



**MINUTES**

**Meeting:** ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMMITTEE

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Time:** 10.30am

**Venue:** NORTH WEALD LIBRARY

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**PRESENT:**

**Councillors (8)** G Mulliner (Chairman), A Buckley (Vice Chairman), T Blanks, Mrs A Grigg\*, B Clegg, Mrs S Jackman MBE,

**Also in Attendance (1)**

Aimi Middlehurst, Parish Council Support Assistant

\*Present for part of the meeting

**Members of the Public (1)**

**E19.17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**NOTED** apologies for absence from Cllrs Eldridge, A Tyler, A Irvine

**E19.18 OTHER ABSENCES**

**NONE RECEIVED**

**E19.19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**E19.20 MINUTES**

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

**E19.21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

An Allotment plot holder from Hastingwood made a request to the Committee for permission to keep racing pigeons on an allotment plot. He advised that he had approached all the other plot holders at the Hastingwood site who had not objected to the proposal for a pigeon loft. The size of the loft would be approximately 8 ft x 6ft to house up to 30 pigeons. The plot holder felt that as there were birds housed on an other allotment plot at Thornwood it seemed unfair not to allow racing pigeons at Hastingwood.

**The Chairman referred to Standing Order 1.A and at his discretion moved to item 7C Allotments on the agenda to allow the member of the public to hear the debate.**

**E19.22 ALLOTMENTS**

**7c Hastingwood Allotment Site – Racing Pigeon Request**

The Chairman advised that this item had been considered by the Committee in September 2018 and following negative feedback from some of the other plot holders it was agreed not to grant the request. The birds at Thornwood are actually housed in

a Dovecote on the Thornwood Allotment site, this is located on an open garden area and not on a tenanted allotment plot.

The Meeting Clerk advised that an enquiry had been made with the Council's insurers with regards to the keeping of racing pigeons on Council property, given that the birds are valuable and a response was awaited. Advice had been sought from the Racing Pigeon Association, who had advised that they did not have any concerns with regard to siting a loft on an allotment site provided the size was enough to house the birds sufficiently.

The Chairman advised that reports had been received of produce being stolen from several plots at Hastingwood recently and that it may be beneficial to add this item to the agenda of the Annual Meeting of Allotment Holders in March 2020. This would allow all plot holders at Hastingwood a chance to raise any concerns regarding the racing pigeons in an open forum.

Cllr Clegg proposed to defer the decision until after the Allotment Holders meeting. Seconded Cllr Buckley. **AGREED**

The member of the public then left the meeting.

#### **E19.23 PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORT**

Members **NOTED** the cost of the annual reports of £360. The Meeting Clerk advised that the Council's Health and Safety Officer had reviewed the reports and had provided a summary for Members information. All items were a low risk and could be addressed during the winter months by the Council's contractor. New play equipment was being provided at both School Green Lane and Thornwood following successful grant applications and the contractor could be asked to provide a quotation to repair the safety surfaces.

Members **AGREED** it appropriate that the Parish Council staff confirm to Members that the the relevant action necessary has been carried out and confirm to Members at the next meeting.

#### **E19.24 ALLOTMENTS**

##### **a) Allotment Warden – Queens Road and Wheelers Farm Gardens**

Members **NOTED** that a volunteer had come forward as Allotment Warden for the Queens Road site.

Members **AGREED** that the Allotment Sub Committee would continue to temporarily take over wardenship of the Wheelers Farm Gardens site until the Annual Meeting of Allotment Holders where hopefully a new warden would volunteer.

##### **b) Thornwood Allotment Site Water Supply**

Members **NOTED** that following damage to the one of the water uprights at the Thornwood Allotments, repairs have been completed by the Parish Council's

grounds maintenance contractor. However, due to the pipe being extremely old, the part required for fixing needed to be ordered from America.

Whilst the repairs have been completed, should there be a problem in the future the Council may be asked to consider the full replacement of the old piping right through to the stop cock at the hall and for the length of the allotment site

Members **AGREED** for an amount to be precepted for in the 2020/21 budget to replace the old pipe should it be required.

**E19.25 ASSET CHECKS**

The Meeting Clerk reported that all the Council assets had been logged and checked. Members **NOTED** the remedial action required. This included work to three noticeboards and vegetation around one of the Weald Common Stones which will require severely cutting back.

**E19.26 BULB PLANTING**

*At the last Committee meeting Members **AGREED** to plant Crocus and Daffodil bulbs at the entrance gates and within the Cemetery also within the High Road as required during the month of October*

Members **AGREED** additional sites at the junction of Canes Lane/Hastingwood Road and Norway House Play Area. A budget of £50.00 was also **AGREED** and a date towards the end of October would be circulated subject to the availability of the volunteers.

**E19.27 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS VILLAGE GREEN, NORTH WEALD**

Members **NOTED** that a 10ft Christmas tree has been ordered.

Members **AGREED** a switch on date of first Sunday in December at 4pm.

**E19.28 CEMETERY**

**a) Stolen Statue**

Members **NOTED** that the donated statue of the little girl was stolen in July. The incident has been reported to the Police and Council's Insurance Company. The Meeting Clerk reported that further information was still awaited from the Insurance Company.

**b) Criminal Damage at the Cemetery**

Members **NOTED** the damage to the gates, fences and bench and also that the lock to the front gates was removed. The Meeting Clerk reported that works had been carried out to replace the damaged gates and fencing. This item to be placed on a Full Council agenda for consideration in preparation for a budget meeting in case any further works are deemed necessary.

**c) Memorial Adornments**

The Chairman provided a verbal report to the Committee following the site visit. to the Hedges and Cremated Remains Sections. Several plots have a vast amount of adornments despite the rules and regulations stating that this is not permitted.

The Chairman suggested that plot purchasers are reminded of the Rules and Regulations in relation in to items being placed on grave plots, Purchasers also to be reminded that the Cemetery rules and regulations will be strictly adhered to in all other areas and unauthorised adornments will be removed.

Cllr Clegg proposed the Chairman's suggestion and not to take any action with regards to the current adornments. It may be necessary that any dead or silk flowers on any grave will need be removed. Seconded Cllr Mulliner. Members **AGREED**

Cllr Grigg left the meeting at 11.10 am

**E19.29 MEMORIAL TREE**

Members **NOTED** that neither the land or the tree in Hampden Close belong to the Parish Council but that there is a dedication plaque placed at the foot of the tree in memory of nine members of the Essex Regiment who were killed whilst guarding the aerodrome.

Cllr Clegg advised that he had visited the site with a tree surgeon who had advised that neighbours would need to be notified of any works as some limbs overhang their gardens. He had provided a quotation to the Council of £850.

The Meeting Clerk advised that the tree was not EFDC's responsibility. The Principal Finance Officer had made some enquiries and planning permission had been sought in 2001 by the then owner of number 11 Hampden Close to carry out works on the tree. A Land Registry search shows the parking area where the tree is located but it is unclear who it is registered to. The Title Absolute refers to George Wimpey North London Limited and the Committee may wish to consider contacting them in the first instance for information.

Following discussion, Members **AGREED** to contact the resident who had previously had work carried out to the tree, together with a member of the RBL who may have some background on the memorial but also George Wimpey North London Limited to ascertain if they have responsibility for either the memorial or the tree. The Meeting Clerk to also contact Village Life to ask if June could ask if any parishioners have any request any information that they may like to share.

**E19.30 ANNUAL TREE SURVEY**

Members noted the recommendations arising from the summary report. The Meeting Clerk advised that quotations were being sourced. Members **AGREED** to review quotations at the next meeting of the Environmental Committee

**E19.31 THORNWOOD COMMON PLAYING FIELD**

Members **NOTED** that the Epping Youth Football Team have agreed an Annual contract with the Council. Matches commenced 8<sup>th</sup> September. This will be on a trial basis for one year. It will be reviewed in April 2020.

**E19.32 BONFIRES**

The Meeting Clerk reported on feedback from EFDC's Environmental Enforcement Officer with regards to bonfires. There is not set times that bonfires are allowed unless advocated by a local bylaw. If a bonfire causes a nuisance, ie it is smoking and neighbours have to close windows or cannot air washing then EFDC would investigate. The only materials allowed to be burnt on a bonfire are clean wood (untreated) or green waste.  
Members **NOTED** this information.

**E19.33 ENVIRONMENTAL & GREEN POLICY**

Members **NOTED** the Epping Forest District Council statement:-

- We are aware that humans have already caused irreversible damage to the climate.
- The global aim is to reduce our waste to landfill from 6.5 tonnes per annum to 2.00 per annum.
- Also to reduce the overall increase in global temperature by 1.5 degrees during the same period.

Members considered making amendments to the policy at a local level and the suggestions provided by the Parish Clerk and Principal Finance Officer. After review, Members **AGREED** that the draft provided with any amendments should be recommended to Full Council as soon as possible for adoption.

Council Members also **AGREED** they would lobby Epping Forest District Councillors to take more aggressive action on fly tipping with stiffer penalties and to liaise regularly with the **Steering Group for updates and guidance.**

**E19.34 NORTH WEALD BASSETT PARISH SIGN**

Members **NOTED** that the North Weald Bassett Parish Sign had been refurbished and would be reinstalled on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September. A small unveiling ceremony /photo opportunity was planned with some members of the Preservation Society – who look after the small garden around sign in attendance.

Meeting closed: 11.50am

Signed .....

Date .....