



DRAFT

MINUTES

**Meeting:** ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMMITTEE

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018

**Time:** 10.30 am

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

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**PRESENT:**

**Councillors (5)** G Mulliner (Chairman), A Buckley, B Eldridge, B Clegg, B Bartram

**Also in Attendance (2)**

Susan De Luca, Clerk

Joanna Tyler, Senior Administrative Officer

**Members of the Public (0)**

**E18.01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Eldridge **PROPOSED** Cllr Mulliner as Chairman of the Committee, this proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr Clegg. There being no other nominations, Cllr Mulliner was duly elected as Chairman of the Environmental Committee for the current municipal year.

**E18.02 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Bartram **PROPOSED** Cllr Eldridge as Vice Chairman of the Committee, this proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr Mulliner. There being no other nominations, Cllr Eldridge was duly elected as Chairman of the Environmental Committee for the current municipal year.

**E18.03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (2)**

**NOTED** apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mrs Godwin-Brown, Ms Crosby

**E18.04 OTHER ABSENCES (0)**

**E18.05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**NOTED** there were no declarations of interest.

**E18.06 MINUTES**

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018.

**E18.07 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

**E18.08 PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORT**

**a) Weald Common Play Area**

The Clerk reported that the pathway leading to the play area required maintenance work. Photos had been attached to the agenda, depicting erosion of the surface, leaving a gully running along one side. Members noted that there is also a dip where the pathway meets the entrance to the play area, which is causing a trip

hazard.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's contractor had confirmed that the bench donated by Epping Ongar Railway had been reinstalled.

**b) Thornwood Play Area**

Members **NOTED** that essential maintenance works had now been completed.

**c) Queens Hall Play Area**

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had asked the Parish Council's contractor to cut the grass and clear overgrown vegetation from around the perimeter of the play area fence. This was following visits from the Parish Office staff to check the play area on two occasions during the past month. Photographs taken on those visits (4<sup>th</sup> June and 11<sup>th</sup> June) were tabled at the meeting. The Clerk informed Members that there was an agreement in place that the Queens Hall Committee would undertake the grass cutting, however, it had not been carried out. Cllr Bartram confirmed that Queens Hall employ a contractor to do the grass cutting. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that the Parish Council's contractor should be asked to cut the grass every two weeks until such time as the Clerk hears from the Queens Hall Committee.

The Clerk stated that, ideally, the play areas needed to be checked by the Committee every two weeks. Cllr Buckley agreed with this suggestion. Cllr Clegg volunteered to check the Thornwood playing field and the play area. The Clerk suggested that the Allotment Sub Committee could visit Weald Common and the Queens Hall Play Areas when carrying out their allotment checks. The Clerk stated that the play areas are the Parish Council's flagships

Cllr Clegg asked the Clerk if the works to the path alongside Thornwood Play Area had been completed. The Clerk confirmed that the paving slabs had been removed and that new turf had been put down. She also advised Members that when the Parish Council's contractor removed the moss and algae from the pathways within the play area, several holes were exposed which had to be filled. Cllr Eldridge mentioned the graffiti on the play equipment at Queens Hall and said that perhaps the Police would be able to recognise the "tag". The Clerk reminded Members that the Police now run a "coffee with cops" session which people may go along to.

The Clerk mentioned that the Parish Council's contractor had recommended that the bins in the play areas be emptied twice a week during the Summer months. The Clerk suggested that they should be emptied twice a week from May until September, perhaps on a Thursday and a Monday to cover the weekends. All Members **AGREED**.

**E18.10 ASSET CHECKS**

The Clerk advised Members that the asset checks were due to be carried out and suggested that it may be best to undertake the checks in September, bearing in mind summer holidays. The Chairman suggested that if the forms are prepared for completion, Members could collect them from the office and carry out as and when

they are able to, so that they are not completing too many at once. Cllr Clegg stated that he would carry out the checks for Thornwood. The Clerk reminded Members that they would need to take a photograph of each asset that they check, which would then be printed and attached to each completed form. Members noted that the camera was available for use, should it be required.

The Clerk confirmed that arrangements would be made to put the bench back at Hastingwood. However, it would be a three seater rather than a two seater. Cllr Eldridge asked about the memorial plaques that had been removed from the original bench. The Clerk suggested that rather than putting the plaques back on the bench, she could ask that the names be engraved into the back of the bench, as per the bench at Thornwood that was recently unveiled in memory of Cyril. All Members **AGREED**.

## E18.11 ALLOTMENTS

### a) Queens Road Allotment Site Meeting

The Clerk reported that STORM Building Limited had arranged a site meeting to discuss issues surrounding the Queens Road allotment site, on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> June at 11am. Representatives from Epping Forest District Council would also be in attendance. The Clerk asked if a member from the Committee could also attend. Following discussion, the Chairman confirmed that he would be available, Cllr Buckley and Cllr Eldridge also confirmed that they may be able to attend and would confirm their availability to the Clerk.

### b) Plaques for two benches in orchard – Queens Road Allotment Site

Members **NOTED** that the Allotment Warden had put forward a suggestion that the two benches in the new orchard at Queens Road allotment site be dedicated (by way of a plaque) to two long standing allotment tenants who have both recently passed away. Following discussion, all Members **AGREED**. Cllr Buckley offered to make arrangements for two plaques to be supplied, as he would be ordering the new ones for the garden at the parade of shops and asked that inscription details and sizes be provided as soon as possible.

### c) Wheelers Farm Gardens Allotment Site

Members **NOTED** that following a report of low water pressure at Wheelers Farm Gardens allotment site, the Parish Council's contractor visited the site, together with a plumber, to investigate the matter. The contractor informed the Clerk that in order for the plumber to provide a quote, an inspection hole would need to be dug. The Clerk had been advised that it was almost certain that the stand pipe was rusting internally, causing a blockage which, in turn, is resulting in poor pressure. The contractor also reported that a ball valve had broken in one of the water tanks. The Clerk reported the matter to the Chairman of this Committee who agreed for the works to be carried out. Members **NOTED** that the Parish Council's contractor had now confirmed that all works had been completed.

## E18.12 CEMETERY

### a) Grounds Maintenance Costs

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had received notification from the grounds maintenance contractor that the cost per visit is to be increased to £260.00 with immediate effect. Members noted that the increase is due to the new layout of the Meadow Brook Section and the extra time being taken to complete the work required. The Clerk stated that the increase may need to be taken into account when considering whether or not to increase the fees next year. Cllr Buckley asked how often the grass was cut. The Clerk confirmed that the grass was cut once every two weeks in the Winter months and once a week during the Summer. The Chairman asked the Clerk if the cemetery was self funding, the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had always tried to make it self funding. Cllr Bartram reminded Members that was the reason for agreeing not to increase the fees for the current year and that in previous years they had been increased by 10%. The Clerk stated that the hedgerow planted around the perimeter of Meadow Brook Section had been funded from income received from the cemetery.

**b) Maintenance Works**

Members **NOTED** that the Chairman of this Committee had agreed that the following maintenance works should be undertaken at the cemetery:-

- Benches – all to be cleaned and varnished / stained
- White Picket Fence – to be cleaned and painted
- Gates and wooden surrounds to front and back – to be cleaned and sadolin applied
- Wooden styles – to be cleaned and sadolin applied
- Metal gates – clean and prepared and painted (black satin)
- Cemetery wall – clean and prepare plaster work and paint (magnolia)

The Clerk received a quote for the works and the Chairman of this Committee agreed the price quoted for labour which is a total of £600.00. The Chairman asked Members if they were happy with this, to which they all agreed. The Clerk confirmed that the cost for maintenance was self funding, covered by income received from the cemetery.

**c) Installation of bollard to prevent vehicles driving along the pathway adjacent to Meadow Brook Section**

The Clerk reminded Members that agreement had been made at the previous Committee Meeting to install a sign at the cemetery requesting no vehicular access beyond the Hedges Section. Following two recent burials in Meadow Brook Section, it was noted that the sign is being ignored by funeral directors. The pathway leading to the end of Meadow Brook narrows and the Parish Office staff are concerned that a hearse may have difficulty reversing as there is not enough room to turn a vehicle around. Members were asked to consider the possibility of installing a retractable post to prevent vehicles from accessing the area. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council's maintenance contractors and the grave digger would be given a key to lower the bollard for when access is required to carry out their work. Cllr Buckley expressed concern that people walking around that area may bump into the bollard (the Senior Admin Officer distributed photos of posts recommended by the Parish Council's contractor), the Clerk stated that the posts were clearly marked with hazard lines and did not think that they would

would cause any problems. Cllr Eldridge asked if the cost of the post included installation. The Clerk stated that the prices were for purchase only and that the Parish Council's contractor would charge for the installation, therefore the total cost is expected to be around £200.00. The Clerk said that on the grounds of health and safety, she believed the post should be installed as added security due to the sign being ignored. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that a retractable post should be purchased and installed to alleviate the problem.

#### **E18.13 WEALD COMMON – PATHWAY LEADING TO PLAY AREA**

The Chairman stated that although this matter had been covered earlier in the meeting, he wished to discuss whether there was something more substantial that could be put on the pathway. Cllr Buckley asked if plastic matting could be put down after the pathway material had been compacted. The Clerk stated that care needed to be taken when using plastic matting as it can be dangerous to use sometimes. Cllr Bartram stated that it would become slippery when muddy. The Clerk reminded the Committee that Members had previously agreed to budget for the pathway in the precept every year, therefore funds were available to undertake any maintenance works. Cllr Bartram reminded Members that it had been agreed that the pathway would need to be dressed every year when it was first installed. The Clerk recommended that it would be best to instruct the installer to undertake the work to restore the pathway. All Members **AGREED**.

#### **E18.14 THORNWOOD COMMON NATURE RESERVE**

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had received a report from Epping Forest Countrycare in April, informing that the fence on the northern side (furthest away from the allotments) had fallen down. Following agreement from the Chairman of this Committee, the Clerk confirmed that Epping Forest Countrycare may undertake repairs to the fence as part of the normal maintenance work on the site. The Clerk read out the email received, which confirmed that the cost would be no more than £200 for new timber. Cllr Bartram stated that Countrycare normally charge an additional fee for one staff member. The Clerk stated that this was expected to be £50.00 however, it did not state an additional cost in the email received.

#### **E18.15 BULB PLANTING**

Members discussed suggestions for bulb planting and **AGREED** to have a final list by the end of August, with planting to take place during October. The Clerk stated that she had received lots of favourable comments about the Talbot Roundabout and the small daffodils planted by the District Council. The Chairman stated that, unfortunately, the smaller daffodils do not appear to last as long as the larger ones. Cllr Eldridge reported that he had also received favourable comments from residents in Hastingwood. The Clerk suggested that more bulbs could be planted around the road signs. Cllr Buckley informed Members that a request for suggested sites was mentioned at both the Parish Hall and the Hastingwood Village Hall Committee Meetings.

#### **E18.16 UPDATES ON OTHER MATTERS**

##### **a) Dog Bin – Rowley Mead, Thornwood**

The Clerk informed Members that complaints had been received (via facebook)

from residents regarding the dog bin in Rowley Mead, Thornwood, not being emptied. The Clerk contacted Epping Forest District Council regarding this and the officer with responsibility for dog bins explained that the bin is being used for other litter as well. The officer suggested that the current bin could be replaced with one that would accommodate dog waste and general litter, however, the views of residents would need to be taken into consideration. The Clerk advised that she had contacted Cllr Clegg with regard to this and he had stated that he believed residents would welcome the suggestion. The Clerk reported that she had also asked members of the Parish Hall Management Committee for their comments and those present had agreed that a larger bin would be a good solution to the problem.

The Clerk asked Members if they agreed with the suggestion. Cllr Clegg stated that the District Council needed to ensure that the bins are emptied on a regular basis, he also referred to the waste bin on the corner of Upland Road, adjacent to the Parish Council's notice board. All Members **AGREED** with the suggestion. The Clerk confirmed that she would advise the officer at District Council.

**b) Maintenance Work - Various**

The Clerk expressed her concerns regarding the amount of work that is being given to the Parish Council's contractor and the length of time being taken to complete various works, some of which has been of an urgent nature. The Clerk advised that earlier in the year she had attended a course at EALC regarding the Local Services Fund which is run by EALC and Essex County Council and stated that the Parish Council could possibly apply for £15,000 grant funding over a three year period which could perhaps be used for a village warden / handyman. Following discussion, Cllr Clegg suggested that Members agree to the Clerk investigating the matter further, reporting back to this Committee at the earliest opportunity. The Clerk asked Members if they would be happy with her liaising with the Chairman with regard to this. Following further discussion, Members **AGREED** that the Clerk should investigate the matter further and liaise with the Chairman, Cllr Buckley and Cllr Eldridge.

The Clerk advised Members that she had also applied for grant funding with regard to Remembrance Sunday for the "Here But Not Here" silhouettes. The Clerk stated that a Remembrance Sunday meeting would be organised for either July or August and she hoped to be able to provide more information then.

**b) Update on Wall / Garden**

Cllr Buckley confirmed that the wall had been repaired at the entrance to the car park to the parade of shops. With regard to the new plaques, Cllr Buckley advised that he had received confirmation from three of the sponsors and is currently waiting to hear from one other. Cllr Buckley stated that this would provide an income of £400.00. The supplier used for the plaques had confirmed that the price would be the same as last year, which was around £10.00 per plaque, plus VAT. Cllr Buckley stated that this would allow for the remainder

of the money to be used to cover the cost of new plants.

Cllr Buckley advised Members that the Preservation Society had agreed to continue to maintain the garden around the flagpole and to provide the plants at no cost to the Parish Council. Therefore, agreement had been made that a plaque would be installed, in their name, free of charge.

**c) Damaged Railings**

Cllr Buckley advised Members that it had been established who had caused the damage to the railings outside North Weald Chemists. The Clerk confirmed that the vehicle had been identified.

**d) Oak Tree Memorial**

Cllr Clegg mentioned the oak tree in Hampden Close, North Weald and asked the Clerk if the tree had been pruned. The Clerk stated that as far as she was aware it had not been pruned and that she had not received a quote from the Tree Surgeon. Cllr Clegg advised that the contractor used at Pike Way may be available to undertake the work. The Clerk asked Cllr Clegg if he could request a quote for the work required.

Meeting closed: 11.14am

Signed .....

Date .....