



**MINUTES**

**Meeting:** ANNUAL PARISH  
COUNCIL

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**Time:** 7.30PM

**Venue:** PARISH HALL, THORNWOOD COMMON

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors (11)** A Buckley (Chairman), Mrs S Hawkins, B Clegg, Mrs S Jackman MBE, N Born, A Irvine, Mrs P Etherington, T Blanks, R Spearman, A Tyler, Cllr Bedford\*  
\*for part of meeting

**Officers in Attendance (2)**

Susan Deluca - Clerk

Adriana Jones – Principle Finance Officer

**Members of the Public (3)** – Inc PC Andy Cook\*, EFDC Cllr Bromwich, EFDC Cllr Burrows

**Members of the Press (1)**

Prior to the start of the meeting a presentation of the Sporting Award which formed part of the Civic Awards was presented to Joanne Ryan who could not attend the Awards ceremony on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Joanne was selected to represent Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the 4 x 100 metre relay team at the European Masters Athletics Championships in Pescara Italy last year. The team, with Joanne as lead runner, won a gold medal. Following this, Ms Debbie Bodhanya from The Limes Surgery, Epping, was in attendance to meeting informally with Members of the Parish Council only.

**C24.001 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Mrs Jackman **PROPOSED** Cllr Buckley as Chairman, the proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr Hawkins. There being no other nominations, Cllr Buckley was duly elected by way of unanimous vote as Chairman of North Weald Bassett Parish Council for the current Municipal Year, following which the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of the Chairman of the Council was duly executed.

**C23.002 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Buckley **PROPOSED** Cllr Mrs Hawkins as Vice Chairman, the proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr Blanks. There being no other nominations, Cllr Mrs Hawkins was duly elected by way of unanimous vote as Vice Chairman of North Weald Bassett Parish Council for the current Municipal Year, following which the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of the Vice Chairman of the Council was duly executed.

**C24.003 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (3)**

Apologies from Cllrs Ms Wood, Kinnear and Stroud. Apologies for lateness from Cllr Bedford.

**C24.004 OTHER ABSENCES (0)**

None.

**C24.005 MINUTES**

Councillors **AGREED** the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

#### **C24.006 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The Chairman welcomed Members of the public present, and invited PC Cook to address the Council. PC Cook provided the crime statistics since the previous meeting, advising there had been one non-dwelling burglary in Bassett Gardens, and two sets of number plates stolen from another location. There were 64 calls to police, with 34 recorded incidents over the last month. It was noted that theft of motor vehicles had gone down across the whole district.

#### **C24.007 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Spearman declared an interest in the Local Plan.

#### **C24.008 REPORT OF THE CLERK**

The Clerk provided the following reports:

- Sensory Garden – Covered in separate item in this Agenda – everything had now been installed.
- Allotments – all staff been dealing with this.
- Annual Report – everybody should have had a copy.
- Civic Awards – All awarded.
- End of Year processes – Internal Audit taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> June.
- Clerk advised she had received an email from Cllr Razia Sharif who advised she was not happy with the fact that her name was not included in the annual report as a District Councillor for the Parish. The Clerk read out in full the correspondence received from Cllr Sharif, and the Clerks response. The Clerk advised that a note had been placed on the Parish Councils website advising of this error. Cllr Tyler advised that each and every Councillor had received a copy of the magazine to read and review prior to its publication, and even Councillors had not spotted this error. The Chairman asked if all the reports had now been delivered as he had received comments that residents in Thornhill had only just received it. The Clerk advised it was not a fixed timespan, but they should all be circulated by now. Cllr Blanks asked if anybody had spotted the error on the accounts which stated the figures were in ‘thousands’, however nobody had spotted this. Cllr Tyler stated that despite these minor issues, he felt the annual report was great. The Chairman agreed, and it was stated the same type of report would be completed for next year also.
- Norway day – 17<sup>th</sup> May and Cllr Tyler will put up the flag.

#### **C24.009 REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS**

- a) **Chairman’s Report** – The Chairman reminded Councillors to submit a written report if possible as this saved time and gave Councillors time to digest the comments. The Chairman advised that the new gardener who was maintaining the garden outside the shops in North Weald was doing a great job, and he would be asking him to look at options for the central focal point on Weald Common near the Copper Beach tree. It was hoped to enhance this area with plants which were ‘labour free’ as much as possible. The Chairman advised he continued with his purge on dog fouling across the Parish, stating the Clerk had a list of issue locations in Thornwood, however this was not an issue for Hastingwood. There continued to be a habitual dog fouler at the garden outside the shops in North Weald, and the Chairman had noted a comment on Facebook recently that a small child had stepped in some dogs mess. New signage was expected from the District Council which would be erected at these locations in the hope people to encourage people to start picking up their dogs mess.

- b) **Vice Chairman's Report** – Cllr Hawkins advised of the death of Janet Abbott. Janet had worked as the booking secretary for Thornwood Common Parish hall for many years, and her death would be a great loss. It was **AGREED** the Clerk would arrange for a donation to St Clare's hospice for the sum of £50 in memory of Janet.
- c) **District & County Councillors Reports** – Cllr Burrows advised the District were working towards the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> May when the new District Council Chairman would be elected, and that the Leader was working towards the cabinet and other matters. Cllr Born asked what topics were debated at these meetings that could have an affect on this Parish, to which Cllr Burrows advised that the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> May was more of a ceremonial meeting where all the different appointments to District Council would be made, but that most other meetings could be viewed on the District Councils website or were broadcast live.

Cllr Bromwich stated that since being inducted onto the Council he had followed up an issue regarding a possible illegal traveller site being created on Weald Bridge Road – Roseback Cottage – with Bridleway 34 being completely flattened and flora and fauna ripped up from the sides. He was dealing with EFDC Enforcement who had opened up a formal investigation into this issue, and he hoped to bring a positive update to the next meeting.

- d) **Parish Councillors Reports** – Cllr Tyler advised that he wanted to bring in the District Councillors present regarding this issue, summarising the history of North Weald Market, stating that currently the Market was three times larger than previously and that the community of North Weald were having terrible problems with traffic on a Saturday. Traffic could be backed up across the entire village, making it almost impossible for residents to go about their normal daily lives. He stated that the traffic urgently needed marshalling, as if there was an emergency it would be impossible for emergency vehicles to get through. In addition, as a result of the North Weald Village Hall car park closing to the public, people were now parking in Wellington Road, including those visiting or associated with the railway, which was causing further issues. Cllr Tyler stated he had had some contact with Mr Goodey of EFDC, and that EFDC simply have to pay for marshals to manage this issue, stating that it wasn't only residents that were suffering, but local businesses also. Cllr Mrs Etherington advised she fully endorsed Cllr Tylers comments, stating that she understood the market brings in income for EFDC, however it is making the residents lives terrible and this must be addressed by EFDC. Councillors were advised that a meeting with members of the Parish Council and Mr Goodey would be taking place the following Saturday regarding this matter, and an update would be given at the next meeting.

Cllr Blanks advised that the new EFDC waste service would commence in November under the name of Terra Verde. It was not clear if this business was part of Qualis, but Cllr Chris Whitbread had been appointed to the board of directors of this company. Cllr Whitbread was not on the board of directors for the Qualis companies, and it seemed this business may be being treated separately or is another subsidiary, but it was not clear at this time. The Chairman stated that it had been discussed before that Qualis did not fall under the remit of the Parish Council, however Cllr Mrs Jackman stated that it should be addressed as it affects residents.

Cllr Clegg advised that the Community Speedwatch Team would be out later in the week weather permitting. He also asked the Clerk if there had been an update on the issue of fuel on the new Waste site on the airfield yet from EFDC, to which the Clerk advised there had not been and she would chase this up. It would also be interesting to see how the waste trucks would operate on a Saturday at the same time as the market. Cllr Born asked if there were any statistics regarding Community Speedwatch in terms of the type of cars that were the frequent offenders. Cllr Clegg stated that not particularly in terms of type of vehicle, however Range Rovers or Landrover Discovery's tended to come to mind, but interestingly not so many motor cyclists.

Cllr Clegg asked what was happening with the implementation of the 30MPH limit along the High Road in Thornwood by the new Rosario development, as he recalled it being agreed somewhere that the new speed limit would be introduced prior to development starting, which it now had. He stated there was a delivery recently which caused chaos along the road. The PFO stated that her understanding was that the precise locations of where the 30MPH zone would start and finish had not yet been agreed, so it could not be implemented. In addition, she did not recall such a requirement. Cllr Bedford suggested Cllr Holly Whitbread should be chased up about this. Cllr Tyler suggested Bob Weston of Weston Homes should be contacted about the disruption to the road. It was **AGREED** to look into this further to see if any such agreement had been made regarding implementing the 30MPH prior to development.

- e) **Queens Hall Charity Report** – None
- f) **Highways** – None

#### **C24.010 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

Councillors **AGREED** the membership of committees to include:

- (a) **Planning Committee** (10 Members) - dates now subject to plans being available and dates that comments have to be returned to EFDC. Meet usually in the Parsh Hall when available.
- (b) **Environmental & Open Spaces Committee** (7 but open to All Members).  
to usually meet three times a year in the Parish Hall however may also be held in the Queens Hall. Agreed Meetings would take place in the evenings only.
  - (i) **Allotments Sub Committee** (2 Members of The Environmental Committee) - to have delegated power to act on all matters relating to the allotments. To meet monthly and visit allotment plots, and report back. Cllrs Hawkins & Spearman.
- (c) **Finance & General Purposes Committee** (Open to all Members)  
to meet at least once a year, but always to meet to set the Budget and Precept
- (d) **Personnel Committee** (Up to 5 Members) includes Chairman and Vice Chairman – Cllrs Clegg, Spearman & Jackman) to meet as and when necessary.
- (e) **Emergency Personnel Working Group** (3 Members of the Personnel Committee) to be able to meet at short notice
- f) **Neighbourhood Planning – All Councillors** – New Format still to be agreed.

#### **C24.011 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Councillors **AGREED** the dates of the meetings for the coming year, noting the change of date for the June meeting to be 10<sup>th</sup> June.

### C24.012 REPRESENTATIONS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members **AGREED** the following representations on outside bodies:

OUTSIDE BODIES	
Outside Body	Representation Council Year 24-25
Parish Passenger Transport Forum	Cllr Born
Norway House	Chairman of Parish Council
North Weald Village Hall	Cllr Bedford
Epping Forest District Council Committees	Cllr Mrs S Jackman, MBE & Chairman, & Clerk – In the Absence of Cllr Jackman – Cllr T Blanks has attended as a substitution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Epping Forest Branch of the Association of Local Councils – two reps (clerks may also attend these meetings)</li> </ul>	As Above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Councils' Liaison Committee – two reps – (clerks may also attend these meetings)</li> </ul>	As Above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint Standards Committee – one rep (but only if your council is a member of this)</li> </ul>	Cllr Bedford

### Queens Hall Charity

In the Governing Document the Term of Office is for One Year.

#### PC Appointed 2023/24

- Cllr Wood – Councillor, Administrator & Treasurer
- Cllr Kinnear – Councillor, Chairman

#### Groups

- Vince Curren – NWCC - Cricket
- Diane Archer- Bowls

### C24.013 REGISTRATION OF COUNCILLORS INTERESTS

Members were reminded that they should review their Interests on a regular basis. This is a legal requirement. New forms were included in packs and Members asked to re-submit these forms at the request of EFDC to ensure all details are up to date. Please return to the Clerk, who will forward to EFDC. Cllr Irvine advised he may need a new form.

### C24.014 REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Council has a duty to ensure that the financial management of the body is adequate and effective and that the body has a sound system of internal control. To this end this Council reviewed the effectiveness of its systems of Internal Control, and confirmed they were happy with the current processes.

### C24.015 APPOINTMENTS OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Councillors **AGREED** the appointment of Auditing Solutions as the Parish Councils internal auditor for 2024/2025.

### C24.016 PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE

The Parish Councils insurance was due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024. Once again the Clerk had been looking to source competitive quotes. Previously called BHIB, Clear Councils was one

company that has been looked at, however generally in the past the overall cover has been less favourable than what was being offered by the Councils current insurers. It was **AGREED** to continue with the current insurers, unless a more favourable quote was received.

#### **C24.017 ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS**

Councillors **AGREED** they would be happy to receive documents electronically in case of an emergency, albeit hard copies would normally be delivered.

#### **C24.018 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

The Localism Act 2011, Chapter 1 of Part 1, Sections 1-8 has provided local authorities with a General Power of Competence. *“The Governments intention in providing eligible parish council with the general power of competence is to better enable them to take on their enhanced role and allow them to do the things that they have previously been unable to do under their existing powers”*. It gives eligible local councils “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they do not break other laws. It is intended to be a power of first not last resort. This Parish Council is an ‘eligible council’ as the Clerk is a Qualified Clerk and holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration, the Clerk has completed the training in the exercise of the General Power of Competence, and this Council fulfils the Electoral Mandate by having at least two thirds of the Membership of the Council elected. It was therefore **RESOLVED** to confirm the relevant criteria had been met, and this Council holds the GPC.

#### **C24.019 PARISH COUNCIL REMUNERATION SCHEME**

The Clerk had received a request from a Councillor to put this item on the agenda for reconsideration. This Council does not currently have a remuneration scheme for Members. It has been discussed in the past and voted on, however historically over the last twenty-five years it has been agreed that Councillors would not support any payment for undertaking what they perceived to be their civic duty, and only the Chairman would be allocated an allowance to carry out his duties throughout the municipal year. The Clerk had spoken to Gary Woodhall in Democratic Services at EFDC who had provided extremely detailed guidance on the subject, full details of which were included in the agenda.

Cllr Born advised that given the current cost of living crisis, and if you work out the amount of hours a Councillor gives up their time, he felt this matter should be reconsidered as Councillors were not designed to fund the Parish Council by giving up their time for free, albeit he accepted there were arguments to the contrary. The Clerk advised it was her understanding there were two councils in the Epping Forest District who had adopted such a scheme. She also advised that Councillors get their training paid for, as well as any mileage they undertake in the pursuance of their role. Cllr Blanks stated that this was not the right time to consider this matter as the Budget had been agreed for the current year, so perhaps it should be considered at the next budget meeting. Cllr Tyler stated that he was immensely grateful this Parish Council was not political, and that Councillors were simply there to represent their residents, and he felt Councillors do not need to be paid to do this, stating he would not support such a scheme. Cllr Irvine agreed, however suggested ‘subsistence’ may be a better word to use.

[Cllr Bedford Arrived]

Cllr Irvine stated that he understood Cllr Born’s point of view, however advised he wished to remain a volunteer, stating he was voted in to act on behalf of residents. Cllr Mrs Hawkins

advised she would not support a remuneration scheme. Cllr Bedford stated that Councillors should also consider that this could have tax implications, stating that he was happy to stay as a volunteer. Cllr Spearman advised he would not support such a scheme. Cllr Clegg advised the same. Cllr Clegg **PROPOSED** this council did not adopt a remuneration scheme. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Blanks. After a vote was taken it was **AGREED** not to implement a Councillor Remuneration Scheme.

#### **C24.020 TRAFFIC ORDER–UPLAND ROAD JCTN WITH HIGH ROAD THORNWOOD COMMON**

Members were advised of a Traffic Order in relation to the placing of Red Lines in Upland Road and at the junction where it meets High Road, under Traffic Regulation Order number NEPP\_EFDC38\_Upland Road. Cllr Clegg stated this was further than what was requested, which was good news.

#### **C24.021 UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS**

- a) Councillors **AGREED** the draft response to the Sport England’s response to application EPF/2587/23, a copy of which was attached to the agenda.
- b) Councillors **NOTED** that the promoters of Site NWB.R1/T1 had met with Queens Hall Charity and also invited neighbours including residents of Blackhorse Lane to a meeting at St Andrews School to specifically address their concerns
- c) Councillors **NOTED** that the Clerk and PFO had met with the promoters of the Tudor House development site in Thornwood, regarding both access to the common from the development and the type of play facilities that were needed. The PFO provided a full explanation, and tabled plans showing the type of access onto the common the site promoters had suggested. After full discussion, Council stated they understood the suggestion of access onto the common from the development, and **AGREED** the following:
  - i. Both access points must be no greater than 2m in width.
  - ii. The provision of staggered barriers to stop motorbikes / quad Bikes, from coming through (pedestrian access only).
  - iii. A pedestrian link between this development site and the other development site also included in the Local Plan located just north of the site (north of the pond) – this is to enable the site north of Tudor House to have pedestrian access to the common too.
- d) The PFO explained how going forward there would be many planning matters such as this that would need to be fully considered, and it could not take place in either a Parish Council or planning committee meeting as it would take up the whole meeting. It was therefore **AGREED** to set up a Development Working Group where such matters could be fully reviewed and considered outside of Parish Council meetings, and the Working Group could provide their feedback to full Council who could then make a decision. The Terms of Reference would need to be drawn up for the working group, who would have no decision making or spending power. It was **AGREED** Councillors should email the PFO by the following Friday if they wanted to be on this group. Cllr Born, Cllr Tyler, and Cllr Etherington **AGREED** they would like to be on this group.

#### **C24.022 LETTER FROM BLACKHORSE LAND RESIDENTS GROUP**

Early in April the Clerk received a letter from a group of residents who advised that they had formed a resident’s group in relation to development that was happening around Blackhorse Lane in North Weald. A copy if the communication which was received was attached to the

agenda together with this council's response. The Clerk advised that it was understood that the Agents for the site have held a meeting with the residents who are local to the proposed development, stating that the spokesperson for the group had advised he would be attending tonight's meeting however was obviously not present. The Clerk had advised him that over the last 4 or 5 years numerous communications had been published and even put through doors explaining about this and other development. Cllr Irvine advised that this Council had spent a considerable amount of money raising public awareness about the different development sites, and he specifically recalled standing in village halls waiting for members of the public to turn up, however very few ever did. We had banners, pop up events outside the shops in North weald, a specific website, notices, leaflets, social media, and adverts in village life. Cllr Irvine advised that this Council should continue to try as much as possible to engagement with residents, and local passion and involvement was good, however this group does not have the power to act as a statutory consultee and being created this late in the day means a lot of opportunities have been missed.

Cllr Clegg stated that he was part of the Neighbourhood Plan group for 4 or 5 years, and despite so much effort trying to raise awareness there was still the feeling that the public were not interested, and the group was being ignored. It was noted that the Parish Council had been involved in this process for 13 years, and had been actively publicising and trying to raise awareness about this with local residents the whole time. Cllr Clegg advised that he recalled some years back the Neighbourhood Plan group having a conversation that the residents will only get active when the building starts, and this is exactly what has now happened. The Clerk advised that the group had already been given a potted history of all the action this council had taken. It was **AGREED** to continue with communication with the group, however at this stage they needed to be liaising with the site promoters – Swords – and they should be directed to liaise with them directly. It was noted that almost all the actions the Residents Group was suggesting in their documentation had already been either addressed or undertaken by the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

#### **C24.023 CIVIC AWARDS**

Members noted that the Civic Awards (2023) were presented at the Annual Parish Assembly in April. Details of the award winners were shown on the schedule attached to the agenda and listed on the Parish Councils website. The Chairman was delighted to hand out the awards to the very worthy winners.

#### **C24.024 SENSORY GARDEN**

The Chairman advised that the Sensory Garden had now been completed. The Official Opening would be Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30am, and all councillors were invited to attend and invitations were currently being sent out. It was going to be a low-key affair.

#### **C24.025 D DAY COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS**

a) The Parish Council commemorative event will commence at **9.00pm** at the Debt of Honour on 6<sup>th</sup> June, and will involve the lighting of the Ruby Lantern at **9.15pm** in line with all other areas. The Chairman will have a tribute to read out, and details will be posted on notice boards and social media.

b) The Clerk explained that full details had now been received regarding the event which was being organised by the Squadron on the Airfield on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Councillors discussed that the event was mainly going to attract WWI Aeroplane enthusiasts, and with the



cost of the tickets being £25.00, it was not though many local resident would be in attendance. As such it was **AGREED** not to have a presence at this event.

**C24.026 CONFIRMATION OF DATES FOR TRIP AROUND AIRFIELD WITH DARREN GOODEY, AIRFIELD MANAGER**

The Clerk advised that Darren had provided the Clerk either May 23<sup>rd</sup> or June 13<sup>th</sup> late afternoon or early evening. After some discussion, it was **AGREED** the Clerk would book 6 people to attend on 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 6pm.

**C24.027 CHANGE OF DATE FOR JUNE MEETING**

Members **AGREED** the June Parish Council Meeting would be held on the second Monday in June – Monday 10<sup>th</sup>. This was due to the need for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to be approved and signed at a Council Meeting.

Meeting closed:

Signed .....

Date .....