that Trevor's response was perhaps more specific in terms of suggestions and ideas, and the Parish Councils response was more of a factual, evidence based approach, and that it could be wrong of the Parish Council to suggest ideas without having a clear mandate from the residents supporting such ideas.

The Chairman invited comments from the District Councillors present. Cllr Morgan stated that on first glance it seemed a comprehensive report, and he agreed with what he had read so far. Cllr Chris Whitbread stated that it looked like a very in depth report, however he would have to reserve whether or not he would support the response, as it was important he viewed all the evidence as a whole. Cllr Holly Whitbread stated that the comments regarding Thornwood Common were interesting, and that she would certainly take these comments back and review them further.

After discussion, it was **AGREED** that subject to the additional paragraph regarding the old radio station area, the response to the Draft Local Plan as tabled should be sent to EFDC as this Parish Councils formal response. **PROPOSED** Cllr Eldridge, **SECONDED** Cllr Blanks. It was also **AGREED** that after submission, a copy of the response could be placed on the Parish Councils website.

Cllr Mrs Grigg asked that thanks were recorded for the work put in by the PFO in formulating this response.

The Clerk reminded members of the suggestion of a joint response in terms of proportionality from some of the Parish Clerks in the District, stating that it may hold some weight with both the District Council and the Examiner. Cllr Stallan stated that he agreed it is possible that some form of joint response could hold some weight, and supported the idea. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that a joint response covering just the proportionality argument would be supported, suggesting those Councils names were listed within the response.

C16.107 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Councillors **NOTED** the following report from the Clerk:

Date	Reported By or Action Initiated By	Regarding	Action Taken	Further Action Taken
NOV	CLERK/ PFP	Personnel / HR Issues	Ongoing/Cont inuing	Reassessment of Staffing Priorities
NOV	PFO	Neighbour hood Plan Steering Group	Meetings/On going	Various Actions

NOV	Clerk/PFO	Local Plan	Ongoing	Various Actions
NOV	CLERK/PFO	Legal / Property Matters	Ongoing	Sourcing \information/research
NOV	PFO	Neighbourhood Plan	Ongoing	Meetings /Minutes
NOV	CLERK/SEN ADMIN OFFICER	REMEMB. SUNDAY	ARRANGE EVENTS	Various Actions
NOV	CLERK/PFO	Training/V arious Meetings	Attend where necessary	Various Actions
ITEMS RECEIVED WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST				
Various EFDC Agendas, North Weald Village Life. Various other Periodicals				

The Clerk stated that she had received an apology from Farther Rodley for not coming back to her the previous week regarding the St Andrews Primary School Carol event on 19th December. Cllr Buckley and Cllr Tyler were due to give readings, however Cllr Tyler was no longer available. It was noted this was the same night as the next Planning meeting. Volunteers were asked to contact the Clerk, however Alan confirmed he would do both if needed.

Members noted that the Clerk had received an enquiry regarding a sign for a 'no through road' near Hurricane Way going around the back of Blenheim Square. It was agreed this would be discussed further at the Wednesday subcommittee meeting, with a meeting possibly being arranged with the person who raised the enquiry. Cllr Bedford suggested the Council should respond directing the individual to raise this with ECC.

Members **NOTED** that the Parish Council had been successful in receiving funding of £11,245 via the ECC Community Initiatives Fund towards the cost of safety surfacing at the Weald Common play area.

C16.108 MEMBERS REPORTS

The following reports were **RECEIVED**:

- a) **Chairman's Report** – The Chairman thanked all Councillors who attended the recent events that took place on Sundays and lunch times, together with thanking the staff for their hard work regarding the Local Plan.
- b) **Vice-Chairman's Report** – No Report
- c) **District Councillors Report** – Cllr Mrs Grigg confirmed that she has been approached by developers regarding Rayleigh Lane Golf Club regarding proposal to develop this land. Cllr Mrs Grigg also showed members a brochure she had received regarding 'Roding Village' at Chigwell - a proposed development of 600 homes. Both of these go to show that developers are still coming forward suggesting land for development even though the land is not included within the Draft Local Plan.

- d) **County Councillor Report** - Members *NOTED* the report from ECC Cllr Jackson as attached to the agenda.
- e) **Councillors Reports** – Cllr Mulliner reported that he had noticed an increase in the amount of litter in various locations, including Station Road and the field beyond Weald Common, and that he would try and clear this over the coming days.

Cllr Eldridge reported that Priors had now got involved with the fencing issue on the land opposite Brent House Farm, and after his investigation it has been established this is land belonging to Harlow Council, however Harlow Council state they have no knowledge of it being their land at all.

Cllr Blanks reported that he had asked a question at the EFDC Cabinet meeting the previous week as to whether or not EFDC would be publishing a list of all the changes made to the final Local Plan as a result of the Draft Local Plan consultation, however the response from EFDC was that this would not take place. Cllr Blanks asked that it was recorded in the minutes that he was unhappy about this.

C16.109 FINANCIAL REPORTS

- a) **List of cheques and Monthly Statement** - it was *NOTED* that due to the Local Plan, this item would be held over until Januarys F&GP meeting.
- b) **Internal Audit** - members *NOTED* that the internal audit would be taking place on Friday 16th December.
- c) **External Audit** - Members *NOTED* that the External Audit for 2015/2016 has been completed and returned unqualified. A copy of the notice of conclusion of audit was published in accordance with the required guidelines. There were two matters not affecting the opinion of the External Auditor that were drawn to the attention of the Parish Council. The first was a difference in the Precept figures submitted to the External Auditor by EFDC, however Cllr Mrs Jackman had recently attended an EFDC Local Liaison meeting where it was confirmed this was an error on their part and that letters of apology would be sent to each affected Council. The second was that it was stated that members of the public were not given adequate time for the exercise of public right to inspect the accounts, however the PFO disagreed with this and would be looking into this further.

C16.110 COMPLAINT FROM MR RAMSEY AND RESPONSE FROM CLLR NIGEL BEDFORD REGARDING THE DEBT OF HONOUR MEMORIAL

Councillors *NOTED* that a letter of complaint had been received following the commemorative events on Remembrance Sunday, a copy of which was attached to the agenda. A full personal rebuttal has been given by Cllr Nigel Bedford, a copy of which was also attached. Councillors expressed concern regarding the content of the letter from Mr Ramsey, especially with regard to the Health and Safety action (or lack of) seemed to have been taken by Mr Ramsay. The Clerk confirmed that a Risk Assessment was completed on the morning of the Remembrance Sunday, and it was at this time that the paving between the Norwegian Stone and Debt of Honour was found

to be dangerously slippery, with a member of staff having actually slipped as a result. It was felt the service would not be able to continue without some form of action being taken, especially considering many of the representative laying wreaths were elderly, and the action taken was at the suggestion of Cllr Bedford, whose job is Health and Safety within the Fire Brigade. Cllr Mrs Jackman asked if Mr Ramsay represented the Trust, and if so were the other members of the Trust aware of this letter. Cllr Bedford confirmed Mr Ramsay did represent the Trust, but that he was unaware if other members were involved or aware. Cllr Godwin-Brown expressed concern that a member of the Trust had maligned a Councillor in this way, and fully supported the action taken by both the Parish Council and Cllr Bedford to ensure the safety of all in attendance at the event. Cllr Stallan stated that there was a process Mr Ramsay could follow if he felt a Parish Councillor had behaved inappropriately. It was suggested that perhaps a different location should be considered next year for the Remembrance Sunday service, with a number of Councillors agreeing this should be considered. Cllr Mrs Grigg expressed her concern at this suggestion as the Parish Council originally just laid wreaths at the Norwegian Stone, and only after Mr Ramsey organised the Debit of Honour did this change to include laying wreaths there too. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that she would be very reluctant to see the laying of wreaths moved away from the Norwegian stone, especially considered the history and importance of Norway to this village.

It was **AGREED** that the content of the letter would be discussed at the Remembrance Sunday dissemination meeting due to take place over the coming weeks, with Councillors deciding how to progress at that point. It was also **AGREED** that any response from the Parish Council to this letter should include the fact that the tree in question is not the responsibility of the Parish Council, but possibly EFDC, and that Mr Ramsay should direct this particular question at EFDC asking them to investigate if the tree is causing the damage.

C16.111 THANK YOU LETTER FROM SUE KEANE – REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Members **NOTED** the letter received from Sue Keane – Inge Ovstedal's daughter, - who laid the wreath this year on behalf of the People of Norway and in the absence of the Royal Norwegian Defence Attaché.

C16.112 CODE OF CONDUCT

Members **NOTED** that Correspondence had been received from Epping Forest District Council regarding revisions to the Code of Conduct, a full copy of which was attached to the agenda. These revisions were agreed by the EFDC Joint Standards Committee, upon which Cllr Nigel Bedford sits as this Councils representative. Cllr Mrs Jackman **PROPOSED** that this Parish Council agree the changes and to **RESOLVE** to **ACCEPT** the Revised Code of Conduct. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Buckley. All **AGREED**.

C16.113 FIRST REGISTRATIONS OF LAND

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had received correspondence from Whiskers Solicitors asking for various items that may be located within the archive at Thornwood, and that the Clerk will attend with Kevin of TGM to try to locate as much information as possible to provide to the Solicitors.

C16.114 MOTORBIKES USING MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELD

Members *NOTED* that concern has been expressed by one of the Managers of a local football team regarding the fact that Motorbikes are using the Memorial Playing Fields and are disturbing the surface of the fields. Whilst the majority of the field is owned and managed by the Queens Hall Charity there is a very tiny area that is still owned by the Parish Council. It is understood that Councillor Bartram has spoken to some of the Dog Walkers regarding this matter. A copy of the email from the complainant was attached to the agenda. The Chairman, together with Members of the Environmental Sub Committee, have visited the area to assess the situation. It is understood that the Queens Hall Charity will be erecting a notice by the Car Park, with the suggestion that the Parish Council should erect a notice by the play park. Cllr Bartram confirmed he had passed all the details onto PC Andy Cook, together with photographs, however since this issue was published in the local press, no further issues have occurred. Cllr Bartram confirmed he would keep the Parish Council informed of any further problems.

C16.115 NAMING OF DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO QUEENS ROAD GARAGES

Members *NOTED* that the response to Alan Hall's email from the Cabinet Office regarding the naming of the proposed new development off of Queens Road, North Weald, as Queen Elizabeth Close has regrettably not been agreed. On this basis, the recommendation has gone forward to the District Councils Cabinet Committee that the development be named after this Councils second choice – "Elizabeth Close".

C16.116 CHANGES TO DATES FOR MEETINGS IN JANUARY 2017

It was *AGREED* that due to the commitment in providing a timely response to the EFDC Draft Local Plan, together with Staffing Resources, and the visit from the Internal Auditor, there be no Parish Council Meeting in January 2017. It was further *AGREED* that the Finance and General Purposes Meeting be held on Monday 16th January with an Extraordinary Meeting on Monday 30th January 2017 to confirm the figures to be forwarded to EFDC for the precept demand for 2016/2017. The Clerk would fit the required planning around these dates.

C16.117 CLOSURE OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE DURING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Members *NOTED* that the Parish Office will close at 1.15pm on Friday 23rd December 2016, and will re-open at 9.15am on Wednesday 4th January 2017. The library service offered by the Parish Council during this time will not be available. The Clerk will be available for any emergencies during this time by contacting her on the following number 07572 507591 . A notice has been placed in Village Life, and message will be placed on the office answerphone, the Parish Councils website, and notices will be placed at the entrance and exit to the Library.

Meeting closed 20.44

Date

Sign:.....