



DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 8th January 2018

Time: 7.30PM

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

PRESENT:

Councillors (10) A Buckley (Chairman) B Clegg, B Bartram, N Bedford, G Mulliner,
Mrs Godwin-Brown, D Stallan, R Spearman, B Eldridge, Mrs Jackman MBE

Officers in Attendance (2)

Susan Deluca - Clerk

Joanna Tyler – Senior Administrative Officer

Members of the Public (2)

Members of the Press (0)

C17.140 VACANCY FOR A COUNCILLOR

Members **NOTED** that there was currently a vacancy in the Hastingwood Ward due to the resignation of Cllr Harris. The Clerk apologised for the error in the agenda, which reported that the vacancy was in Village Ward. Members **NOTED** that the vacancy had been reported to Epping Forest District Council Elections Office.

C17.141 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (3)

NOTED that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Blanks, Tyler and Mrs Grigg

C17.142 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

No other absences were recorded.

C17.143 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 4th December 2017 were **AGREED** and duly signed as a true record. The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting held on Monday, 18th December 2017 were **AGREED** and duly signed as a true record.

Councillors **NOTED** the Minutes of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Common Management Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 7th December 2017.

Cllr Bartram informed Members that the Queens Hall Charity Meeting scheduled to take place in December was cancelled as the committee was not quorum.

C17.144 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Spearman declared a pecuniary interest with regard to any item relating to the Local Plan.

C17.145 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were 2 members of the public present, one of whom had expressed a wish to address the Council. The Clerk informed Members that Mr Hamish Buttle would like to ask a question. Mr Buttell stated that he had noted that there was to be an

Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 22nd January 2018 to specifically discuss the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation. Mr Buttle stated that he would like to request an opportunity to make a further presentation to the Parish Council and also to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to discuss his company's proposals.

The Chairman asked if Members had any objection to this request. The Clerk stated that it would be difficult for a presentation to be made at the Extraordinary Meeting as the Parish Council would be discussing its own comments with regard to the Local Plan, adding that the Principal Financial Officer was currently compiling comments for that meeting. The Clerk informed Councillors that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had already agreed that they would meet with developers and that it would be for Members to decide if they wished to do the same. The Clerk stated that the only way she could guide Members was to make them aware that they could not pick and choose who they wished to meet with and that if they agreed to meet a developer they would need to meet with all developers. The Clerk therefore suggested that the Parish Council does not meet with developers on the day of the Extraordinary Meeting, but to agree to arrange a later date. The Chairman asked the Clerk if she knew how many developers that would entail. The Clerk stated that, following on from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings, she believed there would be between 8 and 12 developers that they would want to meet with. The Clerk added that if the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group wanted to meet with developers, then she believed that the Parish Council should also meet with developers, otherwise it would not be right.

Councillor Stallan stated that the reason for calling an Extraordinary Meeting was to discuss the Local Plan that it is out on consultation, as stated in the report, until 29th January and the remit for public consultation relates to the 'Tests of Soundness' and also includes legal compliance. He stated that whether Members do finally decide to meet with developers would be a different matter, adding that if one potential developer meets with the Parish Council on that night, Members would, in theory, have to open the meeting up to all developers, not just to those who are not included in the submission plan but also to those developers which are included. Cllr Stallan stated that he thought it would be right not to meet, in particular as the remit is on the 'Test of Soundness' and that is all. Cllr Stallan reiterated that the sites would not be discussed, just the 'Test of Soundness' adding that this would be what the Parish Council would be making representations under. Cllr Stallan stated that it would then go straight to the inspector, adding that this was the reason why he had argued at the Precept Meeting for money to be set aside in case the Parish Council needed to seek professional advice. Cllr Stallan reiterated that if the Parish Council wanted to meet with developers it needed to be after the Extraordinary Meeting.

Cllr Bedford stated that he agreed with Cllr Stallan, that the Parish Council should not be talking to developers at this early stage. Cllr Bedford stated that his view would be that the Parish Council waits until the inspector comments so that we know what the inspector is advising. Cllr Stallan asked the Chairman if he could interject. Cllr Stallan stated that if the Parish Council meets with developers, it needs to be before the Local Plan goes to public inspection, as once it comes back from the inspector,

there would be nothing more to discuss. Cllr Stallan reiterated that this would be the District Council's Local Plan, there would be nothing more to discuss.

The Clerk asked the Chairman if she could interject. The Clerk informed Members that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had agreed to ask developers to meet with them on a couple of Saturdays. The Clerk stated that the Steering Group would be having a meeting in two weeks to discuss how they would meet with the developers. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council may be able to use the same format. The Chairman suggested that, in order to save time, the developers could present to both the Parish Council and the Steering Group. All Members **AGREED** with the suggestion.

Cllr Bedford stated that he would like to second Cllr Stallan's proposal. Cllr Clegg asked if the Extraordinary Meeting would be closed or open to members of the public. The Clerk confirmed that the meeting would be open. The Clerk stated that rather than placing the item on the next Parish Council Meeting, it was agreed that it would be better to have a meeting specifically for this to discuss the comments that the Principal Financial Officer puts forward and for Members to agree/disagree. Cllr Clegg stated that he agreed with what Cllr Stallan had said and that the Extraordinary Meeting should be for the Parish Council alone, allowing anybody to attend who wishes to observe it, but without any further presentation.

Cllr Stallan said that what he proposed was that the Parish Council may wish to discuss, in light of the question from the member of the public, that we do not meet at this stage, the question should be placed on an agenda for Members to make a decision. That decision should be made on the 22nd January. The Clerk confirmed that she would place the item on the agenda. Mr Buttle thanked Members, stating that he was happy with that decision.

C17.146 CLERKS COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Members **NOTED** that there was no report due to the Christmas and New Year period. The Clerk confirmed that the majority of the work undertaken had been general duties and the opening of the new section of the cemetery.

C17.147 REPORTS AND MEMBERS REPORTS

- a) **Chairman's Report** – The Chairman reported that Norway House had held its Christmas Party, the donation from Members of the Parish Council had been gratefully received. All of the children received a selection box and the remainder of the monies were used for the buffet. The children really enjoyed themselves. The Chairman stated that he had been approached by a resident of Norway house and was asked to pass on her thanks to the Parish Council for their contribution. Cllr Stallan passed on comments from residents of Norway House, saying how much they appreciated the party and that the residents did not realise the Parish Council contributed so much.
- b) **Vice-Chairman's Report** – The Vice Chairman reported that the horses had not returned to the Mill Street verges, which residents are very pleased about. The Vice Chairman mentioned that, along with bulb planting, the verges are being widened and ditches filled in. Logs are being placed along the sides to stop lorries

encroaching on to the verges, however, they do not appear to stop the lorries as the logs sink into the ground, therefore this continues to be an ongoing problem.

- c) **District Councillors Report** – Cllr Bedford asked whether details regarding the reporting of fly-tipping could be noted on the Parish Council website, in order for members of the public to clearly see what has been reported, this would cut down on multiple reports. Cllr Bedford stated that this would be of benefit to him as a District Councillor as it would reduce the number of emails that he sends to District Council reporting these items.

The Vice Chairman asked the Chairman if he could report an item which he should have included in the previous report. The Vice Chairman informed Members that there was an issue with fly-tipping on the pathway leading to Brent House Farm. He believed that an enforcement officer from Epping Forest District Council was going to deal with the problem, however, because it is the pathway leading to the farm it is nothing to do with the District Council, the responsibility for removing the rubbish lies with the builders. The Vice Chairman expressed concern that there are rats running around the rubbish at night. The Clerk stated that she would look into the matter further.

Cllr Stallan referred to the meeting held on 14th December at EFDC regarding the submission version of the Local Plan, which was agreed. He stated that he had chaired that meeting which lasted for around 5 hours with a couple of breaks and wished his thanks to be recorded to the Chairman, the Clerk, Adriana and others who had attended that meeting in the public gallery. Cllr Stallan reported that members had commented how well behaved residents attending were, in consideration of the contentious items that were being discussed.

Cllr Stallan mentioned that the Chairman's quiz evening is to be held on Friday, 19th January 2018 at Theydon Bois Village Hall and that if the Parish Council wished to put a team of 8 together, they would need to let District Council know as soon as possible. The quiz is in aid of the Chairman's charities. The Clerk stated that if any Members wished to attend, she would take details after the meeting had closed. Cllr Bartram stated that he would need to give his apologies as he would be chairing the British Legion meeting that evening.

- d) **County Councillors Reports** – none received.

- e) **Parish Councillors Reports**

Cllr Mulliner informed Members that the planting of the hedgerow around the new section of the cemetery had been completed in time for the opening of Meadowbrook on Wednesday, 10th January 2018. Cllr Mrs Jackman MBE asked if parking would be available in the cemetery. The Clerk confirmed that it would be and recommended that those attending arrive at 11.50am for 12 o'clock prompt start. Cllr Bedford asked the Clerk to record his apologies as he would not be able to attend the event. The Clerk confirmed that there would be a reception in the Parish Hall, Thornwood, at 1pm.

Cllr Spearman reported that a resident had complained that there appeared to be a rough sleeper using the play area in Thornwood. On visiting the play area Cllr Spearman found cans of lager and cardboard around the youth shelter. Cllr Stallan stated that Housing at EFDC should be informed.

Cllr Clegg mentioned that the sign located at the junction of Duck Lane and Woodside is still awaiting repair. The Senior Administrative Officer confirmed that the matter had been reported to Highways some time ago.

Cllr Spearman mentioned that the manhole cover in Weald Hall Lane is still awaiting repair. The Senior Administrative Officer confirmed that the Vice Chairman of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Management Committee was liaising with ECC Highways regarding this item.

Cllr Bedford mentioned that there was a large pot hole in Emberson Way that needed to be reported. The Clerk confirmed that it had been reported to Highways and that it would be chased.

f) Neighbourhood Plan & Local Plan – Update
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN REGULATION
19 CONSULTATION

Members **NOTED** the following:-

On 14th December 2017, EFDC agreed the content of the submission version of the Local Plan that will guide development in the District to the year 2033. As such, the Local Plan is now undergoing its Regulation 19 consultation giving all Stakeholders an opportunity to make representation on the plan. The Regulation 19 phase of the consultation process provides local communities, businesses and other interested stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on the policy content of a draft Local Plan, within a specific remit. The remit for public consultation relates to the ‘Tests of Soundness’ and also includes legal compliance, as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Para 182 of the NPPF – Examining Local Plans – states the following:

The Local Plan will be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to Assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound. A local planning authority should submit a plan for examination which it considers is “sound” – namely that it is:

- 1. **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;*
- 2. **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;*

3. *Effective* – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
4. *Consistent with national policy* – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

The Local Plan consultation documents total over 600 pages, a hard copy of which is located in both the Parish Council Offices and North Weald Library for full review. Councillors are urged to take some time to read the main sections of the Local Plan prior to the meeting, however due to the amount of documents that need to be read and considered, it is expected that an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held after the Planning Committee meeting on 22nd January specifically to discuss this item, and for Councillors to consider if they wish to make a formal response to this consultation, the deadline for responses being 29th January 2018.

C17.148 FINANCIAL REPORTS

a) CONFIRMATION OF BUDGET AND PRECEPT

Members were asked to resolve to agree the Budget and Precept for the Year 2018-2019.

The Clerk referred Members to the Finance and General Purposes papers, as per the meeting held on 18th December 2017, a precept of £184,249, which represents a 5% increase, was agreed. The Chairman asked if Members had any further comments. The Clerk stated that as it is a resolution, a proposer and seconder would be required. Cllr Eldridge **PROPOSED** to agree the Budget and Precept for the Year 2018-2019, this was **SECONDED** by Cllr Bartram. A vote was taken, the results of which were as follows:-

- 8 – For
- 2 - Abstentions

b) List of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts

The Clerk confirmed that these would be presented at the February Meeting, as the Principal Financial Officer was on annual leave.

c) Internal Audit

Members **NOTED** the Report of the Internal Auditor, who had carried out the Council's Interim Audit, a copy of which was attached to the Agenda.

d) External Auditors

NOTIFICATION OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENTS FOR 2017/18 FINANCIAL YEAR

Members **NOTED** the following:-

Under powers set out in Regulation 3 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Lt (SAAA) was appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as “a person specified to appoint local auditors” and as the Sector Led Body (SLB) for smaller authorities. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is less than £6.5 million. This Parish Council opted-in to the

central procurement process and as such PKF LittleJohn LLP has been appointed as auditor for this Council for the 5 year period commencing with the financial year 2017/2018. The Annual Return will now be known as the “Annual Governance and Accountability Return” and will need to be completed in accordance with “proper practices” as set out in ‘*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, a Practitioners’ Guide*’, and then be published in accordance with the applicable Transparency Codes. The new Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms will be sent out by the appointed auditor electronically at the end of the financial year.

Cllr Mrs Jackman MBE asked for a vote of thanks to be recorded for the work undertaken in submitting it to the auditor. All Members **AGREED**.

C17.149 NORTH WEALD BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL CEMETERY – OPENING OF MEADOW BROOK SECTION

Members **NOTED** that the Opening of the Second Section of the Cemetery, the Meadow Brook Section, was to be carried out on Wednesday, 10th January 2018 at 12 noon. This would be followed by a Reception to be held at the Parish Hall in Thornwood.

The Clerk informed Members that a number of dignitaries would be attending, including the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Rosemary Padfield, Cllr Aldridge who is the Chairman of Essex County Council, Cllr Stallan who is the Chairman of Epping Forest District Council, the Mayor of Epping and the Mayor of Loughton. Together with an additional 25 to 30 distinguished guests.

Cllr Mulliner asked the Chairman if there was to be a second entrance into the Meadow Brook Section. The Chairman stated that there had been one or two complaints about people accessing the first burial section by walking across graves, therefore the idea of one entrance to the new section would stop this from happening by directing visitors into the second section from one entry. The entrance had been created to ensure that it is wide enough to accommodate the pall bearers. The Chairman stated that there would be a possibility in the future to create a second entrance if necessary.

Cllr Mulliner asked for confirmation that when the plots are sold in Meadow Brook Section that no adornments would be placed there. The Clerk confirmed that plot owners would be asked to sign a form to say that they are aware that if they placed any adornments on or around the grave, the Parish Council would take them away. Cllr Stallan asked the Clerk to clarify if the form would say the plot owner or his/her heirs, the Clerk confirmed that this would be the case.

The Clerk referred Members to the diary sheet included in the Agenda packs and asked that they delete the entry for Thursday, 3rd May as Cllr Stallan had advised that there may be District Council Elections held in Thornwood on this date. The Clerk thanked Cllr Stallan for advising.

Meeting closed: 8.10pm

Signed
Date