



MINUTES

Meeting: PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 5th June 2017

Time: 7.30PM

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

PRESENT:

Councillors (14) C Hawkins (Chairman), A Buckley, B Clegg, B Bartram, G Mulliner, Mrs Grigg, Mrs Godwin-Brown, R Spearman, D Stallan, N Bedford Mrs S Jackman, T Blanks, A Tyler, B Eldridge

Officers in Attendance (2)

Susan Deluca - Clerk

Adriana Jones - Principal Finance Officer

Members of the Public (1)

Members of the Press (1)

C17.020 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)

NOTED that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Harris.

C17.021 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

No other absences were recorded.

C17.022 MINUTES

Cllr Mrs Jackman stated her name was incorrect on page 7, and that she should also be listed as sitting on the Local Liaison committee under the 2017/2018 committee listing. Subject to these changes, the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 8th May 2017 were *AGREED*. The following minutes were *NOTED*:

- The Minutes of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Common held on the 11th May 2017
- The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on the 18th May 2017
- The Minutes of the Queens Hall Charity – held on the 18th April 2017

The Clerk advised that as there were currently vacancies on the Queens Hall Charity for Parish Council appointed trustees, she planned to circulate these minutes when possible, and if any Councillor was interested in becoming an appointed trustee to let her know.

**C17.023 TO RATIFY THE ITEMS FROM THE REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
DISSEMINATION MEETING**

The items from the Remembrance Sunday Dissemination meeting as attached to the agenda were *RATIFIED*.

**C17.024 TO RATIFY THE ITEM FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING
MEETING REGARDING THE QUEENS ROAD ALLOTMENT LEASE**

Members were given details of the Lease of the Allotments at Queens Road. Clause 5 had been pointed out by Whiskers as needing special consideration. Members asked if this could be reviewed by the person who had also looked at the Wheelers Farm Gardens Allotment Land before it was signed off, however the clerk confirmed this individual was not available. The Clerk confirmed that both herself and

Principal Finance Officer had gone through clause 5 of the lease in fine detail and could not find any issues with this. The main points in clause 5 were regarding the need for the Statutory Undertaker to have access in case of an emergency, and if needed approval to break the lock to gain access, the cost of which would be refunded to the Parish Council. The Clerk had emailed all Councillors to confirm her findings, and had received 7 positive responses. Therefore, in conjunction with the Chairman the Clerk had responded to EFDC confirming the Parish Council were happy with Clause 5. Whiskers still need to formally confirm this.

Cllr Blanks stated he was very happy to ratify this subject to the Parish Council having access at all times, regardless of whether or not emergency works is being undertaken. The Clerk explained that for Health and Safety reasons there may be times when access was not a possibility. The Clerk explained that she had secured a 99 year with access at all times, other than for Health and Safety reasons. Cllr Blanks expressed his concern that the Parish Council should not be denied access to land that they lease by another party, other than if the Parish Council choose to restrict access themselves. Cllr Blanks stated that he would not want this to prevent any agreement taking place, but wanted to express his concern that access should be available at all times, and that this should be the approach that the Parish Council should take for all such agreements going forward. Cllr Eldridge stated that he understood Cllr Blanks' concerns, however felt that this should be ratified. This was seconded by Cllr Tyler.

Councillors **RATIFIED** acceptance of the lease and clause 5.

C17.025 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Bedford, Cllr Clegg, Cllr Blanks, and Cllr Tyler declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 14 by virtue of being a member of the Parish Council appointed Neighbourhood Plan Sub Committee. Cllr Spearman declared a pecuniary interest in the Local Plan.

C17.026 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The one member of the public present was welcomed.

C17.027 CLERKS COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

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

| Date | Reported By or Action Initiated By | Regarding | Action Taken | Further Action Taken |
|------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| MAY | CLERK | Cemetery | Ongoing/C ontinuing | VARIOUS ADMINISTRATION |
| MAY | Clerk/PFO | Neighbourhood Area Plan | Ongoing | Various Actions |
| MAY | SENIOR ADMIN OFFICER/PFO/ CLERK | STANDING ORDERS FINANCIAL REGS | Ongoing | Preparation of Documentation |
| MAY | PFO | QUALITY COUNCIL | Ongoing | Admin |
| MAY | PFO | END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS | Continuing | Preparation of Documentation |

| | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|---------|----------------------------|
| MAY | CLERK | ALLOTMENTS | ONGOING | Lease |
| MAY | CLERK | SOLICITORS | ONGOING | FIRST REGISTRATION OF LAND |
| MAY | PFO /clerk | Npsg | ongoing | Grant Application - admin |
| ITEMS RECEIVED WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST | | | | |
| Various EFDC Agendas, North Weald Village Life, EALC – Various Items, Training Items. Allotment Newsletter | | | | |

The Clerk advised members of the Sprit of North Weald brochure regarding Community day taking place on 16th July. The Clerk reminded Councillors that it had previously been agreed that the Parish Council would not have a stand this year, however the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were intending to have a stand.

C17.028 REPORTS AND MEMBERS REPORTS

- a) **Chairman's Report** –The Chairman reported it had been a relatively quiet month.
- b) **Vice-Chairman's Report** – Cllr Buckley gave a quick update on the garden outside the shops, confirming that both himself, Cllr Mulliner and their respective wives completed some weeding and replaced the winter plants with begonias. Work has begun on sourcing sponsors for this coming year. Stuart Poulton Family Funeral Directors had already agreed to sponsor for this coming year, and an update was awaited from a number of other organisations. Once sponsorship had been agreed, new markers would be made up and an article placed in village life to thank those local organisations on behalf of the Parish Council.
- c) **District and County Councillors Report** – Cllr Bedford reported that whilst he had no District Councillor report, he wanted to raise the issue of flags being lowered in the Parish in response to major incidents and other notable occasions. Cllr Bedford confirmed he was happy to have a key to support this, and suggested there should be a few keys held. Councillors **AGREED**, and the Chairman confirmed he would get some keys cut. It was **NOTED** that new flags had also been ordered.

Cllr Bedford advised that it was the Duke of Cambridge's birthday on 21st June, and that the flag need to be changed for this day. In addition, 24th June was armed forced day, and that the flag would again need to be changed. Cllr Bedford also suggested the flagpole and line should be checked for safety, to which it was confirmed that the stability of the pole was completed annually as part of the Asset checks, but not the line. Cllr Bartram confirmed this was repaired a short time ago. Cllr Stallan confirmed that Armed Forces day is on the Monday.

Cllr Buckley asked if the planter underneath the flag pole has been actioned to which the Chairman stated he would be dealing with this.

Cllr Grigg advised that the Cabinet agenda was printed today and this included information concerning the local plan and proposed masterplanning exercises, including North Weald. Epping, Debden, and Ongar have also had masterplanning exercises proposed. The Cabinet meeting is on 15th June.

- d) **Councillors Reports** – Cllr Eldridge advised Councillors that Brent House Farm had burned down. The Clerk advised that she had tried to contact Nigel Richardson at EFDC, but had not been successful, however the Clerk didn't believe this would make a difference in terms of any S106 payments due. The Clerk stated she was concerned that Environmental Health were unsure about who owns Brent House Farm, as this information is publicly available. Cllr Eldridge stated that the recently erected notices over Harlow Common concerning the horses have all but blown away.

Cllr Bedford advised of some fly tipping at Art Nursery. Cllr Clegg stated that there was a huge amount of fly tipping along Rye Hill Road, however he was not sure if this was in this Parish. The Chairman confirmed he would visit this site the following day.

- e) **Environmental Issues** – Cllr Mulliner stated that there had been interest in an allotment from a youth from the village, and suggested the Parish Council support him in this.

C17.029 FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

It was **NOTED** these would be presented at the July meeting.

b) **Notice of Internal Audit**

Members **NOTED** that the Internal Auditor will be in attendance on the 9th June.

c) **Approval of Accounts / External Audit**

Councillors **NOTED** that the date on which the External Audit must be approved by the Parish Council as being 12th June 2017. As there will not be Council meeting prior to this time, the Council:

- (i) Completed a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control
- (ii) Considered the findings of the review
- (iii) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/2017.
- (iv) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statements for 2016/2017.

The Accounting Statements were signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting. It was **AGREED** that the period of public rights and publication of the unaudited annual return would be between 8th June and 17th July, and that the relevant notices would be erected.

C17.030 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

It was **NOTED** that these would be on the July agenda for formal Adoption by Members as they will be placed in front of the Parish Council's Internal Auditor under Corporate Governance for his comments in the first instance.

C17.031 FIRST REGISTRATION OF LAND

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk was in current correspondence with the Councils Solicitors, and has expressed her concern at the level of service being offered. The

Solicitor has reverted stating that this task will take some time. The Clerk summarised the current status in terms of each piece of land, and stated that the amount owed for the work to date was around £600. The Clerk had spoken to the previous Conveyancer recently used, an agreement would have to be made with them to undertake the work, however if they could do the work the estimate given was approximately, £600/£700 however a more concise price would be needed if we were to go forward.. It was confirmed that the Solicitors' currently hold all the relevant files. Cllr Eldridge **PROPOSED** that the current solicitors bill should be paid, and all documents removed from them and an alternative solicitor/conveyancer used. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Tyler. Both Cllr Bedford and Cllr Grigg suggested that costings from an alternative solicitor were sourced in case the Parish Council needed a solicitor in the future for any future matters.

C17.032 WEALD COMMON – NETS FOR 5ASIDE GOAL POSTS

It was noted that the Clerk had received a request for Members to consider providing Nets for the 5Aside Goal Posts on Weald Common. This request had been made by a Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator who had been speaking to users of the grassed area where the 5aside Goal posts are situated. The area is not big enough for 'formal' organised games, but is simply used as a kick about area. The Clerk read out for members the full email request. The Chairman expressed concern in terms of resources stating that in that in Harlow these nets have to be erected and removed daily as Deer will often get caught in them. Cllr Buckley stated that the Parish Council recently spent much time, effort and cost to provide a youth shelter at the exact same location, and this was vandalised and demolished within weeks of it being installed. After discussion, it was **AGREED** not to provide such nets and that a letter should be written to the applicant.

C17.033 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP–USE OF GAZEBO

It was **AGREED** that the NP Steering Group would be able to use the Parish Council's Gazebo, tables and chairs for their public events subject to availability.

C17.034 DATA PROTECTION ACT – BESPOKE COURSE FOR COUNCILLORS

Councillors **NOTED** that new updated legislation will soon be coming into force regarding Data Protection - important legislation that needs to be addressed. Data Protection legislation is currently in force however this is in addition to the current legislation. One Council (Basildon) has just been fined in excess of £100,000 for having information on its website relating to a certain section of the community, under the Data Protection Act. Office staff have been concerned for some time now regarding the Data Protection legislation rules. The office staff will be attending a short course on current legislation on June, however it was suggested that Councillors were also trained in the DPA and new regulations to ensure they too were aware of the requirements and obligations of the Parish Council, as well as understanding what the office staff are legally required to do. Members discussed this issue and if they would like to have this course arranged in order that they can all attend to ensure that they are aware of the importance of Data Protection to local councils. Cllr Grigg stated that as a District Councillor she had been advised of the need to protect personal information and the importance of doing so. It was **AGREED** that a bespoke course in the evening should be arranged, possible in September.

C17.035 FLY THE FLAG - ARMED FORCES DAY

Attached to the agenda was a letter from the Ministry of Defence with recommendations for Armed Forces Day and the Duke of Cambridge's Birthday. Members **NOTED** and accepted these recommendations.

C17.036 PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTING COURSE

It was noted that the Rural Community Council of Essex was offering a Course for Councillors or Staff who manage or own Village Halls to undertake training for portable appliance testing (pat testing). Whilst it is a certificated course, at a cost of £70 for the training and £200 for the appliance pack, there are concerns that electrical legislation & HSE legislation is constantly changing. The Parish Council currently has its PAT test undertaken at the Parish Hall by an independent certificated company which this year cost approx. £50.00. It was also noted that Essex CC asked that the Parish Council undertake the PAT testing of Parish Council items within the Library, this year also at an additional cost of £50. The benefit of having a certificated independent company to carryout PAT testing for the Parish Council is that they are able to keep up with current legislation. Cllr Tyler expressed his concern regarding this, stating that legislation changes constantly and there was pitfalls with completing this in house. After discussion it was **AGREED** to continue with an external provider for this service.

C17.037 PEER GROUP NOTES

It was **AGREED** that the notes of the presentation given by the Peer Group regarding their proposals for development in North Weald were not restricted for publication.

Meeting closed: 8.30pm

Signed

Date