



DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 2nd November 2015

Time: 7.30 PM

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

PRESENT:

Councillors (11) C Hawkins (Chairman), A Buckley, T Blanks, B Clegg, R Spearman, B Bartram, G Mulliner, Mrs S Jackman MBE, A Tyler, N Bedford, B Eldridge

Officers in Attendance (2)

Susan Deluca - Clerk

Adriana Jones – Principal Finance Officer

Members of the Public (54) inc 2 x Representatives Essex Police

Members of the Press (2)

C15.101 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (4)

NOTED that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Adams, Stallan, Mrs Godwin-Brown and Mrs Grigg.

C15.102 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

No other absences were recorded.

C15.103 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th October 2015 were *AGREED* and duly signed as a correct record. Draft Minutes of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Committee Meeting held on 1st October 2015, and the Environmental Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2015, were duly *NOTED*.

C15.104 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Bartram, Hawkins, and Buckley declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 - Remembrance Sunday - by virtue of being members of the Royal British Legion.

C15.105 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public present, stating that it was his understanding they were present to express their concern and anger at the lack of policing following the antisocial behaviour in the village the previous weekend. The Chairman asked that points were put forward succinctly, and that only one person at a time spoke in order to ensure everybody could hear the questions being asked and the subsequent responses. The Chairman introduced the two representatives of Essex Police present. The following is a brief summary of the main points raised, the responses given, and any agreed actions.

Q. Why did it take so long for the police to arrive. Calls were made at 6.30pm, police arrived at 7pm, however youths were not dispersed until 9.30pm.

PC Cook stated that he was not present on the night, however had read the incident reports, and unfortunately was unable to offer a response to this question at this time. This was

possibly a delay following the available resources being deployed elsewhere. PC Cook reported that there were resource issues which most members of the public would already be aware of.

Q. There were 13 calls made to the police. During a 999 call, I was informed the incident was not important, however after a firework was thrown the police suddenly decided it was important. What do we, as members of the public, need to do to help the police react quicker.

PC Cook responded stating you have to tell us if its urgent. Ensure you keep yourself safe, but be a good witness. PC Cook stated that resources had been doubled up for 5th November, and that there would be police patrols in the area.

Q. Following the 5.17pm call to the police, a PCSO was present and had powers to take the fireworks away, however she didn't get out of the car. At 5.30pm there were over 40 youths in the road, and three further 999 calls made, still nobody attended. The concern is that youths feel they have free reign. The police were in the village earlier, and this could have been dealt with 2 hours before a young child had a firework thrown at her.

PC Cooks stating that as he was not present, he was unable to answer this question.

Q. It wasn't just fireworks - there was an individual with a BB gun threatening a man at the petrol station. There are also reports of knives and knuckle dusters. Is this true?

PC Cook stating that the police were aware of a BB gun being used, however no further information on this issue could be released at this time as this was an ongoing investigation.

Q. There seems to be a discrepancy over the number of times this issue was reported, and the incident numbers being received, with some members of the public not being given an incident number. Are all the reports treated as incidents?

The Police responded stating this would be a question for the control room, who would be able to source the incident log of the night and could establish the number of incidents reported. The current records show there were 4 calls, however the Chief Inspector would be able to investigate this.

A member of the public stated that generally, the village of North Weald is not a hotspot area for crime or related antisocial behaviour, however wanted to know if this is the type of response the public should expect, and as such are we expected to put up with it. It was generally accepted however that this wasn't a 'seasonal' issue, and that there had been concern for a number of months previously, specifically related to youths on bikes, who were not only a danger to other road users, but putting themselves in danger. Out of the approximate 40 youths present, there was one arrest for possession of an offensive weapon. PC Cook confirmed that not all the youths in the village on the Saturday evening were from the village itself.

The Chairman reminded members of public that the two Officers present would not be able to answer all their questions, and suggested that perhaps through these two Officers, Chief Inspector Denise Morrissey (District Commander for Brentwood) should be invited to come and meet with members of the public to offer explanations. It was suggested that Chief Inspector Morrissey should be invited to attend the NW event on 22nd November 2.30pm at North Weald Village Hall, together with Neil Ross -the schools liaison officer.

Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she had listened to everybody's concerns, and suggested that perhaps 4 or 5 representatives from those present could attend the Epping Forest Local Liaison Committee meeting at which Nick Alston, the Police and Crime Commissioner was going to be present to answer questions from members. It was **AGREED** that a representative of the public present would liaise directly with the Clerk regarding this invitation and the questions they would like put to Nick Alston.

Cllr Blanks formally requested that additional police officers were present in the village over the coming few days, and weekend. PC Cook confirmed that resources had been doubled. Cllr Bedford stated that either the Parish Council or the Police should make a formal request for the use of CCTV, and that this should be put in place by Saturday. PC Cook stated that he had previously requested this in August, however due to various bureaucratic reasons the request had not been followed through. The Clerk confirmed that she would liaise directly with EFDC regarding PC Cooks request.

Members of the public expressed their concern than these youths seem very well educated in their rights, and asked for clarification in terms of the rights of adults wanting to protect themselves or their property. PC Cook stated that every individual has a right to protect themselves, however there were plans in place for a potential pre-planned dispersal order covering a specific period of time, however this would need to be approved by the Chief Inspector. Members present were informed that they were entitled to support such action, and that details would be available on the Parish Councils website.

The Clerk informed the members of the public that action sheets were located at the front of the library, stating that any reports of specific individuals or instances could be reported via this medium and they would be passed on to the police for further investigation.

The Chairman thanked the members of the public present for taking the time to attend, stating that the Parish Council supports the suggested actions, and that the Clerk would liaise directly with the police on these issues. It was also **AGREED** that details as to how to contact the police would be placed on the Parish Council website.

[most members of the public left the meeting].

C15.106 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
Oct	PFO	Play Areas	Ongoing	Various Checks
Oct	Clerk & PFO	Neighbourhood Area Plan	Ongoing	Various Actions
Sept	Clerk & Sen Admin Officer	Remembrance Sunday Events	Ongoing	Liaising with RBL & various organisations / arrangements for lunch etc
Oct	PFO	Internal Audit	Various	For Internal Audit

Oct	PFO / Clerk	Internal Risks	Various	Undertake & write up Reports Financial /HS/ Rem Sun
Oct	PFO	Asset Review	Examine	Undertake Review
Oct	Senior Admin Officer	Various Env/ Highway Matters	Continuing	Ongoing .
Oct	Clerk	Brent House Farm	Continuing	Liaising with EFDC Senior Officers
Oct	Clerk	Grant App	Ongoing	Awaiting Outcome
Oct	Clerk	Hast Vil Hal	Various	Details on PC Agenda
Oct	Cler	Various Meetings	EFDC	Ongoing
ITEMS RECEIVED WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST				
Various EFDC Agendas, North Weald Village Life. Voluntary Action Epping Forest Annual Report				

C15.107 REPORTS AND MEMBERS REPORTS

- a) **Chairman's Report** – The Chairman thanked those Councillors and members of the public who assisted with the bulb planting, and also thanked Cllr Buckley for attending a number of meetings as Vice Chairman.
- b) **Vice-Chairman's Report** – Cllr Buckley reported that the Parish Council had been awarded £2,962 by way of a grant from Epping Forest District Council towards the green area project in front of the shops, and that he was awaiting the licence agreement from ECC. The Clerk has been chasing ECC and hoped to hear from them over the coming few days. The next steps will be to re-assess the overall costs of the project. The bench and the phone has to stay.
- c) **District Councillors Report** – All District Councillors had been invited to send a written report, however no reports had been submitted.
- d) **Councillors Reports** – Cllr Eldridge reported that the residents in Hastingwood are increasingly fed up with the HGVs that go through the village, and suggested that signs should be erected stating that the roads are not suitable for HGVs.
- e) **Environmental Issues** – Cllr Mulliner reported that one of the allotments, previously let to a tenant who had not tended their plot, had been leased to another interested party, and the previous tenants tenancy terminated. Following the recent antisocial behaviour in the village, Cllr Mulliner had noticed a vast amount of litter in the village and had collected around 200 small gas canisters some of which were located on land owned by the Pier Group. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would contact the Pier Group regarding this find, so that they could, if needed, contact the police with regard to permission to arrest offenders on private land. Members noted that the youth shelter on Weald Common had been vandalised, the damage including panels ripped from the side, the bench and back panels set fire to, and it's full of graffiti and litter. It was **AGREED** the Environmental Committee would be asked to consider the future of the youth shelter, and whether or not money should be spent on its repair, or if it should be removed. All present agreed that it was extremely disappointing that less than 6 months after being erected, and all the hard work and effort put in by Peter Collins, such damage was caused. It was suggested that perhaps a notice should

be placed in the Village Life if the Environmental Committee decide it should be taken down stating the reason why.

C15.108 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 October 2015.

b) Internal Audit

Councillors **NOTED** the interim report of the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2015/2016, mentioning that it had been noted that no VAT returns for 2015/2016 had been made, despite the PFO being instructed by the Council to do so. The PFO explained that as it was a new accounts system, she was waiting for the internal auditor to review the status of the account and confirm that the VAT records had been correctly accounted for, after which time she would submit a VAT Return.

c) Financial Risk Assessment / Business Continuity Plan / Business Recovery plan

Councillors **NOTED** the internal auditor had viewed these documents, and found them to be extremely favourable and totally appropriate to the needs of this Parish Council. There were some amendments that were needed, which would be made, and updated documents put before Council at the December meeting for adoption. It was noted that these document should be retained for 40 years.

d) Budget & Precept meeting

Councillors **AGREED** that this year's F&GP meeting to discuss the budget and associated precept for 2016/2017 would be held on Monday 21st December.

C15.109 GRAFFITI POLICY

Members **NOTED** the draft Graffiti Policy as attached to agenda, which was loosely based on the EFDC policy. Cllr Mulliner asked if the Parish Council removes graffiti from private land, to which the Clerk confirmed they do not. Councillors **ADOPTED** this Graffiti Policy.

C15.110 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLAN

Members **NOTED** that the 2-page information sheets had now been distributed to each household within the Parish. Three information / mopping up events had been scheduled (one for each village in the Parish) as follows:

- Hastingwood Village Hall Sunday 29th November - 2pm to 4pm
- North Weald Village Hall – Saturday – 23rd January 2016 – 9.30am – 11am
- Parish Hall at Thornwood - Saturday 23rd January 2016 – 11.30am – 1pm

The Clerk confirmed these dates would be advertised in Village Life and on the Parish Council Notice boards. Hastingwood residents would be advised of this date by way of a leaflet drop courtesy of the Hastingwood Residents Association. The Clerk stated there had been around 6-8 responses so far. Cllr Bedford recalled that the Council had

taken the decision that if there wasn't enough interest in a Neighbourhood Plan, it would not be progressed.

C15.111 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY ANNUAL EVENTS

Members **NOTED** that the organisation of the events continued, and that a representative from the Norwegian Defence Attache's Office will be in attendance at the events and the luncheon. Members also **NOTED** that the Parish Council staff had undertaken the organisation of the British Legion Service at St Andrews this year with the exception of the Risk Assessment which will be undertaken by the Chairman of the British Legion as it will need to be conducted on the day. The Clerk invited Members to attend the North Weald Village Hall on Saturday 7th at 2.30pm to assist with the setting up of the hall. Cllr Bartram stated that as the newly elected Chairman of the Royal British Legion, he would like to thank the Office staff for their hard work and assistance. It was **NOTED** that due to resources, the police would not be stopping the traffic this year.

C15.112 EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL – RELOCATION OF HOUSING SERVICES REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE HUB.

Councillors noted that following an invitation from Paul Pledger, EFDC Assistant Director (Housing Property & Development) the Clerk and Vice Chairman, attended a Meeting with Paul and Cllr Dave Stallan on Friday 23rd October. The topic of the discussion was the need for the relocation of the EFDC Repairs and Maintenance Hub to be relocated from the rear of the Unigate Dairy (part of the St John's Road Development in Epping). Much discussion took place regarding the need for this to happen which was clearly laid out in the EFDC Report to the Cabinet attached to the agenda.

Paul Pledger and Cllr Stallan advised that one of the areas that EFDC is considering, and the area which potentially is the 'best' area as it is in EFDC's ownership and is already in the Local Plan for Employment, is land at Blenheim Way.

Cllr Stallan advised that both he and Cllr Grigg were acutely aware that there was a history attached to the Blenheim Way site and the fact that this Parish Council was extremely concerned that no land was set aside for a play area in the original proposal. Cllr Stallan had advised that if any development was to be considered for that area, then land should also be set aside for the creation of an Open Space which could be passed on to the Parish Council to either lay out as a Play Area or to remain as Open Space. Members were also advised that this would be made possible by the land being transferred from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account.

Members were further advised that they were not being asked to look at or comment on any planning application at the current time, as nothing has been put in front of the Parish Council, but that they were simply being asked to comment on an 'In Principal' matter as follows:

If the Repairs and Maintenance Hub was relocated to Blenheim Way - would the Parish Council wish to take up the offer of an area of land which could be left as an open space or used as a play area.

The Clerk stated that the District Council would provide the land, and the area would be fenced and turfed. This would be given to the Parish Council by way of a 25 lease (similar to Bluemans End and Pike Way). The size of the land is approximately 170sq m (1367 sq ft). The Clerk explained that a decision was needed before the 5th November so that it could be reported back to Cabinet.

Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she had studied the attached report, and it states that should the Parish Council wish to take up this option, they would provide the facility at its own expense, however she was concerned that the Parish Council actually has the funds to do so. In addition, was the Parish Council aware of the views of the residents of Blenheim Way regarding this suggestion. The Clerk explained that when the Blenheim Way area was built, the suggestion of a play area was discussed by many interested parties. Cllr Mrs Jackman noted this, however stated that this may well be different if the park is on an industrial area. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that in her opinion there were a lot of 'unknowns', and she could not see how the Parish Council were expected to give a blanket 'yes - we would accept a play area'.

Cllr Mulliner stated that the suggestion of a play area would come up at the time of any planning application, at which time the specifics could be agreed, however suggested the Parish Council accepts this offer provisionally. Cllr Tyler reminded the Council that there would be a cost in terms of the continued maintenance of any such area. The Clerk stated that it didn't have to be a play area, but it could simply be an open area of green space. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that it would still need to be maintained. Cllr Bedford stated that he would support a green area, however would not support a play area due to the costs involved.

Cllr Blanks stated that he had given the item some considerable thought, and that he could not understand the haste with which this was being conducted as EFDC had known about a need to move premises for many years - why hasn't anything been done before. Cllr Blanks continued, stating that EFDC has around 500 acres of land (the Airfield) where this hub could be located, however they want to cram it into this small site, with only 28 car parking spaces. Cllr Blanks stated he would not support a 'yes' response to this question, and that the Council should clearly indicate why. Cllr Bartram stated that several years ago the Parish Council were approached by local residents wanting a play area at this location, and that his opinion has not changed, and **PROPOSED** the offer be accepted in principal, and if a planning application comes through, the specifics can be agreed at that time. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that this should not be supported without knowing whether or not the residents want it.

Cllr Blanks expressed his concern that if this Council responded stating 'yes', then the Parish Council could not at a later date oppose any plans for this site should it feel plans were unsuitable. The Clerk stated this was incorrect, in that the Parish Council would still be asked to comment on any plans for the site as part of the normal planning process. The Clerk explained that for many years now the need for additional play area facilities in this location had been mooted, and this was a good opportunity to get what was needed for the residents. Cllr Mulliner stated that he

supported the idea of a play area, however asked if the Council could request an alternative location.

Cllr Jackman **PROPOSED** the Council responded stating that the Parish Council had insufficient information to enable it to make an informed decision. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Blanks. The Clerk asked if Council wished to comment on the need for consultation with residents. Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that she would support an amendment to the proposal to include comments regarding the need for the District Council to consult with local residents. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Mulliner.

Cllr Buckley stated that he agreed with Cllr Bartram's initial proposal, stating that you have a find a way forward rather than simply saying you don't want it. This area has been highlighted in the Local Plan as a business area, and as such the opportunity could be lost altogether. Cllr Buckley stated that he didn't feel the Parish Council would be committing themselves if it said it was interested. Cllr Buckley **SECONDED** Cllr Bartram's initial proposal.

There being two proposals, a vote was taken.

Vote 1 - Proposal to accept offer of play area in principal

2 - For

7 - Against

1 - Abstention

Proposal lost.

Vote 2 - Proposal to respond stating insufficient information to make a decision, and lack of consultation with local residents:

7 -For

2 - Against

1 - Abstention

It was therefore **AGREED** that the Parish Council would respond to the District Council as per Cllr Mrs Jackman's proposal as amended.

C15.113 MEETING WITH CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Clerk, Principal Finance Officer, Cllr Blanks and Cllr Clegg had met with the Chief Executive to discuss this Council's concerns, mainly relating to Planning. Cllr Whitbread, Leader of the Council, also joined for part of the Meeting. A copy of the notes from the Chief Executive from this meeting, together with Cllr Blanks comments were attached to the agenda. Cllr Blanks has suggested a number of slight amendments to the notes.

Cllr Blanks stated that whilst Mr Chipp's notes were accurate, they did not reflect the passion with which the Parish Council attendees conveyed their message. The word 'expedient' was used regularly throughout the meeting, and referred specifically to enforcement issues. The Clerk stated that Mr Chipp was unaware of the Parish Council charter.

C15.114 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS –VILLAGE GREEN, NORTH WEALD

At the recent Environmental Committee Meeting Members discussed the possibility of holding an event to mark the turning on of the Christmas Lights this year. The Chairman stated that if there was to be an event, arrangements would need to be put in place now, together with notices to advertise the event. Members recalled that last year, permission was not granted to use the hall at Wheelers Farm Gardens. The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Hall Management Committee would be holding an event at the Parish Hall on Sunday, 6 December 2015 at 4pm and stated that it had been suggested that the lights could be timed to turn on at the Village Green at the same time. The Chairman invited all Councillors and residents to the Thornwood event, stating that there would be a Chior and festive refreshments for all. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that arrangements would be made to ensure that the Christmas Lights would be put up in time for Sunday, 6 December 2015, with the turning on of the lights timed to coincide with the event at the Parish Hall.

C15.115 EFDC LOCAL PLAN WORKSHOPS

Members **NOTED** that EFDC would be holding Workshops to update Members regarding the Local Plan. The Clerk had circulated an email to all Members advising of the dates, however Councils have only been allocated one place on each Workshop. Cllr Blanks has advised he would be willing to attend the Workshops on the 2nd and the 24th November, however due to events in the Parish over the weekend prior to the 2nd, this was not possible. The PFO had subsequently asked Cllr Mrs Grigg and Cllr Stallan to provide a report on the meeting.

C15.116 WOODSIDE – COMPLAINT FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS REGARDING SMELLS AND POLLUTION TO BROOK

Following a complaint from Cllr Mrs Godwin Brown, the Clerk had contacted Dr Paul Baccarini at EFDC regarding this matter. A copy of the emails were attached to the agenda for members information. The Chairman stated that he had witnessed visitors checking the brook and taking samples every day the previous week, and it was **AGREED** the Clerk would request a copy of the subsequent report from Dr Baccarini.

Cllr Bedford advised Councillors of the sad death of Chris Overend, EFDC. Members expressed their sympathy to Mr Overends family and friends.

Cllr Jackman suggested this Council should obtain a copy of ECC Highways policy on Planning, so it can understand why there is a constant lack of involved and relevant comments regarding planning applications.

Meeting closed

Signed
Date