



**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Meeting:** PARISH HALL AT            **Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018            **Time:** 7.15 PM  
THORNWOOD COMMON  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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

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**PRESENT: Committee Members (14)** Cllr R Spearman (Chairman), Mrs S Hawkins (Vice Chairman), Mrs J Abbott, Mrs D Shelley, Mrs I Smith, P Hebden, Mrs E Davis, B Cooper, T Sawyer, Cllr B Clegg, Cllr Ms M Crosby, Mrs L Foster, Mrs S Rush\*, T Drane\*\*

\* Also representing Mums and Tots Group

\*\* Arrived 7.18pm

**Also in Attendance (2)**

Joanna Tyler – Meeting Clerk

Susan De Luca – Clerk to the Council

**Members of the Public (1)**

**PH18.018 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (0)**

**PH18.019 OTHER ABSENCES (0)**

**PH18.020 MINUTES**

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

**PH18.021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

**PH18.022 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**PH18.023 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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

The Caretaker confirmed that he had inspected the fire exit route prior to the start of the meeting and it was clear.

**PH18.024 HALL ALARM**

As discussed at the previous Committee Meeting, Members **NOTED** that a quotation had been received from the alarm company to replace the remaining PIRs with a wireless system. The cost for replacement will be £385.00 (+vat) for materials, plus an attendance fee of £75.00 (+vat) which includes the first half an hour of labour, plus £35.00 (+vat) charged per half hour thereafter. Members **NOTED** that this item would now be put forward for

consideration by the Parish Council at the Budget and Precept Meeting scheduled to be held towards the end of the year.

As discussed at the previous Committee Meeting, Members **NOTED** that the Pest Control contractor was informed of the alarm company's report regarding the intermittent 'tamper' and was asked to inspect the loft space on the next visit. The Caretaker informed Members that following the latest visit, the contractor had confirmed that there were no indications of rodents in the loft space and that no bait had been taken. Members **NOTED** that there had been no further incidents of the alarm being in 'tamper' mode.

#### **PH18.025 UNWANTED CHAIRS**

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council had been contacted by a charity asking whether the Committee would be willing to donate the unwanted chairs to their organisation. The charity cleans the homes of parents / families battling chronic illness and health conditions. It also grants special wishes to their unsung heroes – the children. Mrs Davis advised Members that the charity had been in contact after seeing the information she had put on social media regarding the chairs. The Clerk to the Council suggested that as there had been no luck in selling the chairs, Members may wish to donate some of them to the charity, retaining a small number should they be required for future events. Following discussion, all Members **AGREED** that the chairs should be donated.

#### **PH18.026 REMOVAL OF GARAGES**

Councillor Clegg reported that he had visited a container company, based on North Weald Airfield, with Cllr Buckley, to see whether or not a storage container would be suitable a replacement for the garages. Cllr Clegg informed Members that the containers are brand new, are 20ft long, can be ordered in any colour, would be vermin proof and are guaranteed to not have problems with condensation. The initial purchase cost would be £3,000, plus £1,000 to have the container delivered to site and put in place. In addition, the container can be supplied with a heater and shelving, however this would incur an extra cost. The Chairman asked if the cost included delivery. Cllr Clegg confirmed that it did and advised that before any agreement was made to purchase, a representative from the company would carry out a site visit to assess whether or not a container could be placed there.

Cllr Clegg stated that a grabber lorry would be needed to remove the garages, rather than hiring a large skip. Mr Sawyer asked if the garages had asbestos in the roofs. Mrs Davis stated that the Clerk to the Council had checked this and had reported that they did not. Cllr Clegg informed Members that he had made some enquiries about asbestos and stated that it would be a good idea to have the roofs assessed as asbestos can be hidden. The Clerk to the Council stated that the Parish Council's contractor had informed her that he did not believe they contained asbestos, however, she would ask him to check the roofs again. The Clerk added that she could recall the garages being put up in the early 1990's and believed that enquiries had been made at the time they were ordered. The Chairman asked whether the garages could be sold. Cllr Clegg stated that there could be problems with taking the garages apart, adding that he was not asked to look into selling the garages. Cllr Clegg stated that he would suggest that a container would be the best solution, it would be very secure and they are dry.

Cllr Ms Crosby informed Members that she rents a container on a business park and that it is full of condensation no matter what time of year it is. Cllr Clegg stated that condensation had been his main concern when he went to visit the Airfield, however he had been assured that this was not a problem and the container that both he and Cllr Buckley had been shown did not have condensation. Cllr Clegg asked if the Clerk to the Council would make further enquiries with regard to the technical issues. The Clerk stated that she would prefer to wait until Cllr Buckley returned from holiday, adding that Cllr Buckley had been in contact with Epping Forest District Council regarding the use of containers. The Clerk stated that a guarantee could be asked for and that she would ask Cllr Buckley with regard to specifications as he has experience of dealing with shipping containers. The Chairman stated that he would also make some enquiries about the use of containers. He informed Members that there were a large number in Oak Hill which are rented out to small businesses, adding that they had been insulated before being rented.

#### **PH18.027 CAR PARK**

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that she had received a phone call from the Flower Club back in June regarding the car park and the issue that they had wanted to use it to park in on the same day that the Thornwood Seniors had hired the hall for an event. Mrs Shelley confirmed that in the end the Flower Club members had all managed to park in the street, Mrs Smith confirmed that the parking had not been an issue on the day in question. The Clerk stated that there were still a number of concerns with regard to the car park not being used by hall hirers and that she had wondered whether it would be worth employing someone to be at the entrance to the car park on the days when there are large events. Mrs Shelley stated that on the ordinary meeting days for the Flower Club, members had been asked to double up parking spaces to alleviate the problem. The Clerk suggested that an attendant could be present to see whether there was an issue with cars being parked from local businesses.

The Clerk informed Members that the lady who called from the Flower Club had advised that there were 16 cars parked when she had arrived at the hall on one of the Flower Club days. The Clerk advised that she had arranged for someone to check the car park following the phone call and stated that there were not that number present when checked. Mrs Davis advised that all allotment holders using the car park displayed a parking permit.

The Clerk stated that she hoped to try and find an easy solution to the problem. Mrs Smith stated that cars are usually parked there between 8.30am and 10am, therefore if somebody could be in attendance during those times, the issue may be resolved. Mr Sawyer stated that he believed someone would need to be in attendance from 7.30am. Mrs Shelley stated that there could be an issue with the Flower Club's Christmas Event which is to be held on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Mrs Smith stated that Thornwood Seniors have a Christmas Dinner on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> December with 120 attending, therefore a parking attendant would be useful on that day. The Clerk stated that she would arrange for someone to be present on both days, the attendant would need to be paid. All Members **AGREED**, that the Clerk should make arrangements for these two days only.

The Clerk stated that Cllr Ms Crosby also wished to speak about the car park and had asked for the matter to be placed on this agenda at the Parish Council Meeting held in July. Cllr Ms

Crosby stated that she was concerned about the car parking spaces being leased indefinitely, adding that if more events and community events are held at the hall, more people would want to use the car park, resulting in a lack of spaces. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that the issue would need to be reviewed longer term and that a solution needed to be found. The Clerk suggested that Cllr Ms Crosby may wish to cover this matter when she would be talking about community events later in the meeting.

#### **PH18.028 FUTURE FUNDRAISING / COMMUNITY EVENTS**

- a) Mrs Hawkins informed Members that the following fundraising events had been organised:-  
Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> September – Lunch  
Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> September – MacMillan’s  
Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> October – Christmas Fayre  
Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Carols

Mrs Davies advised that posters advertising the events had been advertised on social media and that posters had been put up on noticeboards.

- b) The Chairman informed Members that Cllr Ms Crosby had posed the question “*Do the Parish Hall Management Committee normally organise the Thornwood Village Day?*” The Chairman confirmed that the answer to this was no and that Mr and Mrs Hawkins, together with a small group of volunteers, had formed the Festival Committee, Mrs Hawkins advised that the committee members were now 80 plus and they could not organise the Festival anymore, adding that for many years they had posted letters through every door in the village asking for help, but no one had ever come forward.

Cllr Ms Crosby asked how Mrs Hawkins would feel if the Festival was started up again. Mrs Hawkins stated that it would be totally up to Cllr Ms Crosby, adding that she would not be interested in getting involved with the Festival again. Mrs Hawkins stated that her love was for the village and that she intended to carry on with what her husband had done for the village. Mrs Hawkins informed the Committee that next year it is her intention to organise more events. Mrs Davis referred to what Cyril had suggested when the Festival ended, which was to run smaller events throughout the year to raise funds, rather than organising one large event.

Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she agreed with what had been said and referred to the newsletter that she had started, stating that she is concerned about Thornwood, she is concerned about its profile, its identity and where it is going in the future. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that an event such as the Festival, puts Thornwood on the map and brings people to the village, adding that she thought that the Festival Committee had done a wonderful job. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that the village now has a communication tool, which can be used to go out to residents and say that if they want this event, then they would have to contribute and would have to help with the organisation, adding that if people do not want to help then it will just “die a death”. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she believes the Committee will be surprised and that she thinks that people will be prepared to help. Mrs Hawkins said that she hoped that Cllr Ms Crosby does have a go at organising the Festival, adding that it would be terrific if she succeeded.

Mrs Davis referred to the open gardens event held earlier in the Summer and stated that the organisers of the event do raise the profile of the village, hence the large numbers of people who attended from surrounding areas such as Harlow, Hastingwood and North Weald. Mrs Davis stated that the open gardens attracted more people than expected, adding that the Parish Council gave permission for the allotments to also be opened, which was very popular and was a good focal point for the village. Mrs Davis confirmed that the event would be going ahead next year as well. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that unless anyone has any reason otherwise, she does not see why both events (the open gardens and the Festival) could not be run. Mrs Davis stated that she was just concerned that Cllr Ms Crosby may not have enough people to run the event and asked if she had a list of volunteers already. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she was referring to new people running the event, not those who are already organising events. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she would be prepared to put herself forward. Mrs Davis stated that she did not think that the Parish Hall Committee should be responsible for organising the event, adding that it should be a separate Festival Committee, phase 2. The Chairman confirmed that the Festival has always had a separate committee. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she was happy to find out if people were prepared to get involved and that she would keep Members of this Committee up to date with what would be happening. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that the only thing she would ask is if the people who had experience of organising the Festival, would share their knowledge with the new committee, that is the only amount of work she would expect anyone to do.

Mrs Shelley asked if anyone had asked what had happened to Festival Day this year. Mrs Davis stated that the open gardens were organised in its place. Mrs Davis asked Cllr Ms Crosby if she was still in mind to hold the event to raise funds for St Clares. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she had not thought about that, adding that it would be a fundraising event but at this stage she was not sure if it would be for the hospice. Mrs Hawkins advised that the original committee had started the Festival to raise funds for the hospice. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she wanted to be honest with Members and said that if the event was for fundraising and was not in aid of the hospice, then it would be for Thornwood. She added that if money cannot be raised by any other means for Thornwood, then residents have to raise it themselves. Mrs Hawkins advised that over the years £60,000 had been raised for St Clares Hospice, stating that she believed this was a very good effort for Thornwood. Mrs Hawkins stated that when the last Festival Day was held there were only 5 people on the committee. The organisation was very hard work, not only on the day, but in the months leading up to it. Cllr Ms Crosby said that people would need to be willing to do that. The Chairman stated that he was sure that people would be willing to pass on information. Mrs Hawkins reiterated that she would continue to organise small events.

Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she wished to talk to the Committee about community events. She stated that there were a lot of people in different sectors of Thornwood who knew one another and that there were also lots of different things going on, however she is concerned that generally throughout the village, from one end to the other, people do not know the different roads or who lives there. Some residents are quite isolated and do not get to meet other people. Cllr Ms Crosby said that

she had found that this not only applied to elderly members of the community, but also younger members, giving an example of someone she had met whose wife was at home with a young baby and did not know anyone in the village and was not aware that there was a Mums and Tots club in the Parish Hall. Mrs Foster advised that the club had advertised. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she believed that the committee should make the best use of the hall for the community and that she would like to see more events being held, if Members were in agreement with the suggestion. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she would like to see more clubs and read out a list of suggestions. The list included a gardening club. Members advised that a gardening club already existed. Cllr Ms Crosby agreed, however, added that the club was not open to the full community. Both Mr Cooper and Mrs Abbot advised that it was. Mrs Abbot stated that the club was held at her house and that anyone would be welcome to attend. Mrs Abbot explained that the club was originally held in the Parish Hall, however, due to dwindling numbers, it was moved to her house. Cllr Ms Crosby commented that the club was not talking about gardening in general, adding that it was more like friends getting together. Mrs Davis stated that the gardening club always had a large stall at the Festival. Cllr Ms Crosby advised that she had been invited along to attend, however it was her understanding that the club was for friends getting together. Mr Cooper reiterated that the club was open to anybody and that they would welcome new members. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that if it was advertised that members of the community could join the gardening club, Mrs Abbot would not want 30 or 40 people in her house. Members commented that the club could then meet in the hall. The Chairman stated that there needs to be a number of people interested in a club for it to be successful. Cllr Ms Crosby stated that if the committee get more people together, it would result in more funds being raised for the hall. The Chairman stated that this had been tried in the past, giving an example of the table tennis club, which did not have enough members to cover the hall hire fees. Cllr Ms Crosby asked the Committee if they were prepared to let her try to generate interest. All Members **AGREED**, provided there were no double bookings.

Mrs Davis asked Cllr Ms Crosby if she could advise Members of the types of clubs she was considering promoting in order that the Committee could let her know if a club had been tried previously and whether or not it had been successful. Cllr Ms Crosby read out a list of suggestions. Mrs Davis referred to the suggestion of a flying club, advising that there was a model flying club at North Weald Airfield and that this could not be operated on the playing field. Cllr Ms Crosby referred back to the list and stated that those clubs she had suggested would appeal to all areas of the community, not just one age group. She would like to see if she could get people involved, adding that those who were interested would have to be prepared to run the club as she could not organise them all. Mrs Davis referred to the Yoga Club that had previously been promoted at the hall and advised that in the end there had been only two or three people attending.

Following further discussion, the Clerk had suggested to Cllr Ms Crosby that she take a morning or a whole Saturday 'free of charge' as a type of Community Day to advertise the Community Events that she would like to do for the village and in particular the hall.

However, Cllr Ms Crosby stated that she felt that her newsletter would be sufficient and that she would continue in getting her support that way. Therefore, that is why she would like to book the hall for less than the minimum time to see what support she had for the clubs she had suggested. The Clerk advised that she could see no problem with this between now and Christmas and that a diary of when the hall was available would be given to Cllr Ms Crosby. However, Cllr Ms Crosby was asked to advise the Booking Secretary of the dates that she was using the hall to ensure that the hall could be used for bookings and there is no clash of bookings. The Booking Secretary would let the Parish Office have the Bookings Diary by the end of the forthcoming week.

#### **PH18.029 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

**Misted Windows** – Members *NOTED* that following the previous Committee Meeting, the Meeting Clerk had contacted the company which originally installed the windows to obtain a quotation for repair / replacement. The caretaker met with the contractor on the 18<sup>th</sup> June. Despite numerous telephone calls, a quote was not forthcoming. In light of this, the Meeting Clerk contacted the company who would be replacing the front doors to see if they would be able to provide a quote. In the meantime, the Clerk to the Council was advised that one of the windows had been damaged when the Spiritualist Group had attempted to shut the window. The handle had to be removed to close the window and it was temporarily taped up. The Clerk to the Council made arrangements for a contractor to visit the hall to assess the damage. The Clerk also asked the contractor to provide a quote for the misted windows. Members *NOTED* that the total cost for the repair to the window and the misted windows would be £357.00. The Clerk to the Council had agreed that arrangements should be made for the work to go ahead.

#### **Royal British Legion – Poppy Appeal Collection 2018**

The Meeting Clerk informed Members that the organiser for the Poppy Appeal collection had mentioned that she was looking for volunteers to help deliver the collection boxes to roads in Thornwood. Mrs Davis and Mrs Smith both offered to help and confirmed that they would be happy for their contact details to be passed on to the organiser.

#### **PH18.030 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman mentioned that arrangements were now in place for the replacement of the front doors and passed around a drawing of the proposed replacement. The Chairman explained that the doors would be of a commercial standard, with four separate panes of double-glazed georgian wired glass. The Chairman explained that the alarm operating unit inside the doorway may have to be moved during the installation. The Chairman also mentioned that there were two electrical ceiling roses either side of the door way which would also need to be moved. Arrangements would need to be made for an electrician to check this.

#### **PH18.031 OTHER REPORTS**

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

- Mums and Tots – Mrs Foster reported that the club's storage cupboard in the kitchen was found to be open. The Caretaker advised that the only key to the cupboard was held by the Mums and Tots group.
- Flower Club – Mrs Shelley mentioned that a member of their group had visited the Parish Office with their microphone for PAT testing, on arrival the member was

advised that the electrical contractor had cancelled the same day. The member asked an electrician to look at the microphone and Mrs Shelley confirmed that it had passed. The Clerk to the Council asked if the Flower Club were happy with this and advised Members that the Electrical Contractor would be carrying out PAT testing at the Parish Office on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> September and would also be testing any items at the hall which had been missed previously.

- Harlow Bowmen – Mr Cooper reported that due to a reduction in the number of members, the Bowmen would only be meeting three times a month.
- Thornwood Seniors – Mrs Smith informed Members that a Race Night was being organised for 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018, to fund new tables for the hall. Mrs Smith advised that notices would be put up on notice boards around the village and that every household would receive a flyer through their door, however, from previous experience, Mrs Smith had found that they had more people attending from outside Thornwood. Cllr Ms Crosby asked whether it would be possible to have an advertising board, referring to where the Festival used to place their board, so that people travelling through Thornwood would be able to see what was going on. The Clerk to the Council stated that it was her understanding that an advertising board would be removed by Epping Forest District Council. Cllr Ms Crosby asked if the District Council would give permission. The Clerk stated that they would not permit an ad hoc advertisement board. The Chairman stated that he had experience of district council removing his advertising boards. The Clerk advised Members that a banner had been put up in North Weald High Road for the Parish Council which was taken down by District Council the same day. Mrs Davis stated that permission had to be sought for the Festival Board as it was on a temporary structure.

Mrs Smith referred back to the Race Night and asked if the Committee would give permission for the hall to be free of charge, as the Seniors would be fundraising for the hall. The Chairman asked if Members were in favour of the request and asked for a show of hands. All Members **AGREED**.

Mrs Smith mentioned that one of the Thornwood Seniors had been taken ill at an event held at the hall earlier in the day. The defibrillator was removed, however it did not have to be used, paramedics were in attendance.

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

The Booking Secretary reported that August started off well with a 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday and a child's party the first weekend. The car park was hired on the second weekend, with no complaints received from local residents regarding noise. The rest of August was fairly quiet with mainly the Spiritualists, the Seniors and Social Club. September, the Seniors had a Ploughman's, the Spiritualists have Tuesdays and the last Friday, the Flower Club are in Monday, Mums and Tots are back and Thursday there is a Yoga evening for the Well Being Charity. There is the Sunday Lunch on 16<sup>th</sup> September, then there is a child's party and the Parish Council have Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup>. Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> is the MacMillan's Coffee Morning and on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> October there is an Artisan Sale and the hall is busy the rest of that week. On Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> there is a Christmas Bazaar. On 20<sup>th</sup> October the Bridge Club have hired the hall for the day. Yoga has

three more bookings in the New Year, there are four bookings next year for a Clairvoyant. The Booking Secretary has received an enquiry from a young man who is keen to start an exercise club for all ages, which covers a number of different exercises including boxing.

**c) Caretakers Report**

The Caretaker reported that one of the hall windows had been broken on the 21<sup>st</sup> August by the Spiritualist Group. One of the handles had been broken and the window would not close, therefore the Caretaker and the Parish Council's Contractor removed the handle to close it and taped the window up to prevent it from being opened. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that a contractor had ordered a new handle to repair it.

The Caretaker reported that Pest Control contractor had visited the hall last week and had confirmed that no bait had been taken from the loft area.

**d) Financial** – no report.

**PH18.032 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that a training course for the new General Data Protection Regulations would be held at the Parish Hall on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> September at 7pm. The Clerk stated that the training course was open to all Members of the Committee, 'free of charge' and asked that they contact her to confirm their attendance.

Mrs Davis asked the Clerk to the Council if the Spiritualist Group would be charged for breaking the window. The Clerk informed Members that she had discussed this matter with the Caretaker and explained that because it is not clearly stated in the Hall Hirers Terms and Conditions that the windows should be closed using both handles, a charge could not be enforced. The Clerk suggested that the Terms and Conditions should be amended to include the closing of the windows in the checklist or perhaps a label should be placed on each window. Discussion ensued, however, no decision was made regarding the suggestion.

Meeting closed: 8.30pm

Signed .....  
Chairman

Date .....