



DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL MEETING **Date:** 12 May 2016 **Time:** 7.15 PM
OF THE PARISH HALL AT
THORNWOOD COMMON
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Venue: PARISH HALL, THORNWOOD COMMON, EPPING, ESSEX

PRESENT: **Committee Members (12)** Cllr R Spearman (Chairman), Mrs S Hawkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr C Hawkins, R Sawyer, Mrs J Abbott, Mrs D Shelley, Mrs E Davis, P Hebden, T Drane, B Cooper, Mrs L Foster, Cllr B Clegg

Also in Attendance (2)

Joanna Tyler – Meeting Clerk
Susan De Luca – Clerk to the Council

Members of the Public (0)

PH16.001 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Mr B Cooper **PROPOSED** Councillor R Spearman for the office of Chairman, this proposal was seconded by Mrs J Abbott, there being no other nominations, Councillor Spearman was duly elected as Chairman of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Common Management Committee for the current Municipal Year.

PH16.002 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Mr R Sawyer and Mrs J Abbott **PROPOSED** Mrs S Hawkins for the office of Vice Chairman, this proposal was seconded by Mrs E Davis, there being no other nominations, Mrs S Hawkins was duly elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Common Management Committee for the current Municipal Year.

PH16.003 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)

NOTED, apologies for absence had been received from Mrs I Smith

PH16.004 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

PH16.005 MINUTES

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on 3 March 2016.

PH16.006 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED there were no declarations of interest.

PH16.007 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public in attendance.

PH16.008 REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HALL/CAR PARK

There were no items to report.

PH16.009 HEALTH AND SAFETY

a) Fire Exit Illuminated Signs

Members were reminded to ensure that the illuminated Fire Exit signs are switched on upon entering the building (even during daylight hours). A copy of the Parish Hall Booking Terms and Conditions detailing this requirement were attached to the agenda for Members information. Following discussion, the Clerk to the Council stated that a more suitable system is currently being investigated, one whereby it would not be anyone's responsibility to switch the signs on as the signs would remain illuminated at all times.

b) Bouncy Castles

Members **NOTED**, for information purposes, the following extract from the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th April 2016:-

C15.204 PARISH HALL AT THORNWOOD COMMON – USE OF BOUNCY CASTLES

Following the recent tragic accident involving a bouncy castle, the Clerk has investigated whether or not the Parish Council's insurance company wishes this Council to take any further measures to ensure the safety in the use of bouncy castles at events either at the Parish Hall or on the field at Thornwood Common. The Clerk confirmed she had approached the insurance company to establish if there were any specific safety measures the Council needed to take at this time, other than what is currently normal practice to ask for the public liability insurance certification for the supplier of the bouncy castle. Cllr Stallan asked for clarification as to whos liability it is if a bouncy castle was placed on the Common in Thornwood, to which the Clerk confirmed that public liability insurance certificates are always obtained, however the Parish Council would need to show it acted appropriately in all cases.

Cllr Buckley asked how often Bouncy Castles are used, to which the Clerk stated approximately 3/4 times per year. Cllr Buckley stated that if the public liability certificates are obtained, then there should be no reason why the use of bouncy castles should not continue. Cllr Stallan stated that although he understood what Cllr Buckley was saying, he would like to **PROPOSE** that a decision in terms of whether or not our procedure should be altered should be deferred until such time as the investigation into the Harlow accident is completed. Cllr Spearman **SECONDED** this proposal. A vote was taken with unanimous support for this decision.

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that bouncy castles would not be allowed pending the outcome of the investigation into the accident at Harlow.

PH16.010 RESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBER

Members **NOTED** that Mrs Victoria Robinson had resigned as a member of the Parish Hall Management Committee. Cllr Hawkins stated that he would approach the organisers of the Spiritualist Group to ascertain whether they would like to have a representative on the

Committee.

PH16.011 CARETAKER'S HOLIDAY

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council had approved the caretaker's holiday dates. The Meeting Clerk informed Members that the dates were not listed on the agenda as it is published on the Parish Council's website. Members were verbally advised of the dates. The Clerk to the Council asked Members what arrangements they would like to make, or would they like her to arrange cover. Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Abbott offered to provide cover for the dates in question. Both the Clerk to the Council and the Chairman thanked them on behalf of the Committee.

PH16.012 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

- Renewal of fixed price energy plan. Members **NOTED** that, as agreed at the previous committee meeting, the Parish Council's Principal Financial Officer had renewed the fixed price energy plan with e.on for 2016/17 as per the following:-
 - Standing Charge - 27p per day
 - Normal Units - 12.69 per kWh
 - Eve/weekend - 11.14 per kWhThis represents an annual saving of 698.22 per year, equating to 27%.
- Thornwood Festival – Sunday, 26 June 2016 - Members **NOTED** that the Parish Council had agreed the use of the Parish Hall and the Playing Field free of charge. A notice will be placed on the notice board advising of the field closure. Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Abbott asked that their thanks be passed to the Parish Council.

PH16.013 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that Mr Drane would be checking the playing field with a metal detector, prior to the Festival Day, to ensure that there are no small pieces of metal hidden in the grass.

The Chairman informed Members that the certificate awarded to the Committee at the Annual Parish Assembly (together with the group photograph that was taken) had been framed and affixed to the entrance hall wall.

PH16.014 OTHER REPORTS

a) Regular Hall Hirers

- Mums and Tots – Mrs Foster mentioned that peanut butter had been found in the storage area in the extension. Cllr Hawkins explained that this had been used for pest control.
- Flower Club – Mrs Shelley stated that there was nothing to report, however, she did inform the committee that the club had over 100 attendees at their last meeting.
- Harlow Bowmen – no report.
- Thornwood Seniors – no report.

b) Booking Secretary Report

The Booking Secretary reported that during May there are the regular weekly bookings, however all the weekends are free. The National Child Birth Trust have confirmed bookings for this year and next. Clear Water Care Hackney have booked the hall once a month for a meeting with lunch. During June there are two children's parties, one on a Saturday and one on Sunday. Blossoms Nursery have hired the hall for their graduation day. Thornwood Festival is booked for the last weekend of June.

The Booking Secretary thanked Committee Members for the honorarium that was awarded for 2016/17.

c) Caretakers Report

The Caretaker reported a problem with the left hand entrance door to the hall. A small piece of metal from one of the screws had sheared off and required drilling out. The Caretaker stated that he would be able to carry out the repair if the committee wanted him to. The Chairman suggested that the repair be carried out after the June elections, all Members **AGREED**.

The Caretaker informed the committee that the tea and coffee machine would be de-scaled and flushed through over the weekend as there were no bookings until next week and this was when the hall was free.

The Caretaker enquired as to when the playing field would next be cut as the grass had grown very long. Cllr Hawkins requested that the Meeting Clerk investigate this on her return to the office the next day.

d) Financial

The Meeting Clerk advised Members that a report would be given at the next Committee Meeting. Members **NOTED** that the Principal Financial Officer had finalised the accounts and that these were presented at the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 9 May 2016, for agreement.

PH16.015 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM – ALARM AT THE PARISH HALL

The Chairman informed Members that there was a Supplementary Item to be circulated and invited the Clerk to the Council to address the Committee.

The Clerk to the Council stated that she had been asked to look at the viability of the Parish Hall and advised that a further report on this matter would be given at the next Committee Meeting. One matter that required Members consideration was the alarm. The Clerk to the Council advised that she had been speaking to the Parish Council's Personnel Committee, the Emergency Personnel Committee and had sought legal advice from Epping Forest District Council's Monitoring Officer and the Insurance Company.

The Clerk to the Council stated that if savings were to be made with regard to the alarm, it would mean that those groups who are represented on the Committee would need to

agree to be responsible key holders and agree to turn the alarm on and off during their use of the hall. One named person would become a Named Volunteer Key Holder for their group. The Clerk to the Council asked the group representatives if they would be willing to volunteer to do this. Mrs Foster (Mums and Tots) said no. Mrs Shelley said no, adding that she felt that it was a lot of responsibility and that she would feel much happier with the Caretaker continuing to undertake this responsibility. Mr Cooper (Harlow Bowmen) stated that he would be happy to be a volunteer key holder. Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Abbott both stated that they would be happy to turn the alarm on and off.

Councillor Hawkins stated that there are more break-ins during the day than there are at night and his concern is that the insurance company would want to know why the alarm is not turned on when the hall is empty during the day. Mrs Hawkins asked Members if they were all aware of how to turn the alarm on and off, to which they said they were not. Cllr Clegg asked the group representatives if they were the person who unlocked the door when they used the hall. Mrs Shelley said that the person who puts the chairs out unlocks the door for the Flower Club.

Mrs Foster stated that there are three people from the Mums and Tots who may unlock the door, all three would need to be shown how to operate the alarm and would need to agree to be a volunteer key holder. The Clerk to the Council stated that the insurance company would require a named representative and she would need to check if there could be a second in reserve.

Mrs Shelley stated that she would need to speak to the Flower Club committee before making a decision. Mr Cooper said that he would also need to speak to the Harlow Bowmen. The Chairman said that it is a difficult question to ask, bearing in mind that the same person does not unlock the hall for each session. The Clerk to the Council stated that it is a responsibility, which is why it was discussed at the Personnel Committee. The Chairman stated that it is a responsibility and he would be concerned if the named volunteer was not available to unlock the door. Mrs Shelley asked what would happen if the alarm would not turn off.

Cllr Hawkins and Mrs Hawkins offered to show the group representatives how to operate the alarm. Five committee members left the hall, on their return, the meeting resumed.

Councillor Clegg stated that we need to look at the number of key fobs available for the alarm and investigate what arrangements the insurance company would require to be in place. The Chairman stated that if a person is trusted to use the keys to unlock the hall, they should be able to use a fob to turn off the alarm. Discussion ensued as to what arrangements are in place at the present time for the collection of keys by the regular hall hirers and how that differs to one off bookings.

The Clerk to the Council stated that she would speak to the insurance company with regard to the questions raised and would report back to the committee at the next

meeting. The Clerk to the Council asked the groups present to speak to their committees and to let the Clerk know what the outcome of their discussions were. The Clerk confirmed that she would be attending the next meeting and would have the verdict from the insurance company. The Clerk also confirmed that a full set of accounts would also be made available.

The caretaker advised that he would take on the responsibility (**at no charge**) for manually putting the Illuminated Fire Exit Signs on until any decision is reached regarding the Security Alarm, then the Groups or the occasional hirers will continue in their responsibility.

PH16.016 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

- a) Mrs Hawkins mentioned the daffodils planted around the play area and asked for her thanks to be passed on to those who planted them. Cllr Hawkins advised Members that they were planted by John and Tony Woods.
- b) The Clerk to the Council mentioned a cupboard in the extension that used to be used by the Caretaker and asked whether any of the groups were using it for storage. The Caretaker is currently using the store room which houses the Parish Council's archives. Mrs Hawkins stated that she would ask Mrs Smith, as the Thornwood Seniors have been using the cupboard.
- c) Mrs Davis mentioned the hedge bordering the playing field and asked whether it would be cut before the Thornwood Festival. Following discussion, the Clerk to the Council stated that the Parish Council is not allowed to cut back the hedgerow at this time of year because of birds nesting.
- d) Mrs Davis referred to the previous committee meeting and asked Members if they would like her to make arrangements for a 1940's evening in July. Mrs Davis stated that she had not arranged a booking for May as she had only just received a copy of the meeting minutes. The Clerk to the Council stated that the minutes are circulated with the meeting agenda, not before. Mrs Hawkins apologised that she did not advise Mrs Davis of the dates in May. The Booking Secretary advised Members that Saturday, 29 July was currently available. Cllr Hawkins reminded Members that July and August was the holiday period and therefore there may not be many people available. Mrs Hawkins suggested looking at September. The Booking Secretary advised that the 16th and 17th September were available. Mrs Davis stated that the singer charges around £320.00 and the cost for a fish and chip supper should be the same amount as advised at the previous meeting, although she would check this out. Discussion ensued with regard to the cost of tickets and the total number that should be sold. Mrs Davis stated that she would report back at the next meeting.
- e) Cllr Hawkins thanked the Thornwood Seniors for the race night that they had organised to raise funds for the defibrillator.
- f) The Clerk to the Council informed Members that she had received an email from

the CIF for funding, inviting applications to made from August. The Clerk advised that she would be making an application for all three villages in the Parish to purchase a defibrillator.

Meeting closed: 8.05pm

Signed

Chairman

Date