



**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Meeting:** PARISH HALL AT  
THORNWOOD COMMON  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Date:** 4 February 2016

**Time:** 7.15 PM

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

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**PRESENT:** **Committee Members (11)** Mrs S Hawkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr C Hawkins, R Sawyer, Mrs J Abbott, P Hebden, T Drane, B Cooper, Mrs I Smith, Mrs D Shelley, Mrs E Davis, Mrs V Robertson

**Also in Attendance (2)**

Joanna Tyler – Meeting Clerk

Susan De Luca – Clerk to the Council

**Members of the Public (2)**

**PH.075 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (3)**

**NOTED**, apologies for absence had been received from Cllr R Spearman (Chairman), Cllr B Clegg, Mrs L Foster

**PH.076 OTHER ABSENCES (0)**

**PH.077 MINUTES**

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on 3 December 2015.

**PH.078 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**PH.079 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were two members of the public in attendance at the meeting. The gentleman stated that he was seeking permission to use the Playing Field for an organised Boot Camp and that he wanted to introduce himself to the Committee, but understood that they would not be able to make a decision this evening. The gentleman gave a brief summary of what the Boot Camp would entail. He stated that it would be open to men and women aged 30 plus and would not only offer the opportunity to keep fit but would also include nutritional advice. The organiser stated that he is hoping to hold the sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings – Ladies 6.30pm to 7.30pm and Men 7.30pm to 8.30pm. Sessions are carried out in all weathers, throughout the year, however, if the field was very wet, he would look to use the paved area or the tarmac. He is also looking at other locations in the area such as Queens Hall Memorial Playing Fields. The Vice-Chairman thanked the organiser for attending the meeting and reiterated that the Committee would not be able to make a decision and that the request would be passed to the Parish Council for consideration at the next Full Meeting.

**PH.080 REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HALL/CAR PARK**

Fire Alarm Maintenance Contract

Members **NOTED** that an engineer from Ardent Fire & Security Ltd attended the hall on Thursday, 21 January 2016 to carry out the yearly fire alarm service. Councillor Hawkins was in attendance and no issues were identified. Following the visit, Councillor Hawkins had advised the Parish Office that Ardent Fire & Security Ltd had verbally offered to carry out the yearly service and maintenance of the hall's fire extinguishers at a cost of £40.00. The engineer had advised that this could be scheduled to coincide with the fire alarm service.

Members **NOTED** that the current contract is with Anglia Fire Protection. The extinguishers are serviced on a yearly basis in July. Last year the charges for labour and parts amounted to £124.75. Councillor Hawkins stated that the engineer from Ardent Fire & Security Ltd is based locally and is therefore easily contactable should any problems arise, adding that it would also be more convenient to have both the fire alarm and extinguishers serviced on the same day. Following a brief discussion, the Vice-Chairman asked Members if they wished to make a decision regarding the suggestion. Mrs Abbott **PROPOSED** that Ardent Fire & Security Ltd be instructed to carry out both the yearly fire alarm service, together with the service and maintenance of the hall's fire extinguishers. The proposal was **SECONDED** by Mrs Smith. All Members **AGREED** unanimously.

**PH.081 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Fire Exit Door Sign – Extension

At the Committee Meeting held on 5 November 2015, Members had agreed that the fire exit sign on the door in the extension area should be removed as this door is not designated as a fire exit. Councillor Hawkins had suggested that, as the wiring is in place to connect a Fire Exit sign above the door, Members may wish to reconsider the decision. Members **NOTED** that if they decided to have a fire exit sign connected, arrangements would need to be made to clear the fire exit route and a process put in place to ensure chairs do not encroach into exit path to doors (as recommended by the Parish Council's Responsible Person for Health and Safety, following the Fire Risk Assessment carried out on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2015). Councillor Hawkins stated that he would assess, together with the Caretaker, where the chairs could be stored and would report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

**PH.082 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Members **NOTED** the following:-

- Play in the Park – confirmation of the date and time has now been received – Monday, 8 August 2016, 13.30 to 15.30. The Clerk to the Parish Council informed Members that extra days are available, at a cost of £65.00 per day. The sessions are organised by Epping Forest District Council. The Vice-Chairman stated that information regarding the events can be found on EFDC's website.
- The Intruder Alarm routine service/maintenance and alarm monitoring contract with Baron Security Services Ltd has been renewed for a further year at a cost of £294.00 (inclusive of vat).

- Notification has been received from e.on regarding the renewal of the fixed price energy plan (the current plan ends on 11 May 2016). The Meeting Clerk is presently making enquiries to see if there is a possibility of a reduction in the renewal price.

**PH.083 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

No report.

**PH.084 CARETAKER HOLIDAY DATES**

Members *NOTED* that the Caretaker would be on holiday for the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2016. Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Abbott had kindly offered to cover this period. The Clerk to the Council asked for the Committee's thanks to be recorded.

**PH.085 FUTURE FUNDRAISING IDEAS**

At the Committee Meeting held on 3 December 2015, Mrs Davis had suggested that Members may wish to consider holding a Barn Dance to raise funds for the Parish Hall. A list of costs had been provided by Mrs Davis and attached to the agenda for Members perusal. Mrs Davis stated that the costs were those provided last year and she did not think they would have changed. If Members decided to go ahead with the suggestion, a request would be made for the hall hire fee to be waived and Mrs Davis stated that she would make arrangements to pay the liability insurance. As an alternative to a Barn Dance, Mrs Davis informed Members that she had recently attended a function which had a 1940's theme, where the entertainment was provided by singer. She said that the singer was very professional and that the booking charge would be £300. Mrs Davis stated that she would establish if there was an interest for either event and would report back at the next meeting.

**PH.086 OTHER REPORTS**

**a) Regular Hall Hirers**

- Mums and Tots – no report.
- Flower Club – no report.
- Harlow Bowmen – Mr Cooper reported that there had been evidence of mice in the storage area in the extension. Cllr Hawkins advised that the matter had been dealt with.
- Thornwood Seniors – Mrs Smith reported that a race night had been organised for 22 April 2016 to raise funds for either the Parish Hall or a defibrillator.

**b) Booking Secretary Report**

The Booking Secretary reported that regular weekly bookings are back. There are a few children's parties booked and a company called Remus has had a meeting for North Weald. March has bookings for the National Child Birth Trust and there is the Annual Allotment Meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Circle and Swing have booked for April and have mentioned that this may be the last booking due to a reduction in numbers (they thanked the Booking Secretary for the use of the hall and for looking after them). The Booking Secretary has received an enquiry regarding a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary combined with a 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Party. A booking has been made for 2018 for a 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party.

**c) Caretakers Report**

The Caretaker reported that the booking for Christmas Day had caused some confusion. The organiser was expecting saucepans to be available. The Booking Secretary advised that the organiser had called her after the event to apologise, stating that the confusion had been her (the organiser's) mistake. The Booking Secretary informed Members that the same event had been booked for this year.

Members **NOTED** that a new outside light had been installed. The Caretaker mentioned the report made at the previous Committee Meeting regarding the leak in the gents toilets and asked if arrangements had been made for a plumber to attend. Cllr Hawkins advised that the Chairman has the matter in hand. The Caretaker reported that there had also been a problem with water running down the wall from the urinal. Following inspection of the cistern, the Caretaker stated that he was unable to say why it had overflowed and advised that it had not happened since.

The Caretaker reported that he had experienced a problem with the fire exit door lock located near to the storage room. Cllr Hawkins advised that he had been in contact with Exterior Plas to arrange for a contractor to inspect the door lock tomorrow morning.

The Caretaker reported that he had found metal discarded in the bin, he did not know who had put it in there and was concerned that the contractors may not take the metal away when they empty the bin tomorrow. He stated that consideration may need to be given to locking the bin again.

The Caretaker reported that, at the last Committee Meeting, he was asked to place disinfectant in the urinal tank on a monthly basis and to sign and date the Legionella record form, however, he stated that he had not signed the record form as he had not been shown where it was. The Clerk to the Council stated that it could be recorded in the minutes. Members **NOTED** that this was actioned at the end of December and again on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.

**d) Financial**

The Meeting Clerk advised Members that she had been asked by Cllr Hawkins to add an item to the agenda regarding income and expenditure for the hall year to date. The Principal Finance Officer had provided a printout from the accounts system which had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda. The Meeting Clerk advised Members that the Principal Finance Officer had also advised if Members were unsure of any items on the report, they could contact her via the office. Cllr Hawkins stated that this report was not what he had asked for, he had wanted to know if the hall was making a profit or a loss. The Clerk to the Council advised Members that as the report was dated up to 31.12.2015 and monies from Thornwood Seniors, approximately £1500, was paid in, in one tranche, at the beginning of January, the net income does not read true, due to the fact that this income would not include all December hall income monies. Cllr Hawkins, once again stated that this (the report) was not what he had asked for, adding that he was sure that North Weald Councillors would be asking if the hall was making a profit and stated that he could not understand this report.

The Clerk to the Council read out a brief note received from the Parish Council's Principal Finance Officer giving a broader explanation regarding the Parish Council's new accounting system which was introduced in April 2015, advising of how that system had to be implemented by the accountants at the time of its inception for the Parish Council. Members **NOTED** that the figures, although technically correct, will not be on a "rolling 12 month basis" until the year 2017/18. Cllr Hawkins expressed his dissatisfaction with those figures.

Councillor Hawkins stated that with all of these figures that have been given, why is there not a figure stating whether the hall is in profit or loss. The Clerk to the Council advised that the report was an Income and Expenditure not a Profit and Loss Report and a Profit and Loss Report had not been asked for. Members will need to wait until such time as the end of year accounts have been completed for a full profit and loss report, however, they will also need to be aware of the Principal Financial Officer's comments in relation to the change to the Parish Council's accounting system, adding that any Councillor or member of the public may contact the Parish Office and ask any questions of the Parish Council accounts.

Councillor Hawkins strongly reiterated once again that he did not ask for that, these were not what he asked for. The Meeting Clerk stated that this is how the accounts system produces the figures for the Parish Hall. Cllr Hawkins stated that he wanted to know if the hall is making a profit or not, and said that *he* will ask the Parish Council's Finance Officer whether or not it is in profit adding that he wants to know how the hall is doing, so that Members of this Committee know that when they are giving up their time to raise money for the hall it is not for nothing.

The Clerk to the Parish Council informed Members that one of the reasons she was present at the meeting was to advise them that the Parish Hall Management Committee had been nominated for the Citizen of the Year Award in recognition of their raising funds for the Parish Hall.

Mrs Davis asked the Clerk to the Council if the hall was in profit or loss at the end of the previous financial year. Due to the changes to the accounting system, the Clerk to the Council stated that she would confirm on her return to the office tomorrow. Cllr Hawkins stated that we (the Committee) are not told ever if we have made a profit or a loss, adding that he knows that we have spent a lot and raised a lot.

Mr Sawyer referred to the report and asked what "don't use litter bins" meant. The Clerk to the Council explained that this is an old nominal code. Each of the figures listed have a nominal code, if it states on the report "do not use" it is because the Parish Council's auditor/accountant has said so. Mrs Smith asked about miscellaneous income, the Clerk to the Council advised that this would cover items such as money raised from the Ploughmans, adding that the auditor/accountant instruct the Parish Council what code items should be placed under. For example the money received from Jonen's was recorded as a donation, otherwise tax may have to be paid on the amount.

**PH.087 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

- a) Mr Drane asked if he could request permission to use a metal detector on the playing field. Permission has been granted in the past and a license is not required. The Clerk to the Council advised that this request would be put to the Parish Council at the next meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016.
- b) The Caretaker referred back to the earlier request received from the member of the public regarding permission to hold a Boot Camp on the playing field. He stated that consideration should be given as to whether or not use of the car park would be required, possible damage to the field and would the organiser be charged for using the field. A brief discussion ensued, following which the Clerk to the Council suggested that the Committee meet to discuss their concerns which they could put in writing for Councillors to consider at the next Parish Council Meeting to be held on Monday, 7 March 2016. Members **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council would need to be in receipt of their letter by no later than Wednesday, 2 March 2016. Members **AGREED** that they would contact the Vice-Chairman should they wish to voice their concern.
- c) Mrs Davis thanked Committee Members for helping with the Carol Service in December.
- d) Members were advised of the sad news that Mick Sheen, the Chairman of Epping Forest Neighbourhood Watch, had passed away.
- e) The Vice-Chairman informed Members that the Ploughmans Lunch scheduled to be held on 28 February is to be delayed until the second week in March, adding that she would confirm details as soon as possible.
- f) The Clerk to the Council informed Members that the Annual Parish Assembly (incorporating the annual Civic Awards) had been arranged for Monday, 21 March 2016, commencing at 7.30pm. As mentioned earlier in the Meeting, the Clerk to the Council stated that the Parish Hall Management Committee had been nominated for an award in recognition of the funds that they had raised for the Parish Hall, even though fund raising events were not part of the committee's remit. The Clerk to the Council said that it would be great if Committee Members could be in attendance. Mrs Hawkins kindly offered, along with Mrs Abbott, to assist with refreshments on the evening.

Meeting closed: 8.25pm

Signed .....

Chairman

Date .....