



DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 1st February 2016

Time: 7.30PM

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

PRESENT:

Councillors (12) C Hawkins (Chairman), A Buckley, T Blanks, B Clegg, B Bartram
G Mulliner, Mrs Grigg, Mrs S Jackman MBE, B Eldridge,
Mrs Godwin-Brown, N Bedford, A Tyler

Officers in Attendance (2)

Susan Deluca - Clerk
Adriana Jones – Principal Finance Officer

Members of the Public (8)

Members of the Press (0)

C15.146 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (3)

NOTED that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Adams, Stallan and Spearman.

C15.147 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

No other absences were recorded.

C15.148 MINUTES

Cllr Blanks stated there was a slight error regarding the terminology used in the minutes on page 3 stating the 'Shoreham Air Crash Investigation' had not been completed. Cllr Clegg stated that he had not mentioned 100 tonnes of hardcore as detailed on page 3, stating that it was soil not hardcore. Cllr Bedford confirmed he had mentioned 100 tonnes of hardcore. The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4th January 2016 were **AGREED** and duly signed as a correct record.

C15.149 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bartram, Cllr Mrs Grigg and Cllr Buckley declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 20 - Consultation of proposed move of post office - as customers of the shop. Cllr Bartram, Cllr Bedford and Cllr Mulliner declared non pecuniary interests in agenda item 18 - Car Park spaces near Weald Common.

C15.150 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Cllr Hawkins welcomed the members of the public, most of whom were from North Weald Mums, stating that they would be invited to speak later during the meeting under the relevant agenda item.

C15.151 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

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

Date	Reported By or Action Initiated By	Regarding	Action Taken	Further Action Taken
JAN	CLERK/PFO	Corporate	Ongoing	Updating of Various Documentation

		Governance Issues	Continuing	
JAN	Office Staff	Neighbourhood Area Plan	Ongoing	Various Meetings & Actions
JAN	Office Staff	Cemetery	Ongoing	Marking Out Graves/ Marking Up 6 New Graves/Re Aligning Map Section1
JAN	Clerk	CCTV Issues	Ongoing	Various Actions
JAN	Senior Admin Officer	Various Env/ Highway Matters	Continuing	Ongoing
JAH	Clerk	Brent House Farm	Continuing	Liaising with Senior Officers EFDC
JAN	Clerk/Cllr Buckley	Parade of Shops	Ongoing	Liaising with ECC & EFDC
JAN	PFO	Transp Code	Ongoing	Sourcing Various Information
JAN	PFO/Clerk	Weald Common	Ongoing	Researching Various Information
JAN	Clerk	Allotments	Continuing	Researching Various Information
ITEMS RECEIVED WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST				
Various EFDC Agendas, North Weald Village Life				

Councillors noted that the date set for the Annual Parish Assembly is 21st March at the Parish Hall in Thornwood - time TBC.

As agreed, the Clerk had contacted the Queens Hall Charity with regard to the public works loan payments, asking if they were able to contribute to the these payments. The Clerk read out the response received from the Charity which, in summary, stated that the Charity takes no responsibility for the loan, and would not be contributing any payments.

The Clerk stated that Citizen of the Year nomination forms, Local Council liaison, and details of a police conference were including within the agenda packs.

C15.152 REPORTS AND MEMBERS REPORTS

- a) **Chairman's Report** – The Chairman thanked the office staff for attending the Neighbourhood Planning public events at both the North Weald Village Hall and Parish Hall at Thornwood on 23rd January, stating the he was disappointed with the very low turnout.
- b) **Vice-Chairman's Report** – Cllr Buckley confirmed that with regard to the green outside the shops, one quote for the works had been received with another expected by Wednesday. In addition, Cllr Buckley confirmed he has spoken to Mr Patel about the wall by the shops, and was awaiting a letter from him confirming what was discussed.
- c) **District Councillors Report** – Cllr Mrs Grigg confirmed she had attended a meeting of the LSPEB (Local Strategic Partnership Economics Board) regarding the 100 year centenary celebrations for North Weald Airfield, and it is expected that the Parish Council will be asked to put forward a representative for this event.

- d) **Councillors Reports** – Cllr Eldridge reported that a week ago a property in Mill Street, Hastingwood was burgled, and its elderly resident assaulted with a knife by the three offenders. The resident was taken to hospital. Whilst the initial response by police to the incident itself was good, the ongoing actions were not as positive as nearby residents were not informed of this incident. Cllr Eldridge thanked the Clerk who had contacted the police, and a response had been received stating that they were addressing this issue with 10 houses being visited so far. Details of what to do if such an incident occurs will be included in the next edition of Village Life. Another separate issue was that Cllr Eldridge had received complaints about dead chickens, sheep that looked ill, and old boxes of fruit strewn around at the back of Mill House in the field. He had reported this to the RSPCA, however they will not act on this information. Cllr Eldridge also reported that the noise from the motorway is now increasing, and he would like for somebody to come down and survey the noise levels.

Cllr Bedford stated that Essex Fire and Rescue were launching a consultation today about saving money and needing to reduce two stations to one, including Loughton and Harlow. Cllr Tyler asked if there was a specific number of personnel that should be available at any given time, to which Cllr Bedford stated that figures are based on 38 incidents per day in Essex, and that any incident could be back filled by the next station. The number of deaths from fire in the whole of Essex for 2015 was 2. There are over 100,000 houses without smoke detectors. The cost to run one station was £90,000 and if one appliance station is fully crewed its £100,000.

- e) **Environmental Issues** – Cllr Mulliner reported that at this stage no alternative access to the Queens Road allotments had been agreed.

C15.153 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 31st January 2016. Cllr Bedford asked if the photocopying charges equated to around £4,000 year, to which the PFO stated that this wasn't the case, and there are normally two expensive quarters, and two less so in any 12 month period. Cllr Blanks asked if there were arrangements to review the contract if needed. The Clerk stated that the Office were in the process of reviewing the current contract alongside another company, to which Cllr Blanks stated he would be happy to review it.

C15.154 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLAN

The Clerk reminded members that three public events had been held over recent months, one in each of the three villages in the Parish, the best attended being in Hastingwood Village Hall. A total of 34 positive responses have so far been recorded (a positive response is one where the respondent has indicated that they would support the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan). This level of response is really too low to go forward with the plan, however it may be worthwhile going forward with a meeting of those who have registered an interest to see if there is a way forward. A meeting has therefore been arranged for Monday 15th February before the planning meeting. The

future of the Neighbourhood Area Plan will be dependent on the outcome of this meeting. A number of members of the public stated they had not received details of the events, however when checked during the meeting their names had been recorded and details sent.

C15.155 100 YEARS OF NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

Members **NOTED** that invitations to village organisations have been sent out. Three positive responses have so far been received. The Clerk is also looking at options for a marquee, and has located a hire company who may supply one for £500, however space will be limited and would be allocated on a first come first serve basis.

Cllr Tyler stated that there are three airfields celebrating their centenary this year - North Weald, Biggin Hill and an airfield in Durham. In order to try and make the North Weald event special and memorable, Cllr Tyler suggested the Parish Council contacts a microbrewery asking if they would be willing to brew a special beer, fully labelled, which could be sold at the event, with the microbrewery giving a donation to a local good cause, for example defibrillators in the Parish. The Chairman asked if Cllr Tyler was suggesting these beers would be sold at the event, to which Cllr Tyler stated that the company would be responsible for any sales and licensing requirements, however they would make a donation to the Parish Council cause. This would be an opportunity to raise money. The more that people publicise the airfield, the longer it will remain an airfield.

The Clerk asked Members if they were happy Cllr Tyler was put forward as this Parish Councils representative for the Centenary events, as per Cllr Mrs Griggs statement earlier in the meeting, to which Councillors fully agreed. Cllr Tyler confirmed that he was happy for Cllr Mrs Grigg to pass on his details. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that there was a brewery in Brentwood who had completed something similar recently, and it may be worth contacting them.

The Chairman stated that any such project and the sale of alcohol would need to be supported by EFDC. Cllr Bedford concurred, stating that there were two licensed premises on the Airfield who my object. It was **AGREED** the Clerk would arrange a meeting with Darren Goodey to discuss the possibility of this project.

C15.156 QUEENS ROAD ALLOTMENTS – ACCESS FOR ALLOTMENT TENANTS DURING BUILDING WORKS BY EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL TO THE GARAGE SITE

Members **NOTED** that no further communication had been received from Epping Forest District Council regarding this matter, despite the Clerk chasing twice and Cllr Stallan stating he would get somebody to contact the Office. That being said, the Clerk had been informed contact would be made at the end of January / beginning of February, so there was still some time. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she had met with Paul Pledger at EFDC recently who had informed her access would not be a problem during works or after. The Clerk stated this was needed in writing. Cllr Blanks stated that he had approached Nigel Richardson who said it wasn't a planning matter, even though he thought it was.

**C15.157 POLICY DECISION NORTH WEALD BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL
LIBRARY SERVICES AND OFFICE**

The Clerk advised members that an error was made in relation to the date of the break clause in the lease. The break clause will not be relevant until November 2017. The Clerk apologised for this error. The Clerk has a meeting with Karen Prentice in April 2016.

C15.158 PARISH COUNCIL CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Members **NOTED** that nominations were required as soon as possible for the Annual Citizen of the Year Awards. Details of the Awards will be advertised as usual in North Weald Village life, and on the Parish Council website. Members were asked to put forward any nominations. As per previous years, it was agreed that a small sub-committee (one Councillor from each Ward) meet to discuss and pick the award winners approximately one week before the awards ceremony. Cllrs Mrs Godwin-Brown, Mrs Jackman, Eldridge and Clegg confirmed they would be happy to form the sub-committee.

C15.159 POLICING IN THE DISTRICT AND IN THE PARISH

The Clerk stated that attached to the agenda was a report which was discussed at the Epping Forest District Council Neighbourhood & Communities Select Committee held on the 19th January. The Report raises a number of concerns that are relevant to Parish Councils, and in particular the fact that ***the Police will no longer deal with 97% of Anti Social Behaviour and that they will sign post complainants to other services which, in many cases, will be a local authority.***

Epping Forest District Council clearly state in this report that it is expecting to take on a bigger role, not only in its Safer Communities but also in its front line services. Therefore it must also be anticipated / expected that all Councils that have front-line services (ie dealing with Members of the public) will see their role increase. This will involve not only staff, but Council Members also. This is something that will need to be monitored very carefully over the coming months, especially as the role and the amount of police presence is diminishing.

Essex Association of Local Councils are holding a Local Council Police Conference on the 15th March, to which all Members are invited. (details were attached to the agenda).

The Clerk tabled for members a short report following a conversation she had earlier in the day with Paul Gardner, Safer Communities EFDC. The Clerk had also had a 1.5 hour conversation with PC Andy Cook the previous weekend, who had advised how he felt neighbourhood policing would be by the end of March, stating there would be none and only community policing would continue, however nothing would be confirmed until 1st April 2016. Cllr Mulliner asked if the number of police officers quoted are the total number that would be on duty at any given time / 24 hours a day, to which the Clerk stated that the numbers quoted were the number of officers employed in their respective roles. Cllr Eldridge stated that he had a conversation earlier with a member of the police who stated that police officers would still respond as normal to emergency situations, however you will not see your local Neighbourhood Policing team on the streets.

The Clerk stated that she found the report very worrying. Cllr Mrs Jackman would be at an event on 15th March at which Nick Alston, Police and Crime Commissioner, would be in attendance, and any questions could be put to Mr Alston at that time. Cllr Jackman stated that in Suffolk, PSCO's finish work at 5pm, and this was one of the questions she would be raising with Mr Alston. Cllr Jackman also stated that Mr Alston would be retiring around the time any changes come into effect.

The Clerk confirmed that she had requested a copy of the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee when they become available. Cllr Blanks stated that on Tuesday 15th March, the policing element of the precept for 2016/2017 will be known, and amazingly it is expected to increase, yet policing will be going down.

The Chairman stated that anybody with a question for Nick Alston should contact the Clerk.

C15.160 CCTV

a) CCTV at the Parade of Shops

Members recalled that following the F&GP Meeting, the Clerk was tasked with obtaining certain information in relation to CCTV, the responses being as follows from Adrian Petty at Epping Forest District Council – Safety Communities:

Cost

£3,500 was for a re deployable camera (like the camera up now) which has ongoing airtime costs. £5,000 was a cost provided for a better 4 camera system giving a fixed blanket coverage of the vicinity which has cheaper airtime costs. The cost of the system is in the region of £5K. I note a contribution of £1K is mentioned so you would still need to find another £4K? Whilst other systems may seem cheaper it is important to note that if EFDC is to take managerial ownership of the scheme it must comply and meet with our minimum benchmarked standards, the one I costed does just that.

Income

Income generation fees are explained in the CCTV Code of Practice (page 8) which can be found on the EFDC website on the CCTV page. The income comes to cover officer time and equipment spent dealing with an enquiry (such as insurance requests). The costs are emailed to the applicant with a CCTV request form in advance. If they accept the charges we will carry out the work. Once the payment has cleared and paid into a budget code at EFDC we then send off the images. As for revenue generated from insurance claims this covers officer time and the costs to prepare and deliver evidence to them. EFDC as the manager of the system would expect to collect the fees for this work wholly.

Funding From Shops

With regards to gathering funding from shop keepers, I would not recommend this way forward. I have experience of this when working as the CCTV Technical Officer at Harlow Council. Shop keepers and market traders were initially charged a contribution towards the CCTV however when shops changed hands some refused to

pay, then other shopping areas did not pay at all which caused ill feeling. Eventually Harlow Council withdrew charging as it was becoming too problematic. Further to this the shopkeepers, if you were to go down this route, must realise there is a strict policy on who can access and view CCTV and it is not there for their convenience. If this is not clarified those paying may assume they can access the CCTV (after all they are paying for it) which should not be the case.

Insurance Companies

As for revenue generated from insurance claims this covers officer time and the costs to prepare and deliver evidence to them. EFDC as the manager of the system would expect to collect the fees for this work wholly.

Removal of Deployable Camera

Finally just to advise you that the mobile CCTV unit currently in situ at NW shops will be removed at the beginning of February as per our standard protocol. To date we have had no requests to view images from the camera, this is not to say the camera has not been effective it may be because its presence has acted as a deterrent?

Cllr Mrs Jackman asked if there were any funds in the budget for CCTV works, to which the Clerk stated that within the 2016/2017 budget, £1,000 had been earmarked for CCTV at the shops in North Weald. Cllr Mulliner asked if the grant secured for the Garden at the North Weald shops was dependent on CCTV being installed in this location, to which the Clerk stated it was not. He also stated that the images recently seen were from the temporary camera erected at the shops, and it was directed at the shops - would the new CCTV be aimed at the new garden? The Clerk stated that any permanent CCTV would be a new camera, and not the deployable type as at present.

The Clerk advised members to take time to review the comments in italic, emphasising the importance of these points. Cllr Buckley stated that since the temporary camera has been in situ, there has been a marked decrease in terms of crowd activity at the shops, and in his opinion the best way forward would be to install the CCTV at the shops on a permanent basis. Obviously he could not speak for the shops, however he stated he would be hard pushed to send a sensible response to EFDC and the local residents as to why the Parish Council would not move forward with this. Cllr Mrs Godwin Brown suggested EFDC were contacted to ascertain how they keep flower beds in the high street from being vandalised. Cllr Mrs Grigg declared in interest in this agenda item following the steer of the conversation, and stated that EFDC's CCTV is directed more towards the entertainment venues and clubs.

Cllr Tyler stated that in his opinion, the bottom line is that CCTV works. It's had a clear impact on behaviour in the village since the temporary CCTV was erected, and he would support it.

The Chairman expressed his concern stating that a prosecution cannot be made using CCTV unless you have full details including specific times which could be tricky

after a few days. Cllr Bedford stated that any properly licensed CCTV would need to be kept for 31 days.

Cllr Bedford **PROPOSED** that in light of the recent EFDC report as attached to the agenda which sets out the problems EFDC is expected to experience regarding policing in the District, the Parish Council fully funds the CCTV at the North Weald shops. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Tyler. A vote was taken, the result as follows:

- 11 - For
- 1 - Against (Cllr Hawkins)
- 1 - Abstention (Cllr Mrs Grigg)

Cllr Mrs Jackman asked if the money was available to fund such a project, to which the Clerk stated we would need to ascertain if it should come from a specific fund, or out of general reserves. Cllr Bedford suggested funding may be available. Cllr Mrs Jackman suggested the Parish Council could apply for funding via the CIF, to which the Clerk stated applications could not be made until August.

b) CCTV at Weald Common

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had received a number of emails from a Member of the North Weald Mums expressing concern that the Parish Council now 'deem CCTV unnecessary' at the new Play Area on Weald Common. Paul Southgate from Epping Forest District Councils Safer Communities team has also been in contact as he too has concerns on this matter. The Parish Council had pledged its support for CCTV in this area, and a copy of specific Parish Council minute and Media Release was attached to the agenda for members information. The Clerk stated that both feel that as funding and grant applications have been applied for detailing this Council's support for the CCTV it leaves those applications in a very 'precarious' situation.

The Clerk explained that the emails she had received from the North Weald Mums suggest that it's not the fact that the Parish Council did not offer any financial support, but that they seemed to have gone back on their decision to support in principle the idea of CCTV. The Clerk had spoken to Paul Southgate, who suggested that he understood the North Weald Mums have raised £3,500 for this project, and need another £1,500. If they reach this £5,000 target they have a promise of an additional £5,000 of funds. The Clerk asked a member of North Weald Mums to confirm this. A representative of the North Weald Mums stated that there is approximately £4,500 in the bank, and they are expecting a further £1,000 in grant funding, however confirmation of this was awaited. The Clerk asked if North Weald Mums were looking for funding to top up the amount to £5,000, and if so could they confirm the exact amount they were looking for. The representative stated that due to the calculation of VAT, she did not have the exact figure, however could get this. Cllr Mrs Grigg asked if the North Weald Mums had applied to EFDC for a grant, to which it was confirmed they had and they were waiting for a response. Cllr Mrs Grigg confirmed she was happy to say that she supports the principle of CCTV as a good measure towards reducing antisocial behaviour, stating that it was a financial contribution that was discussed at the F&GP

meeting. Cllr Bartram stated that he supported the proposal of CCTV back in April, and he continues to do so. Cllr Mrs Godwin-Brown confirmed the same.

Cllr Bedford asked if the CCTV would be able to take pictures at night, to which it was confirmed it could. Cllr Mulliner stated that the neither the camera, nor the land it would be placed on, was owned by the Parish Council, and as such we shouldn't really be involved in the process. There was also some discrepancy in the amount of funded need, and this should be clarified. A representative of the North Weald Mums stated that the cost of the CCTV was £9,600, and an average shortfall was expected of between £500-£1000 (taking into account the VAT aspect), and as such any contribution from the Parish Council would be very welcome.

Cllr Clegg stated that he was not convinced about the benefits of CCTV in general, and that a decision needed to be made in general terms as to whether or not the Parish Council supports CCTV in principle, the concern being that CCTV could end up being placed everywhere, and costing this Parish a lot of money.

The Clerk stated there were two issues to be considered, the first being the support of CCTV at this location, the second being a financial contribution. A vote was taken on the support of CCTV at this location, the result being as follows:

8 - For
2 - Against

Cllr Mulliner suggested a vote on the decision for funding should be deferred until such time as the exact amount needed was finalised. The Chairman agreed, stating this agenda item was regarding support, not financial support. Cllr Mrs Godwin-Brown agreed however formally **PROPOSED** the issue of financial support was placed on the next agenda for discussion. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Tyler, who stated that whilst the camera would not be on Parish Council land, it would overlook Parish Council land, thereby affording some form of protection. It was therefore **AGREED** this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

C15.161 CCTV

Members were reminded that permission had been granted by means of a License from Essex County Council for the work to create a Garden at the Parade of Shops. Confirmation of funding from Epping Forest District Council had been received subject to certain criteria, however further information is being sought as to how the problems of anti social behaviour in relation to the garden is going to be controlled. The following is an extract from the email from Alexandra Cramp:

'It is difficult for me to be any more specific on the details requested, as the request came direct from the Councillor who approved the bid. I have referred back to the letter that was sent to you by Cllr Whitbread on 22nd October 2015.

To me, it seems that we are just seeking a few comments/observations regarding the possibility of anti-social behaviour & damage to the project that could occur and how you plan to manage this/limit it as much as is possible. I think Cllr Whitbread

was just after some comment/acknowledgement regarding who/what would be making sure the proposed area is not spoilt.

If you could come back to us with just a few lines regarding the means of managing this potential problem, I think that would be sufficient. Hope this helps make it a little clearer.'

It was **AGREED** the Clerk would respond stating that the shops are open from 6am until 12 midnight and will have attendees present, and as such they will be able to view the garden and 'keep an unofficial eye on things'. There will be only a 6 hour period when there are no shop keepers present. There are also residents opposite and adjacent to the area who could alert the relevant authorities regarding any anti-social behaviour that may occur. It is hoped that by making the area a nicer and a more pleasant place (and also to make it the 'Heart of the Village of North Weald'), we would expect the peer pressure to be put on any unwelcome individuals or groups who would want to ruin it for the few. The Parish Council want the Garden and area to be visited and viewed and we would expect it to be 'policed' also by local residents and local groups who would all form part of the project. In addition, the Parish Council has now agreed to install CCTV at the Parade of Shops also, as part of a separate project.

C15.162 WEALD COMMON

a) Path from Stone to New Play Area

Members **NOTED** that the access path to Weald Common is being utilised by motorcycles and the path is being damaged. Members were asked to consider whether or not they felt that a 'kissing style gate' should be installed at the entrance by the stone. In addition, the entrance to the Play Area is very muddy and is making the Play Area almost inaccessible. Cllr Mulliner stated that the Parish Council would be unable to place a kissing gate at this location as there is a Bridleway that goes through this entrance. As such, this needs to be open to all relevant vehicles.

b) Tarmac & Wet Pour

Members **NOTED** that the Principal Financial Officer had met a representative from a Wet Pour Company to give a quotation for the wet pour for the new Play Area. A copy of the quote was attached to the agenda. Members felt that the quote was quite expensive, however understood that the ground conditions at Weald Common were such that extra works would be needed to make the wetpour last. Cllr Mulliner stated that it's really only the area under and around the entrance gate that needs completing, as you are able to move from each of the pieces of play equipment without actually touching the muddy areas. The Clerk suggested that funding should be sought via the next round of CIF funding, and that if needed the play area should be closed. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that three quotes should be obtained due to the amount of money these works were expected to cost. It was therefore **AGREED** to obtain a further two quotes, and that funding should be sought via the next round of CIF.

C15.163 PUBLIC PARKING SPACES ADJACENT TO WEALD COMMON

Members were advised of the location of the eight Public Car Parking Spaces owned by the Parish Council adjacent to Weald Common. Members recalled the Transfer Document & Map provided to Members at the last Meeting by the Clerk. Confirmation of that ownership has now been received from Epping Forest District Council and Peer Group who confirm they also have copies of the same Transfer document. Details were attached to the agenda.

The Chairman confirmed that he had spoken to Nick Dorras, Chairman of the North Weald Village Hall, and he had stated he was happy with it. Cllr Mulliner stated that the trustees of the North Weald Village Hall would like to see the deed, to which the Clerk stated that she held a copy and they were more than welcome to visit the Parish Office to view the document. Cllr Mulliner stated that as the Parish Council own these spaces, they must therefore be responsible for maintaining it and for any claims on it in the past. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that the North Weald Village Hall actually benefit from these parking spaces, as they are often used by hall users. Cllr Mulliner stated that as these are Parish owned parking spaces, are the Parish Council going to place a sign stating as such. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that the reasons this issue was originally raised was that it came up at a Finance and General Purposes meeting as to whether or not these parking spaces were owned by the Parish Council, and works were completed by the village hall to maintain these spaces, there could be a legitimate claim by the village hall saying the Parish Council needed to pay them back. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that the Clerks research has now clarified the position, and she feels the parking spaces should stay as they are, and that she had never wanted them marked as Parish Council spaces. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated she hoped this would now be the end of the matter. The Clerk stated that as part of the new Transparency Code, the Parish Council is required to identify any land it owns, including car parking spaces.

The question was raised as to if any agreements were made within the transfer document concerning maintenance of the access to this site, to which the Clerk stated there was not.

C15.164 PARISH SAFETY VOUNTEERS

Members *NOTED* that Essex County Fire and Rescue Service in partnership with Essex Police is establishing a new volunteering scheme. It aims to help those living in Parish to be, and feel, safer in their homes and to build more resilient communities across the County. The aim is to recruit two Parish Safety Volunteers per Parish in Essex, who will be tasked with arranging and conducting home safety visits. These volunteers will deliver crucial fire and crime prevention advice, extensive knowledge of local support services and the ability to fit smoke detectors directly into the homes of those most in need.

People interested in volunteering will be asked to apply for interview, and required to undertake Essex Police vetting. They will receive comprehensive training from both Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Police, a full uniform and all equipment required. To ensure volunteers are well supported, Parish Safety Volunteers from across the county will be invited to on-going training and networking opportunities throughout the year.

The scheme will be *fully* managed and funded by Essex Fire Service and Essex Police through funding provided by Essex County Council. Parish Councils would be greatly appreciated in assisting in helping to recruit volunteers wherever possible. Any Members who are interested were asked to contact the Clerk for further details.

C15.165 CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Proposed Move of Post Office

Members **NOTED** that documentation had been received from The Post Office Limited relating to the proposed move of the post office to new premises & branch modernisation. Details of the consultation were attached to the agenda. Cllr Mrs Grigg stated that she would like to support this move, as she is aware that Roy has been trying to retire for some time, however a suitable alternative premises in North Weald had not be found. It is important the post office stays within North Weald, as it would be a great disadvantage to our residents if we lose it. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Bartram would complete this consultation on behalf of the Parish Councils supporting this move.

C15.166 QUEENS 90TH BIRTHDAY

a) Beacons

Members **NOTED** that on the occasion of Her Majesty, the Queen's 90th Birthday, it has been suggested that many communities will be lighting Beacons to mark the occasion, and that certain criteria will need to be adhered to if a Beacon is to be lit. Those involved in the organising of the Beacons need to contact Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) for further directions. Members were therefore asked to advise Residents to contact EFDC if they have any queries in regards to this matter.

b) Clean for the Queen

As part of the Queens 90th Birthday celebrations, a countrywide 'Clean for the Queen' litter pick campaign has been launched. Full details were attached to the agenda. Cllr Tyler stated that this was a litter picking and tidying up of the country as a whole, the idea being we make the country and clean and tidier place for the Queen on her birthday. All the equipment needed could be borrowed by EFDC, and as many groups as possible could be involved, as well as members of the community. This would be a good opportunity to raise the profile of the Parish Council, whilst benefitting the community and celebrating the Queen's Birthday. It was suggested this could be passed over to the Environmental Committee to consider.

Cllr Mulliner stated that there were two members of the Council who complete a litter pick each month, and although there seems to be a lot of enthusiasm around the table, nobody ever turns up to assist. Cllr Mulliner suggested that this should be incorporated into a regular monthly litter pick, with specific people doing specific areas. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she had noticed the signs along the highway and centre bollards were extremely dirty, and a bucket of soapy water and some elbow grease was all that was needed to clean them up. This would make such a difference the general feel of the village.

Cllr Tyler stated that the official countrywide date for this project was the weekend of 4/6 March, however the Queens actual birthday was 14th-15th May. Cllr Eldridge stated that Hastingwood never gets cleared of litter no matter how many times this is requested. The Chairman asked if there was a specific area where there was lots of rubbish, to which Cllr Tyler stated that it wasn't necessarily that the Parish was full of litter but was more of a way to create community cohesion and gets residents to join together in a community event.

It was **AGREED** that this could be passed to the Environmental Committee to consider, with the support of Cllr Tyler.

C15.167 JOINT PARTNERSHIP WORKING NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

At the January Parish Council meeting, Cllr Tyler suggested that a more pro-active approach to joint partnership working with the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in North Weald could benefit both parties. It was **AGREED** that in light of the sad death of Mick Sheen, this item would be deferred to a later meeting.

C15.168 PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Members recalled that Townlink Buses Ltd went before the Traffic Commissioners Office on 3rd and 4th November 2015, in Cambridge. The Traffic Commissioner made their decision and decided to revoke their licences with effect from 26th February 2016. This affects several bus services in and around the Brentwood, Epping and Harlow areas. Essex County Council officers are currently assessing the impact of this decision. Some commercial bus operators have already taken on some of these services commercially or expressed an interest and Essex County Council will continue to assess if there are any gaps in service as a result. If there are any gaps, they may need to provide a contract for replacement journeys/services. The Parish Council has downloaded a copy of the most recent Trusty Bus Timetable, and does hold copies in the Library. These are available on the Parish Council opening days. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that at Ongar Parish Council, they had a large representation regarding the 21 bus service that runs through Brentwood, and ECC has agreed to run this service at their expense for a period of time to establish how many people actually use it.

C15.169 ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CYCLING STRATEGY

Members **NOTED** that Essex County Council had recently consulted on a County wide cycling strategy, however Parish Councils were not formally advised of this consultation. Following on from the results of this consultation, ECC, in conjunction with Epping Forest District Council, held a Stakeholder Meeting on 15th January 2016, the purpose being that they are seeking to develop a Cycling Action Plan for the Epping Forest District, the outcome of which will be presented to the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel at its March 2016 meeting. The PFO attended this meeting, stating that Epping Forest District has the lowest level of Cycling in the County, and that suggested new cycling routes were mooted at the meeting. Stakeholders were also invited to suggest any proposed cycling routes. There was only one suggested route put forward for North Weald, which was a Cycling route going alongside the Epping-Ongar railway track. The PFO had also suggested a cycling route between Thornwood and Epping would be a good idea. Councillors supported these two suggested routes.

C15.170 TRANSPARENCY CODE 2015

In 2015, the Government introduced the Transparency Code, the aim being to place more power into citizen's hands to increase democratic accountability and make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision making process and help shape public services. The code is guided by three principles – It must be ***demand led, open*** and ***timely***. The code places an additional obligation on Parish Councils to publish a broad range of material, allowing local people to see how money is spent, how the council uses its access, its decision making process and highlighting issues important to local people. As a Parish Council with a gross annual income or expenditure exceeding £200,000, this council is required under to code to publish specific information. A full breakdown of what this means had been completed by the office staff, and was attached to the agenda. There are a number of areas where this Council currently does not comply with the code, and Council considered the approval of a number of documents (also attached to the agenda) to ensure its obligations are met. These were:

- Details of local authority owned land
- Organisation chart
- Public Car Parking Spaces.
- Parish Council constitution

Council ***RESOLVED*** to formally ***ADOPT*** the above items, and for them to be published in accordance with the requirements of the transparency code.

C15.171 EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES

Members were reminded that the Audit Commission ceased to exist on the 1st April 2015, and was being replaced by a new company Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd. This company has been created to take over the appointment of **external** auditors and the setting of audit fees for smaller authorities from 2017. It is set up on behalf of the Department of Communities and Local Government by the National Association of Local Councils, and the Society of Local Councils. This company will formally appoint external auditors on behalf of Parish and Town Councils, much as the Audit Commission did previously. This would be set for a five year period from the financial year 2017/18. This will happen automatically unless the Council decides to 'opt out' and set up an Independent Audit Panel to procure **external** audit itself.

Copies of the circular from EALC was attached to the agenda, and details of guidance on how to obtain further information on how to opt out can be found on this circular. The Clerk has spoken to three other Parish/Town Councils regarding this matter, all of whom have taken the decision that it would be more prudent to proceed with the new company.

After consideration, it was ***RESOLVED*** to remain within the new Sector Led Body arrangements, and ***NOT*** to opt-out.

C15.172 JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

All Parish and Town Councils within Epping Forest are invited to be Members of the Joint Standards Committee (JSC) and this Council has joined that committee and nominated a Councillor to be a representative. Unfortunately due to current commitments, that Member is unable to represent this council on that committee and a new member is now necessary to be appointed. Meetings are normally held on no more than two occasions each year. Members were asked to contact the Clerk if they were willing to stand as a Member of the JSC.

C15.173 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

As Members were aware, the Parish Council currently holds the Local Council Awards Scheme (Foundation) Level. This is set to expire at the end of January. Staff are currently working on the next level and hope to be in a position to submit the application in the next couple of weeks. Part of the application will involve a number of documents that will have to be linked to our website and which have either had to be updated (such as the Training Policy and the Complaint Policy) or a completely new document drawn up, such as the Business Plan. All of these documents were attached to the agenda. Members reviewed these documents, and it was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** these documents and for them to be published on the Parish Council website if so required. Cllr Mrs Jackman asked if the Parish Council would be going for gold status, to which the Clerk stated they were going for Intermediate.

Meeting closed 9.36pm

Signed
Date