



**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Meeting:** PARISH HALL AT                    **Date:** 2 November 2017                    **Time:** 6.45 PM  
THORNWOOD COMMON  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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

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Prior to the start of the Meeting, the Chairman called for a minute's silence in respect of the late Councillor Mr Cyril Hawkins, Chairman of North Weald Bassett Parish Council

**PRESENT:**    **Committee Members (9)** Cllr R Spearman (Chairman), Mrs S Hawkins (Vice Chairman), Mrs J Abbott, P Hebden, B Cooper, Mrs E Davis, T Sawyer, Mrs L Foster, Mrs I Smith

**Also in Attendance (2)**

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

**Members of the Public (1)**

**PH17.030 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)**

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

**PH17.031 OTHER ABSENCES (2)**

No apologies for absence had been received from Mr T Drane, Mrs D Shelley

**PH17.032 MINUTES**

Members *APPROVED* as a correct record the Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

**PH17.033 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

**PH17.034 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from Members of the public.

**PH17.035 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 Brigade Inspection**

The Clerk to the Council reported that a Fire Safety Officer from Essex County Fire & Rescue Service attended the hall on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017, to undertake an inspection. As a result of that visit, the Clerk to the Council informed Members of the Committee that a letter of Non-Compliance had been issued by the Fire Safety Officer.

The Clerk to the Council read out both the letter and the contents of the report. The following points were noted as failures:-

- Maintenance  
The fire alarm system is inadequately maintained
- Emergency Routes and Exits  
The escape routes were not adequately lit
- Maintenance  
The emergency lighting is inadequately maintained
- Electrical Systems: Lighting and Power
- Fire Action Notices

The Fire Safety Officer had noted suggested actions to remedy the failures, which the Clerk to the Council read out.

The Clerk to the Council informed the Committee that the Fire Safety Officer had stated that the doors to the kitchen were not sufficient and would require replacing. The Clerk stated that she had expressed concern at the cost of replacing the doors and explained to the officer that that there were three to four people maximum in the kitchen at any one time. After taking into consideration the proximity of the Fire Exit doors to the kitchen, the Fire Safety Officer concluded that the present doors were sufficient.

With regard to maintenance of the fire alarm system, the Clerk to the Council advised that a copy of the invoice and test record sheet were provided. With regard to PAT testing, again, a copy of the invoice and report were produced. The Fire Safety Officer expressed concern about the labelling of the fridge, however the Clerk argued that this was not a portable appliance.

Mr Sawyer referred to the Emergency Lighting and stated that he had been in many different public premises and had noticed that the fire exit lights were not lit up. Mr Sawyer asked if the report was stating that they should be lit in the daytime. The Chairman stated that if the hall had a power failure now, the fire exit lights would not come on. The Meeting Clerk stated that the fire exit lights have to be switched on because the batteries are not charging because as soon as the lights are switched off there is no power going to the battery. The Clerk to the Council stated that the reason the Fire Safety Officer attended the hall was because Committee Members had asked her to arrange the visit at the previous meeting. Lengthy discussion ensued. Mrs Hawkins stated that the Civic Offices have lights that stay on permanently in the corridors. The Clerk to the Council asked the Chairman if he wanted the Committee to note the report, to which the Chairman replied not necessarily.

**c) Electrical Testing**

The Clerk to the Council reported that a contractor attended the hall on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> August to undertake a full electrical test and inspection of the premises. A copy of the report was attached to the agenda. The Clerk stated that Cllr Hawkins had been present when the inspection was carried out. The Chairman read through each point that had been identified as requiring attention. The contractor had stated in the report that, at some point, the hall would need rewiring as the existing installation is approximately 40 years old. The Clerk to the Council informed Members that the contractor had not been asked to provide a rewire cost.

The Chairman expressed concern that there would be a lot of making good to be carried out once the works had been completed. Mr Sawyer asked any other quotes had been requested. The Clerk confirmed that it was. Mrs Hawkins asked would we have to have a rewire if all of the works listed were carried out. The Clerk stated that we did not need to have a rewire if all of the works listed are carried out to bring the electrical wiring up to the standard required. The Clerk to the Council suggested that another quote is obtained, reiterating that the works have to be carried out in order for a valid electrical testing certificate to be issued. Following lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk to the Council would contact the electrical contractor recommended by Essex Association of Local Councils and also Epping Electrical to quote for the works. A copy of the inspection report would be provided. Mr Cooper reported that the light switches in the hall sometimes spark, the Clerk stated that the contractors would be asked to check them.

**d) Pest Control**

Members **NOTED** that the Parish Council's contractor had been asked to carry out the following outstanding works as part of the Winter work schedule:-

- Gap at the bottom of the front door
- Removal of fouled insulation
- Holes in ceiling of electrical cupboard

The Chairman asked the Clerk to the Council if the Pest Control contractor could be contacted to continue to carry out regular checks during the Winter months.

**e) Alarm System**

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council had contacted Baron Security to make arrangements for a wireless system to be installed to replace the damaged cable in the loft area. At the time of the meeting, the Parish Office were awaiting confirmation of a date for installation.

Members **NOTED** that the intruder alarm system was served on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The Caretaker was in attendance.

**f) Legionella Testing**

Members **NOTED** that the annual test for the presence of legionella bacteria in the water system was carried out on 21 August 2017. No legionella bacteria were detected. The Chairman stated that a certificate had been received confirming the

result, and advised that a copy would be placed on the notice board and in the legionella test folder.

**PH17.036 REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HALL/CAR PARK**

Members **NOTED** that the Parish Council's contractor had been asked to undertake urgent repairs to the urinals, due to Health and Safety. The Caretaker confirmed that the pipe work had been replaced and that they were now flushing correctly.

**PH17.037 DATA PROTECTION AUDIT**

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that a full Data Protection Audit had recently been conducted on the Parish Council. One of the issues highlighted was that the Parish Council would need to have sole use of the committee room specifically for storing filing. The Clerk informed Members that she had spoken with Mrs Hawkins regarding the fridges, etc., that are currently stored in the committee room and the Mrs Hawkins had confirmed that they may be disposed of. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council's contractor had been asked to replace the lock on the committee room door. The cleaning equipment currently stored in the room would be removed and placed in a storage cupboard in the extension. Members **NOTED** that the Jazz Club would no longer be requiring a storage cupboard from January, therefore this cupboard would be utilised for the cleaning equipment. The Parish Council's contractor has been asked to cut a slat in the cupboard for ventilation.

The Clerk to the Council mentioned data held by the Committee, stating that the new regulations would only affect the Booking Secretary, with regard to hirers details being recorded on the booking forms. The Clerk offered to provide the Booking Secretary with a two drawer lockable filing cabinet for retaining the booking diary and the booking forms.

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that a training course for Members of the Parish Council is to be arranged, stating that any Members of this Committee who manage a group/organisation would be welcome to attend, adding that the course would be run by an outside company and would be free of charge. Mrs Smith confirmed that she would be interested in attending. The Clerk stated that details would be circulated once a date had been agreed. The Caretaker enquired whether they would still have access to the committee room, the Clerk stated that a key would be provided, however, it would be used for emergencies only should access be required to the electric cupboard.

**PH17.038 CAR PARK**

Members were reminded that donations had been received from Jonen's and Clearwater Care earlier in the year. Members **NOTED** that the Parish Office do not know what the situation is with regard to permits as registration numbers were not passed on to staff.

Mr Sawyer stated that there had been three vehicles parked in the car park during the week, a lorry and two cars which he believed were from the vehicle bodyshop from the business units opposite the hall. Mr Sawyer also stated that the vehicles from Jonen's all displayed parking permits dated to 2018. The Clerk to the Council stated that the Parish Office had not issued any permits, as Cllr Hawkins had been awaiting a list of registration numbers from Jonen's. Following lengthy discussion regarding

the number of spaces allocated, the Clerk to the Council stated that she would ask the Principal Financial Officer to check the records for clarification.

Mrs Davis informed Members that she had sourced a supplier of number stencils and stated that if Members were in agreement, she would arrange to purchase the stencils and paint for marking the parking bays. All Members **AGREED**. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that reimbursement would be made by the Parish Office direct to Mrs Davis. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that the parking permits would record the number of the parking bay, rather than a car registration number, thus allowing Jonen's and Clearwater Care to allocate parking permits to any of their employees.

Members **NOTED** that this matter would be placed on the February Agenda to be discussed before donations are due in March/April 2018.

#### **PH17.039 FUTURE FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

Mrs Hawkins confirmed that this year's Carol Service had been organised for Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017, stating that the Christmas lights would be switched on the same day. Arrangements were in hand for Committee Members to put up the Christmas decorations on Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

Mrs Hawkins confirmed that a quiz had been booked for 17<sup>th</sup> November, Mrs Davis stated that nearly all the tables had been booked for the event.

Mrs Hawkins informed Members that a bazaar had recently been held at the hall, which raised just under £1,000. Mrs Hawkins advised that any monies raised for the hospice would be handed over in June of next year.

#### **PH17.040 BUDGET/PRECEPT ITEMS**

The Clerk to the Council asked the Committee if they had any items they would like to put forward for consideration at the Parish Council's Budget/Precept Meeting.

Mr Sawyer suggested purchasing new curtains, it was confirmed that the existing ones had been purchased over ten years ago and were now faded and in need of replacement. All Members **AGREED**.

Mr Sawyer suggested that the chairs should be replaced with padded ones. The Clerk to the Council stated that it had been agreed last year that funds would be allocated to purchase vinyl padded chairs, at a cost of £880 for 20. Concern was expressed that vinyl chairs would not be hygienic, however, it would be expensive to replace the existing chairs with new padded ones. It was suggested that replacement chairs may be sourced from a business such as a hotel or conference centre that may be having refurbishments carried out. Mrs Davis stated that, with Members agreement, she would make some enquiries. All Members **AGREED**.

The Chairman suggested that new external entrance doors be considered. The Chairman stated that he had obtained one quote which was for £4500. The quote was from a

company that provides doors for commercial properties. The current entrance doors are domestic and concerns had been expressed with regard to their safety. The Clerk reminded Members that there were also monies available in the hall fund.

Mrs Smith asked whether replacement of the heaters would need to be put forward. The Clerk to the Council stated that the heaters would be covered under maintenance and therefore funds would need to be taken out of the hall's budget.

The Clerk to the Council stated that she would like to remove the garages and replace with a container, however, expressed concern that this may not be very easy as the garages may contain asbestos.

Mrs Hawkins advised that the fan in the kitchen was not working. The Chairman stated that the fan had been fixed earlier in the year, adding that he would look into it.

Mrs Hawkins suggested that the Committee may wish to consider decorating the inside of the hall. Mrs Davis stated that it had been carried out two years ago. The Clerk to the Council suggested that they may wish to look at using a professional decorator, however, Members expressed concern that this option would be too expensive. Mrs Davis stated that if the Committee volunteered to decorate the hall, it looked like they were giving something back, rather than asking for more money from the Parish Council. The Clerk to the Council suggested that the "Pay Back" team could be used, at no cost to the Parish Council, however, Members stated that they would rather decorate the hall themselves.

In conclusion, Members **AGREED** that the following items would be put forward for the Parish Council's Budget/Precept Meeting:-

- New Curtains
- New entrance doors (external)
- Replacement padded chairs

**PH17.041 PARISH OFFICE – CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR**

Members **NOTED** that the Parish Office would be closing on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> December for Christmas and New Year, reopening on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018.

**PH17.042 NEW YEAR SHUTDOWN PERIOD**

The Booking Secretary confirmed that there was a booking for Christmas Day, therefore, with the exception of this, the hall would be closed from 21<sup>st</sup> December, re-opening on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

**PH17.043 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT – nothing to report.**

**PH17.044 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman reported that, following an informal meeting of the Parish Council, it was agreed that suggestions of how best to honour Cyril Hawkins would be sought, therefore, the Chairman asked if anyone had any suggestions. The Clerk to the Council

advised that she had received one suggestion from a resident who thought the Parish Hall should be renamed “The Cyril Hawkins Memorial Hall”. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that they would like to put forward the following suggestions for consideration:-

1. Rename the Parish Hall after Cyril – Members were very keen for this to be considered, they felt that this would be the most appropriate thing to do.
2. Purchase a bench to be located on the green at the back of the hall, would like the plaque on the bench to refer to Cyril as “Mr Thornwood”.

The Clerk to the Council suggested that a plaque could be put inside the hall explaining the reason for the renaming of the hall. All Members **AGREED**.

The Chairman informed Members that there was a Supplementary Agenda, stating that he would bring the items forward to be discussed at this point in the meeting.

#### **PH17.045 HEATERS**

The Caretaker had advised that 4 heaters in the main hall were currently not working. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that the Clerk to the Council would contact Epping Electrical to arrange for inspection.

#### **PH17.046 FIRE ALARM MAINTENANCE**

Members **NOTED** that notification had been received from Ardent Fire & Security Ltd advising that the Annual Maintenance check was due. The Caretaker stated that he would be available to meet the Contractor. The Meeting Clerk was asked to liaise with the Contractor and the Caretaker to arrange a suitable date and time.

#### **PH17.047 OTHER REPORTS**

##### **a) Regular Hall Hirers**

- Mums and Tots – no report.
- Flower Club – no report.
- Harlow Bowmen – no report.
- Thornwood Seniors – no report.

##### **b) Booking Secretary Report**

The Booking Secretary reported that over the last few months there have been the regular bookings and quite a few children’s parties. People booking the parties have said how clean the hall is and like the car park. The MacMillan’s Coffee Morning was successful. In October there was a table top sale which was a success and one of the ladies is looking to hire the hall and organise another sale next year. Slimming World finished last Saturday and the Jazz club is finishing at the end of the year. We have a new regular booking on a Friday morning for keep fit. We have quite a few bookings for November and the beginning of December.

##### **c) Caretakers Report**

The Caretaker reported that at the last meeting it was suggested to tape up the

switches on the Fire Exit lights, however, after speaking with the Clerk to the Council, it was agreed that the lights would be turned on in the mornings and switched off at night. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that this would continue.

The Caretaker referred to the Fire Inspection report and asked if the mops and buckets stored in the kitchen would need to be removed. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that the Fire Brigade inspector did not ask for them to be removed.

The Caretaker referred to the faulty heaters and advised that he had put red and white tape to identify them.

The Caretaker reported that the guard which covers the heater in the extension had fallen off. Members **AGREED** that arrangements would be made for the Parish Council's contractor to fix.

The Caretaker reported that a piece of plastic had fallen down in the men's toilet. Members **AGREED** that arrangements would be made for the Parish Council's contractor to fix.

The Caretaker reported that a new kettle had been purchased, advising that a spare kettle had also been donated by the Parish Council to keep in the kitchen.

The Caretaker reported that two new tubes had been replaced in the Fire Exit lights.

**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.

**PH17.048 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Mrs Hawkins thanked the Committee and Parish Council for the use of the hall for the Macmillan Coffee Morning, which raised a total of £1260.00.

Meeting closed: 8.50pm

Signed .....

Chairman

Date .....