



MINUTES

Meeting: ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE **Date:** 9th November 2016 **Time:** 10.30 am

Venue: NORTH WEALD LIBRARY, HIGH ROAD, NORTH WEALD

PRESENT:

Councillors (7) G Mulliner (Chairman), C Hawkins, B Bartram, A Buckley, B Clegg, R Spearman, Mrs E Godwin-Brown*, T Blanks*

Also in Attendance (3)

Susan De Luca, Clerk*

Adriana Jones, Principal Finance Officer*

Joanna Tyler, Senior Administrative Officer

*For part of meeting

Members of the Public (0)

E16.26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Brian Eldridge

E16.27 OTHER ABSENCES – None recorded.

E16.28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED there were no declarations of interest.

E16.29 MINUTES

Members **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2016.

E16.30 WHERE DOES THE WATER GO? ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL PROJECT

Charlotte Smith, Flood Assets Officer, Flood and Water Management, Essex County Council, attended the meeting to invite Councillors to take part in the Where Does The Water Go? Project. Members **NOTED** that the parish had been prioritised to complete the project this year, as it is shown to be at risk from surface water flooding as shown on the Environment Agency's flood maps.

Following discussion, Councillors **AGREED** that they would like to participate in the project. Charlotte advised that she would make arrangements with the Clerk to return at a later date to carry out a training session, incorporating Health & Safety requirements and a practical exercise.

E16.31 CONSULTATION PROGRAM – TREES AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE EPPING FOREST DISTRICT

Councillors **NOTED** that EFDC have started a period of consultation to establish where the important green areas, open spaces, trees and general green infrastructure are located throughout the District. The Principal Financial Officer recently attended a consultation event held at Ongar, where members present were asked to identify areas that are important to local residents, or required some form of protection, such

as veteran or valued trees, local walks, open play spaces, nature areas, dog walks, etc. The PFO informed Members that it is expected that there will be an event held in the parish in the near future and it would be beneficial for Councillors to start thinking about identifying the areas which are important and what should be protected.

E16.32 PLAY AREAS

Councillors **NOTED** that Kevin Hebden has been contracted to carry out play area inspections, providing a report to the Principal Financial Officer on a monthly basis.

The PFO informed Members that the multi-play equipment at Thornwood had recently been repaired again. Councillor Clegg asked if the gates to the play area were closing correctly, the PFO advised that these are checked by Kevin Hebden and that no issues had been reported with regard to the gates.

E16.33 FREE TREES FROM OVO ENERGY

Councillors **NOTED** that the Clerk had received correspondence from The Conservation Volunteers inviting the Parish Council to apply for free trees. The Clerk advised that the trees can only be planted on Parish Council owned land. Following lengthy discussion, the Chairman of this Committee suggested that as the offer of free trees was made on a yearly basis, the Committee should bear this in mind and look at again next year.

E16.34 GRAFFITI

Councillors **NOTED** that the Parish Office had recently received two reports of offensive graffiti. One report referred to play equipment at Weald Common and the other was the bus shelter outside of the Kings Head. Arrangements were made to remove the graffiti. The Clerk advised Members that there is now a small supply of graffiti wipes stored at the Parish Office. The Chairman reported that broken glass had also been found in the play area at Weald Common.

E16.35 CEMETERY

The Clerk informed Members of a problem regarding a burial plot that was allocated and used for the burial of Foetal Remains (under the gestation period). The burial was carried out in July 2015. The Interment was provided by the Parish Council free of charge and agreement was given to allow the family to purchase the plot in monthly instalments. Despite the Clerk writing to the family on three occasions and offering a lower instalment of £5.00 per month, no payments/contact had been received. Following lengthy discussion, it was suggested that a further letter should be sent by the Clerk to the family.

The Chairman of the Committee reported concerns with regard to an excessive number of items being placed on certain graves. The Clerk stated that there was a note in place on the Cemetery notice board regarding this. Lengthy discussion ensued, following which Councillors **AGREED** that they would visit the cemetery and report back at the next meeting.

E16.36 ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk informed Members that she was liaising with Affinity Water with regard to Hastingwood B.

Councillor Hawkins asked the Clerk to contact the plot holder who is to relocate to Hastingwood A, to ascertain if he/she would like to retain the new plot in beds, as it is at the moment.

E16.37 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – VILLAGE GREEN, NORTH WEALD

The Clerk and Councillor Buckley had spoken about the possibility of placing a small tree in the garden in front of the shops in North Weald. However, there were concerns that the tree may be vandalised, also care would need to be taken as to where it was placed so as not to obscure the view of drivers when pulling out of the car park.

Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that the Christmas Tree would be placed on the Village Green, with the switching on of the lights programmed to coincide with the event which is taking place at the Parish Hall Thornwood on Sunday, 4th December 2016.

E16.38 LAND IN FRONT OF NORTH WEALD MUSEUM

The Clerk reported that Councillor Bedford had been liaising with Essex County Council and Epping Forest District Council with regard to replanting the damaged hedgerow on the land in front of North Weald Museum and replacement of the damaged street light. The Clerk read out an email from Cllr Bedford. Members expressed their concern that Essex County Council and Epping Forest District Council had not contacted the Bus Company either directly or indirectly via the relative insurance companies to claim back the costs of the relative works to replace the street light and the hedge.

Members **AGREED** that they did not wish to be responsible for replacing the hedge in this location and requested that the Clerk respond urging both Essex County Council and Epping Forest District Council to replace the hedge and the street light as a matter of urgency, especially as this matter was reported to Essex County Council on the day of the accident in the Summer.

Meeting closed: 11.40am

Signed

Date