



MINUTES

Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 3 March 2014

Time: 7.30 PM

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

PRESENT:

Councillors (9) C Hawkins (Chairman), B Eldridge, B Clegg, B Bartram, P Collins,
A Buckley, Mrs E Godwin-Brown, R Spearman, G Mulliner

Also in Attendance (2)

Adriana Jones - Finance and Administrative Officer (meeting Clerk)

Joanna Tyler – Administrative Officer

Members of the Public (3) Members of North Weald Mums

Members of the Press (0) No Members of the Press were present

P13.120 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (6)

NOTED that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors R Stallan,
Mrs A Grigg, G McCormack, Mrs D Adams, T Blanks and N Bedford.

P13.121 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

No other absences were recorded.

P13.122 MINUTES

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 2 December 2013 and 3rd February 2014, and **NOTED** the minutes of the Thornwood Village Hall and Playing Field Management Committee meeting held on 6th February 2014.

P13.123 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED there were no Declarations of Interest.

P13.124 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman asked Councillors if they were happy to move agenda item 9 forward for discussion under this heading, due to the fact that the North Weald Mums (NWM) were present in the public gallery and wanted to address the Council. This was **AGREED**.

Councillors recalled that a group of mums (North Weald Mums - NWM) have been actively raising funds to purchase new equipment for the Weald Common Play Area. To date, the funds raised stands at £18,488.59. On 30th January, the NWM and the new WC Play Area Sub-Committee (set up by the Environmental Committee to liaise with the NWM) met to discuss progress, and to address some specific questions, however answers to all these questions have not been forthcoming. Therefore, a further meeting of the Sub-Committee has been arranged for Friday 28th February 2014 to address these issues. A copy of the minutes from this meeting (created by the NWM), together with a copy of the issues to be addressed and the latest minutes of the Environmental Committee were attached to the agenda.

Councillors were asked to **CONSIDER** any recommendations made by the Sub-Committee.

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public, and introduced Sue Malpass who had asked to address the Council. Ms Malpass thanked the Chairman, stating that there were two reasons for attending the meeting, the first being to give an update on progress to date in terms of the funding the NWM group has secured, and secondly to formally request that the Parish Council applies for funding via the National Lottery Awards for All program. Ms Malpass stated that as Chairperson for the NWM, she is immensely proud of all the mums who are involved in the group, and the effort and hard work they put in.

To date, the events and funding received is in excess of £18,000 which is fantastic. There are four more fund raising events booked, which include a pamper day on 29th March held in association with Barley Barns, an Easter Egg hunt at Weald Common, a Cockney night in June which includes Pie and Mash and will be held in Thornwood Village Hall, and a community day linked with the Tour de France in July, for which £400 has been received towards hosting this event. In terms of funding, the NWM have gone as far as they can, and would like to ask if the Parish Council would apply for funding via the Awards for All program, and also the Co-op grant funding scheme. Ms Malpass confirmed that the NWM have obtained quotes and plans for the park, and fully understand that the Parish Council has ultimate responsibility in terms of making the decisions as to what equipment is purchased.

A second member of the NWM stated that it has been such a successful group, they hope it will continue after the Play Area has been completed, and that some of the events could continue to be held annually such as the carol singing on the green at Christmas.

The meeting Clerk stated that the request for the Parish Council to apply for funding had been an agenda item on the Weald Common Play Area Sub-Committee meeting held on 28th February, and that a recommendation would be going to the Environmental Committee to apply for it. After some discussion, Councillors **AGREED** unanimously to apply for both the Awards for All funding of £10,000, and for the Co-Op fund for £500.

Cllr Buckley asked if the NWM had an update on any of the grant applications they had made themselves, to which Ms Malpass stated that EFDC would be making a decision mid march, however there was no update with Tesco.

Cllr Collins stated that he would like to congratulate the NWM on producing very professional and informative set of minutes following their meeting in January, and he would like to suggest the Bassett Industrial Units are approached for support as they have supported other community initiatives in the past. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Collins would email Ms Malpass with contact details. Cllr Collins continued, stating that Community events are an excellent idea, and such events in the Parish have

declined over recent years - it is nice to see people taking this forward. Cllr Collins stated that he also wanted to address the consultation that took place at the original time the Play Area was installed, stating that the reason there was a consultation was that there were no such leisure facilities on Weald Common at that time, and there was concern that a play area could cause disruption to local residents. The Play Area has been in situ for a number of years, and the need to hold a further consultation is not necessarily needed. Cllr Collins stated that he would be concerned however if the fence surrounding the play area was removed, as this acts as a physical barrier to dogs.

Cllr Buckley asked if the equipment would need to be similar to that already in place, and in keeping with the surroundings, however it was stated that following investigation, the only stipulation on the Sec 106 agreement was that it should be a 'pocket part', details of which were not defined.

Cllr Godwin-Brown suggested that perhaps a project next year could be to create a picnic type area near to the Play Area for the mums and children in the summer.

The Chairman thanked the NWM for attending, after which they left the meeting 19.51.

P13.125 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Members **NOTED** the following Communications and Correspondence:-

From	Type of Document	Regarding
EALC	Monthly Mailings	<i>Various - NOTED</i>
EALC/ECC	Magazine	<i>Making the Links - NOTED</i>
Essex Highways	Letter	<i>Pre-notice of road closures (Note: these are notices for works scheduled to take place in the next 18 months - when dates are set, the PC will receive more detailed information 2 weeks before the event) - NOTED</i>
Karim Hayat, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community	Email	<i>Would like to hold another community event, and requested ideas that will benefit the community, and suggestions for community work they would be willing to undertake. Councillors confirmed they would contact the Parish Office if they had any ideas for events.</i>

P13.126 REPORTS AND MEMBERS REPORTS

a) Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that it had been a quiet month. In terms of the Tour de France, there are no ideas at present as to how or if this event should be

celebrated by the Council, and if Councillors have any suggestions they should contact the Chairman. Cllr Collins stated that he had given it some thought, and rather than trying to do something along the route where there will be a mass of organised activities held by the organisers, perhaps something should be done in the Parish Council building, green out the front or the car park at the back, boldly stating who the Parish Council are, and that they welcome the Tour. Cllr Godwin-Brown suggested bunting along the lampposts, and asked if there was any budget for this event, to which it was confirmed there was £500.

The Chairman expressed his concern that due to the closure of most of the surrounding roads around the village prior to 8am, the office staff would have trouble getting to the office that day. The meeting Clerk stated that many schools would be closed that day, and getting to the office would be very difficult for the staff.

Cllr Mulliner summarised the route, and stated that in his opinion it would be impossible for the Parish Council to hold any type of event on the green in front of the Library due to the numbers of people who will be lining the street.

Cllr Clegg suggested that perhaps Councillors may not have a clear concept of how big the Tour is, stating that for two hours before the bikes there are advertising vehicles along the route throwing sweets and gifts, and unless you are in a specific position, you will miss it. There will be 20,000 people expected in Epping. Essex County Council website contains details of the event, including a frequently asked questions section.

The Chairman stated that if any Councillors had ideas, and were interested in organising an event, they should let him know.

b) Vice-Chairman's Report

Cllr Eldridge reported that the issue regarding the resident in Foster Street and Priors, as referred to in the previous minutes, has not been resolved. Residents continue to be woken at night by lorries going into Priors, despite the fact that Priors have stated they have stopped this.

Something that resembles a large chicken run has been built in Hastingwood, and EFDC have been asked to visit site and make a report. The area in which it has been built was previously an area that was blocked off due to issues with Gypsies, however the barrier has now been removed and people are driving through, as well as using threatening behaviour to the residents opposite. Cllr Eldridge stated that he would investigate further, however said that he had mentioned this Clerk before Christmas.

c) District Councillors Report

No report.

d) Highways

The meeting Clerk tabled a list of all the Highway issues that had been reported to / by the Parish Council, together with an update on their status. Councillors **NOTED** that this list would be updated regularly and a copy tabled at Parish Council meetings. Each issue had the Highway reference number, and as such could be tracked on the Essex County Council website by Councillors individually.

Cllr Buckley discussed the issue of the BT phone box outside the shops in North Weald, recalling that the Clerk was going to check with BT if the phone box could be removed, and if the green triangle area could be made more presentable. The meeting Clerk stated that it was her understanding this was ongoing with Highways. Cllr Buckley requested this was chased.

e) Councillors Reports

No report.

f) Environmental Issues

Cllr Mulliner reported that the monthly Allotment inspections at Hastingwood Site A would begin this month. There had been a request by the Hastingwood A working group to change the permitted times/dates of bonfires, however it was agreed by the Allotment Sub-Committee not to change them at this time. Weald Common Play Area has been closed due to the poor surface conditions caused by the wet weather. The latest ARD quarterly inspection report had been received and any appropriate action taken. Cllr Mulliner stated that it was interesting to note that there are a number of issues on the report that had been a priority 2 for a number of years (a priority 2 being planned action within 6 months). It was interesting that these issues could remain a priority 2 for such a long time, and as such it would seem to suggest that these are issues that are not deteriorating and the equipment remains safe.

g) Neighbourhood Action Panel

The minutes of the last NAPs meeting were **NOTED**.

h) County Councillors Reports

No report.

P13.127 FINANCIAL REPORTS

a) List of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts

Members **APPROVED** the list of cheques which had been updated and were signed up to 31 December 2013, 31 January 2014 and 28th February 2014.

Cllr Collins asked if A&J Lighting had charged the Parish Council for putting up and taking down of the Christmas Lights. The meeting Clerk confirmed she would investigate, and if necessary obtain a refund. Cllr Godwin-Brown stated that as the lights were not connected to any power, it should be ok for them to remain on the tree.

b) Internal Audit

Councillors **NOTED** that the date for both the Interim and Final Internal Audit for 2013/2014 would be 1st and 2nd May 2014.

P13.128 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Councillors **CONSIDERED** a date for this year's Annual Parish Assembly. Councillors noted that in the past it had been agreed to hold this event at various locations throughout the Parish. Cllr Collins **PROPOSED** that the event should be held at Thornwood as the event was very successful last year, and Thornwood has a stage, their own catering facilities and there would be no cost. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Eldridge. A vote was taken as follows:

For: 8
Against: 0
Abstention: 1

It was therefore **AGREED** to hold this years event at Thornwood Village Hall on 14th April 2014 at 7.00pm.

P13.129 PARISH CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Councillors noted that this year's Citizen of the Year nomination forms were attached to the agenda, and that any nominations would need to be with the Parish office by 30th March. Councillors were also asked to consider if they would like to keep the format as per last year, or to make any changes. It was **AGREED** the format should remain. It was **AGREED** that the following Councillors would meet to agree the winners of the awards: Cllr Clegg, Cllr Eldridge, Cllr Godwin-Brown.

P13.130 PARISH COUNCIL REMUNERATION SCHEMES

Councillors noted that the Clerk had received a letter from Ian Willett, Assistant to the Chief Executive EFDC, asking if the Parish Council wishes to introduce a remuneration scheme. A copy of the letter was attached to the agenda. It was noted that at present, the Parish Council do not have a remuneration scheme in place. Cllr Collins asked what this meant for this Parish Council, to which the meeting Clerk explained that Councils can arrange for their members (Elected Members only) to receive an allowance in relation to any duties they undertake in their position as Councillor. The meeting Clerk confirmed that both Buckhurst Hill and Loughton have schemes in place. Cllr Collins stated that Councillors are not here to make money, and felt it would be inappropriate to introduce such a scheme. This was **AGREED** by all members present.

P13.131 COMMUNITY ASSETS

Councillors **NOTED** that the Community Right to Bid is now in force. It aims to keep valued land and buildings such as your local pub, shop, library or football ground in community use. The Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value in legislation) is one of a raft of new initiatives introduced in the Localism Act 2011.

The Community Right to Bid allows communities and parish councils to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value. An asset can be listed if its principal use furthers (or has recently furthered) their community's social well-being or social interests (which include cultural, sporting or recreational interests) and is likely to do so in the future. When a listed asset comes to be sold, a moratorium on the sale (of up to six months) may be invoked, providing local community groups with a better chance to raise finance, develop a business and to make a bid to buy the asset on the open market.

Councillors **CONSIDERED** if they would like to apply to EFDC for registration of any assets, and if so which. A list of those already suggested were attached to the agenda. Members went through this list, and all were agreed in principal, however it was **AGREED** that the F&A Officer would go through these suggestions to see if they meet the strict criteria for a Community Asset. Any further suggestion should be emailed to the Clerk or the F&A Officer.

P13.132 ANNUAL ALLOTMENT HOLDERS MEETING

Councillors **NOTED** the date of the Annual meeting of allotment holders being Sunday 30th March 2014 at 9.30am. This meeting would be chaired by Cllr Mulliner, however all Councillors were welcome to attend.

P13.133 TOUR DE FRANCE 2014 - Local Authority Planning Group (LAPG)

Councillors **NOTED** the press release by EFDC regarding this event which was attached to the agenda, which detailed the road closures around the Parish. It was also **NOTED** there is a Fete de Tour with events taking place in each host city. On 8th April, the director of the Tour de France will drive through stage 3 of the event. ECC are doing a lot to publicise these events.

P13.134 STAFFING MATTERS

Members discussed the current circumstances regarding the absence of the Clerk to the Council. It was noted that the Finance and Administrative Officer had returned to work on 17th February. Cllr Clegg stated that the Clerk is being heavily covered by all the office staff, and that he was happy to increase the compassionate leave for the Clerk for a further month. Councillors formally requested that their thanks were recorded for the office staff and their efforts over the past 6 weeks.

Meeting closed: 8.55 pm

Signed
Date