



**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Meeting:** PARISH HALL AT  
THORNWOOD COMMON  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Date:** 6 July 2017

**Time:** 7.00 PM

**Venue:** PARISH HALL, THORNWOOD COMMON, EPPING, ESSEX

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**PRESENT:** **Committee Members (10)** Cllr R Spearman (Chairman), Mrs S Hawkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr C Hawkins, Mrs J Abbott, Mrs D Shelley, P Hebden, B Cooper, Mrs E Davis T Sawyer, Mrs L Foster\*

\*arrived 7.10pm

**Also in Attendance (2)**

Joanna Tyler – Meeting Clerk

Susan De Luca – Clerk to the Council \*for part of the meeting

**Members of the Public (1)**

*The Chairman reminded those present that the meeting would be recorded*

**PH17.016 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)**

**NOTED**, apologies for absence had been received from Cllr B Clegg

**PH17.017 OTHER ABSENCES (2)**

No apologies for absence had been received from Mrs I Smith and Mr T Drane

**PH17.018 MINUTES**

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2017.

**PH17.019 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr P Hebden declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item number 9.

**PH17.020 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from Members of the public.

**PH17.021 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

**a) Visual Check of Fire Exit route in extension**

The Caretaker confirmed that a visual check had been undertaken and the fire exit route was found to be clear.

**b) Fire Exit Illuminated Signs**

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council, together with the Senior Administrative Officer had visited the hall on Thursday, 22 June 2017 to check on the installation of the defibrillator. During that visit, it was noted that the hall was in use,

therefore a decision was taken to undertake a 'spot check' of the fire exit illuminated signs. On checking the main hall, it was noted that the signs had not been switched on. The Clerk to the Council reminded those present that the signs should be switched on whenever the hall is occupied, for Health and Safety reasons. In light of this, it had been suggested that the Committee may wish to consider replacing the signs with ones which are permanently switched on.

The Clerk to the Council stated that even though it is a nice bright hall, if a fire occurred during daylight hours, the premises would quickly fill up with smoke, therefore the fire exit signs must be turned on whether it be day or evening. Mr Cooper stated that he was not aware of any regulations when he was in the fire service, with regard to fire exit signs being illuminated during daylight hours, adding that common sense needed to be used to switch the signs on when it is dark. The Clerk stated that it was nothing to do with common sense, it is to do with the Health and Safety Executive Check List. The Clerk read out a statement:-

*The staff and Clerk in the office do not make the legislation or the rules regarding Health and Safety, we simply interpret and manage it. What we try to do is ensure that both the Parish Council, as a corporate body, and the Councillors and this Committee are fully covered regarding their liabilities. It is exactly the same as the Chief Executive at Epping Forest District Council would do. Jo has been appointed as Committee Clerk to advise you of your role as a Management Committee Member and to ensure you have no liability on Health and Safety matters.*

The Clerk to the Council stated that the recent health and safety issues which are now in the public domain puts an increasing magnifying glass on all local authorities, no matter how big or small. Members noted that the Chairman of the Parish Council had requested that the Clerk to the Council organise a meeting of the Personnel Committee as soon as possible. The Clerk advised that all members of staff had agreed that Health and Safety must be included on the agenda of the Personnel Committee meeting. The Clerk referred the committee to the Health and Safety Checklist for Village Community Halls, stating that the first page refers to movement around the building and whether lighting is suitable and sufficient to allow safe access and exit, including lighting of emergency exits.

Mrs Davis stated that she was present at the hall when the spot check had been carried and confirmed that the emergency exit signs had not be switched on until 20 minutes after the hall had opened. Mrs Davis expressed concern with regard to money being spent on replacement lights, stating that she thought the Committee were trying to economise the costs of the hall. The Clerk to the Council stated that she would not economise on Health and Safety. Mr Sawyer asked if it was stated in the hirers rules and regulations that the fire exit lights should be turned on. Both the Clerk to the Council and the Meeting Clerk confirmed that it was. Mr Cooper stated that the Committee would be covered (with regard to insurance). The Clerk to the Council stated that the Committee would not be covered, adding that the Committee had responsibility for managing the hall and therefore would be required to ensure that everything possible had been carried out to ensure that the fire exit signs are on. Mrs Davis stated that if hirers have been given instructions in a

contractual obligation that they have signed and they sign to say that they will put the lights on, then liability partially passes to the hirer of the hall. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that partially was the right word. Mrs Davis asked the Clerk if she wanted the Committee to pay the caretaker every time someone hired the hall to ensure that the fire exit signs had been switched on. The Clerk stated that a lot of halls do pay the caretaker to attend the hall when it is hired.

Councillor Hawkins informed the Committee that he had put tape across the fire exit sign switches, advising that they were now permanently switched on. The Clerk to the Council suggested that arrangements could be made for the Fire Service to visit the hall and ask what their recommendation would be. Councillor Hawkins agreed that the Clerk to the Council should arrange for the Fire Service to visit.

**b) Pest Control**

Members recalled that they had agreed, at the previous meeting, for Rentokil to undertake works at the Parish Hall. Members **NOTED** that due to Rentokil requiring an upfront payment prior to commencement of works, Councillor Hawkins had asked the Clerk to the Council to look at an alternative company who he had seen in Thornwood. A contractor met with Cllr Hawkins and provided him with a quote. The quote was agreed and accepted with the Chairman of the Parish Hall and initial works have now been carried out. Further works would be carried out over the next three months. Members **NOTED** that it was agreed that Thornwood Grounds Maintenance would undertake the structural work.

The Chairman asked Cllr Hawkins to update the Committee with regard to this. Cllr Hawkins stated that, initially, the contractor was going to charge £50.00 per month, however, following the latest visit, was advised that this would be reduced to £30.00 per month. The monthly charge will include rodent boxes which will be placed around the outside perimeter of the hall. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that the total charge of £90.00 would be paid following the third visit. The Clerk to the Council reminded the Committee that a decision would need to be made regarding the removal of the fouled insulation. Cllr Hawkins stated that he would ask Thornwood Grounds Maintenance to remove the insulation, confirming that it was no longer required.

The Clerk to the Council asked Members how they wished to proceed with regard to the wireless alarm system, reminding the Committee that payment would be taken out of the funds that had been put aside for pest control. Cllr Hawkins stated that even though steps were being taken to control the mice, there could be a possibility that they return and chew through a replacement cable. The Chairman asked the Clerk to the Council if the maintenance charge would be the same. The Clerk stated that she believed it would be the same once a year charge. The Chairman asked Members if they agreed to a wireless system being installed in the loft area. All Members **AGREED**.

**PH17.022 Repairs and Improvements to the Hall/Car Park**

**a) Damage to Windows**

Members **NOTED** that following the Jazz Club session held on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017, the Caretaker had reported that the arms on two of the windows in the main hall had been

damaged. Cllr Hawkins had made arrangements for repairs to be undertaken the following day. Mr Sawyer asked how much the repairs had cost. Cllr Hawkins stated that he did not have an amount yet. Mr Sawyer asked if the Jazz Club would be charged for the damage. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that they would have the money deducted from their deposit.

**b) Broken window pane in entrance door**

Members **NOTED** that one of the window panes in the entrance door was accidentally damaged by a stone caught by the grass trimmer which was being used by Thornwood Grounds Maintenance. Cllr Hawkins was present at the time and made arrangements for the broken pane to be made safe and organised for its replacement. The Chairman asked if Thornwood Grounds Maintenance would be paying for the damage from their insurance. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that they would be. The Chairman thanked Cllr Hawkins for organising a replacement window pane.

**PH17.023 DEFIBRILLATOR**

Members **NOTED** that the defibrillator had now been installed on the outside wall of the Parish Hall. The Chairman of North Weald Bassett Parish Council, Cllr Hawkins, had requested that the Community Training Awareness Session be carried out in conjunction with the Senior Safety Day being held at the Parish Hall on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2017. A representative from The Community HeartBeat Trust would be in attendance from 11am. The Vice Chairman of this Committee had liaised with the organisers of the Senior Safety Day to arrange this. The Meeting Clerk informed Members that she had received an email from the representative from The Community HeartBeat Trust confirming that he would be happy to attend the event as part of the Community Seminar, however, he had stated that the Committee needed to be aware that the seminar would normally last for two hours to show people how the defibrillator works and to make people aware of what it is. The representative did not want anyone to think that they were being short changed, highlighting that when a defibrillator is purchased from The Community HeartBeat Trust, the Community Seminar is part of the package, therefore it had already been paid for.

Members **NOTED** that in order for the defibrillator to be registered with the Ambulance Service, the Clerk to the Council was asked to provide details of the person who would be carrying out the weekly battery check. This is the initial check to entail checking that the defibrillator is working ok. The check is then recorded on WebNos, which is a management tool for keeping track of all aspects of Governance for defibrillators. The remainder of the reporting would be carried out by the Parish Office. Due to the fact that the defibrillator is a piece of medical equipment, with potential vicarious liability issues, Members **NOTED** that the following would need to be undertaken on a regular basis and recorded:-

- Initial installation records, compliance and equipment manifest
- Weekly, Monthly, Annual checks in line with DoH and MHRA recommendations
- Instant reports to record usage of the defibrillator, reporting out of action and back in action details
- Training records
- Equipment consumable resupply and/or replacements
- Statutory notifications, investigations and outcomes

- Coroner reports; ambulance service reports; stakeholder reports; insurance reports; CQC
- A full history of the equipment, its usage, changes to the configuration, battery and electrode replacement dates and other required audit information

A detailed schedule was attached to the agenda for Members perusal.

Members **NOTED** that the Caretaker had agreed to carry out the battery check once a week, confirmation of which would be emailed to the Parish Office staff who would then have to record and undertake the checks on the WebNos system.

Members **NOTED** that arrangements had been made to insure the defibrillator and cabinet via the Parish Council's insurers for the sum of £2,000. Public Liability cover, including Duty of Care, had also been included. There would be no additional cost for the cover until renewal of the Parish Council's insurance policy. A copy of the email confirmation received from Zurich Insurance was attached to the agenda for Members perusal.

#### **PH17.024 ALARM**

Members of the Committee **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council had requested that the Caretaker continue to set and unset the alarm system for the Spiritualist Group sessions, until the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. Members of the Committee were asked to decide whether they wished to proceed with this arrangement and if so, to consider the financial implications.

The Chairman asked the Caretaker how often the alarm had to be set and unset. The Caretaker confirmed it was five times a month. Cllr Hawkins asked the Booking Secretary what income was received from the Spiritualist's per month. The Booking Secretary confirmed that the figure was around £400 per month. Cllr Hawkins expressed concern that if the Spiritualist Group were asked to set and unset the alarm and they got it wrong, the Caretaker would still be required to attend the hall to reset it. The Meeting Clerk confirmed that there had been no call outs since the Caretaker had been asked to operate the alarm system. Mrs Davis asked if the Spiritualist's had been informed that they were adding to the costs. The Meeting Clerk reminded Members that the reason why the Spiritualist's had not been informed was because the alarm company had found evidence of mice in the loft area, resulting in them chewing through the alarm cable, which set off the alarm. The alarm company were unable to confirm whether the call outs were due to human error or whether the presence of mice were setting off the alarm.

*Mr Sawyer asked the Meeting Clerk to record in the Minutes that the Clerk to the Parish Council had left the meeting at 7.20pm.*

Mrs Shelley suggested that the Spiritualist's could be asked to pay a surcharge. The Chairman expressed concern about upsetting them. Mrs Davis suggested that a pictorial guide detailing how to put the alarm on and off be created for the group. Cllr Hawkins stated that he had met with the Spiritualist Group on twelve occasions to show them how to operate the alarm. Mrs Hawkins stated that she would recommend the Committee continue with asking the Caretaker to continue with operating the alarm on behalf of the Spiritualist's. The Chairman stated that he agreed with the suggestion and asked the Committee

if they agreed. All Members *AGREED*.

**PH17.025 CAR PARK**

Members recalled, from the previous meeting, that a donation had been received from Clearwater Care towards the upkeep of the car park. Members *NOTED* that a donation had also been received from Jonen's for the sum of £1,000. Members were asked to decide if they still required car parking permits to be issued.

Mr Sawyer informed the Committee that on a recent visit to the allotments he had counted over ten cars parked in the area allocated, some had displayed permits, however three or four cars had no permit on display. Cllr Hawkins stated that in the next week all of the cars would have new permits. Mrs Shelley stated that on the days that the Flower Club meets they have over 100 people attending and the car park is very full up. Mrs Shelley confirmed that some of the cars do have permits, but many do not. Mrs Davis Confirmed that the allotment holders had all been issued with car parking permits. Mrs Hawkins asked Mrs Davis to confirm which parking spaces were used by the allotment holders. Following discussion, it was agreed that Mrs Davis would email the allotment holders, to confirm which parking spaces they should be using.

Mr Sawyer reported that he had seen, on a number of occasions, a large pick-up truck parked in the car park. Cllr Hawkins expressed concern at the amount of time that he was spending in attendance at the hall not only to monitor the car park, but also for maintenance issues and suggested that other Committee Members should also volunteer their time.

Councillor Hawkins confirmed that a total of seven spaces had been allocated for both Jonen's and Clearwater Care to use. Members discussed in depth the best way forward to clearly mark the spaces. Mrs Davis stated that she would source a supplier of number stencils in order to spray/paint a number in each space. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that he would obtain the registration numbers of the cars and would pass to the Meeting Clerk in order for parking permits to be printed towards the end of the following week.

The Caretaker reported that he had noticed a car parked in the car park with a disabled badge displayed and asked the Committee to decide how they would like him to proceed if there is a car with a disabled badge. Mrs Hawkins reminded Members that the car park is private and is for the use of hall hirers only. Mr Sawyer asked the Caretaker how long the car was parked there. The Caretaker confirmed that it was parked for two days. Following lengthy discussion, Cllr Hawkins stated that a parking notice should have been placed on the car, the Chairman agreed, expressing concern that it could become a regular occurrence.

**PH17.026 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT** – nothing to report.

**PH17.027 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** – nothing to report.

**PH17.028 OTHER REPORTS**

**a) Regular Hall Hirers**

- Mums and Tots – Mrs Foster advised Members that the Mums and Tots had sorted out their storage area and wondered if anyone had any comments. The Caretaker confirmed that the storage area had been tidied. Mrs Foster asked whether or not the chairs could be stacked in the corner by whoever hires the hall on a Tuesday. Mums and Tots have to move all the chairs to the corner prior to their session commencing, to prevent them from being a hazard when the children are present. The Committee recalled that it had previously been agreed that the chairs would be stacked, no more than four high, around the perimeter of the hall to assist senior hall hirers and to prevent the floor from being marked when the chairs were put away. Following lengthy discussion, Members **AGREED** that the Caretaker would stack the chairs in the corner on a Tuesday evening, during term time only.
- Flower Club – Mrs Shelley reported that the club would be having a lunch on Monday, 10 July and then they would not meet again until September. Cllr Hawkins stated that he would attend the hall early on the Monday morning to check that there were no extra cars parked in the car park.
- Harlow Bowmen – no report.
- Thornwood Seniors – no report.

**b) Booking Secretary Report**

The Booking Secretary reported that June was quite a busy month, with regular hirers. Clearwater Care hired the hall for three days. Village Day was at the end of June. During July there are the regular hirers and three children's parties. Epping Forest District Council have the Well Team attending on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July, they will be giving talks and holding a lunch. The hall has been hired for the whole day on a Saturday, following the Slimming World session. The Bridge Club have booked a day at the end of October. Blossom's Nursery have three bookings for Christmas plays.

**c) Caretakers Report**

The Caretaker reported that on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> May on attending the hall to close up after the Jazz Club, the kitchen was found to have half an inch of water all over the floor. A plug had been placed in the small round sink. The water was mopped up as much as was possible and the Caretaker left the heating on in the kitchen area to try and dry it out. The next morning the Caretaker returned at 5.30am to mop the floor again, wipe down the sides and to leave a note for the Mums and Tots, who had hired the hall on the Wednesday morning. Members **NOTED** that there did not appear to be any further damage.

The Caretaker reported that the urinal was still not working, causing bad odours. Cllr Hawkins mentioned the possibility of installing a different system that flushed every 10 minutes. The Chairman stated that he would have to ask the plumber's advice.

The Caretaker reported that the plug recently been sealed and although the contractor had advised that there would be no smell, it was found that there was. The windows and doors were left open to air the hall.

The Caretaker reported that the Spiritualist's had left a note to say that they could not lock their cupboard, however they did not leave a key. The Booking Secretary confirmed that she would contact the club.

**d) Financial**

The Meeting Clerk stated that financial matters had been discussed earlier in the meeting and confirmed that there was no further report for this month. The Chairman mentioned the donations received towards the upkeep of the car park.

**PH17.029 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Meeting Clerk tabled a Supplementary Agenda for Members perusal. Members were asked to decide what arrangements would be put in place to cover the holiday dates provided by the Caretaker. Both Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Abbott agreed to provide cover. The Chairman thanked them.

Meeting closed: 8.00pm

Signed .....

Chairman

Date .....