



MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL MEETING **Date:** 11 May 2017 **Time:** 7.15 PM
OF THE PARISH HALL AT
THORNWOOD COMMON
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Venue: PARISH HALL, THORNWOOD COMMON, EPPING, ESSEX

PRESENT: **Committee Members (8)** Cllr R Spearman (Chairman), Mrs S Hawkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr C Hawkins, Mrs J Abbott, Mrs D Shelley, P Hebden, T Drane, B Cooper

Also in Attendance (2)

Joanna Tyler – Meeting Clerk
Susan De Luca – Clerk to the Council

Members of the Public (1)

PH17.001 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Mrs J Abbott **PROPOSED** Councillor R Spearman for the office of Chairman, this proposal was seconded by Mr B Cooper, there being no other nominations, Councillor Spearman was duly elected as Chairman of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Common Management Committee for the current Municipal Year.

PH17.002 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Mr B Cooper **PROPOSED** Mrs S Hawkins for the office of Vice Chairman, this proposal was seconded by Mrs J Abbott, there being no other nominations, Mrs S Hawkins was duly elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Hall at Thornwood Common Management Committee for the current Municipal Year.

The Clerk to the Council informed Members of the Committee that the Parish Council had agreed that all Committee Meetings would now be recorded. Recordings of meetings will be deleted once the Minutes of those meetings had been approved.

PH17.003 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (5)

NOTED, apologies for absence had been received from Mrs L J Foster, Mrs E Davis, Mrs I Smith, Mr T Sawyer and Cllr B Clegg

PH17.004 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

PH17.005 MINUTES

Members **APPROVED** as a correct record the Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on 6 April 2017.

PH17.006 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED there were no declarations of interest.

PH17.007 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from Members of the public.

PH17.008 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

Members *NOTED* that a visual check of the fire exit route in the extension had been carried out by the Caretaker prior to the meeting. The Caretaker confirmed that the route was clear.

PH17.009 PARISH HALL ALARM SYSTEM

The Chairman stated that Cllr Hawkins had been dealing with the alarm system and asked him to update the Committee. Cllr Hawkins informed Members that an engineer from Baron Security Services Ltd had attended the hall to investigate false activations of the alarm system which had occurred at random times and also on occasions when the alarm was not set. Following investigation, the engineer reported that there was cable damage in the loft area and evidence of mice.

Cllr Hawkins informed Members that following the visit from Baron's he had requested the Clerk to the Council to make arrangements for a pest control company to meet him at the hall. A surveyor from Rentokil attended the hall and produced a report (which was free of charge) making various recommendations. Cllr Hawkins advised that a quotation had been received for a one off charge for dealing with the problem the cost of which would be £1614.00. Photos taken by the surveyor, illustrating evidence of mice in the premises, were shown to the Committee. The Clerk to the Council read out an email from the Parish Council's Principal Finance Officer regarding the report from Rentokil, which detailed her recommendations with regard to which actions could be taken:-

- 4 part intensive programme for the rapid control of the current issue - £584.00 (4 weekly visits)
- Pest Disinfection - £626.00 (this includes removal of fouled insulation from attic)
- Cost to seal holes in the ceiling of electric cupboard and sealing of hole at the base of entrance door to help prevent rodent ingress - £194.00

The Clerk to the Council advised that the Principal Finance Officer did not recommend the quarterly cost of £276.25 to monitor and control rodents and insects. This could be managed by the placing of rodent boxes in various locations throughout the premises, with regular monthly inspections, which would identify any reoccurrence of the problem. In addition, the PFO did not recommend the perimeter boxes (at a cost of £210.00).

The Clerk to the Council stated that she had spoken to both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Parish Council regarding the problem. The Clerk to the Council expressed her concern that the problem should be dealt with efficiently and effectively especially in light of the diseases which can be transmitted from rodents.

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that should they be in agreement to proceed with the Principal Financial Officer's recommendations, the funds to carry out the works would be via a Health and Safety fund set up for such works.

The Health and Safety fund would not be specifically for the hall, but could be used for any work associated with Health and Safety. Mr Drane stated that he had always believed that rats and mice would never be in the same building, Cllr Hawkins agreed and stated that the surveyor had confirmed that there was no sign of rats. The Chairman asked if anyone had any other comments. Mrs Hawkins stated that the Committee have no option but to have the work undertaken.

Mr Drane asked the Clerk to the Council if she had approached any other companies to quote for the work. The Clerk to the Council stated that no other companies had been contacted, as the quote is under £4,000, adding that when she originally spoke to the Chairman of the Parish Council regarding the matter, he had requested that she contact a company with the relevant professional qualifications. Mrs Hawkins confirmed that the District Council would recommend that you contact a company with letters after its name. The Chairman asked if the Committee were in agreement to the work being carried out as per the recommendations, all Members **AGREED**.

Councillor Hawkins stated that with regard to the alarm system, a decision needed to be made with regard to whether the damaged cable should be replaced or whether a wireless system be installed. The cost of replacing the cable was quoted as £145.00 (+vat) or the cost to supply and fit a wireless receiver and 1 wireless PIR was quoted as £150.00 (+vat). The Chairman stated that, due to personal experience of a wireless alarm, he was not keen on the wireless system. Following lengthy discussion, the Clerk to the Council suggested that the Committee may wish to try the wireless system. Mrs Hawkins suggested that a quiz night could be arranged to raise funds. The Clerk to the Council stated that the Health and Safety fund could be used to pay for the alarm, as the problem had occurred due to the presence of mice, and she would confirm this with the Auditor. All Members **AGREED** to the wireless system.

PH17.010 PURCHASE OF DEFIBRILLATOR

Members **NOTED** that a defibrillator had been ordered and paid for, at a cost of £2170.00. The defibrillator will be installed by The Community HeartBeat Trust's electrician. The Clerk to the Council informed Members that delivery had provisionally been advised for sometime during the first week of June. The Chairman asked how much money had been raised by the Committee/ Thornwood Seniors and residents. The Clerk advised that the total raised was £1645.42, with the remainder of the funds being provided from the Parish Council precept monies. The Chairman of the Parish Council stated that, following the installation of the defibrillator, he would like to invite Thornwood Seniors and residents to attend the hall for a photo-shoot, perhaps with an article in Village Life, to recognise the fund-raising efforts.

PH17.011 BANNER – SLIMMING WORLD

Members **NOTED** that the Slimming World Group had attached an advertising banner to the railings outside the entrance to the hall. The Chairman stated that the banner should not be permanently attached. Mr Cooper suggested that it should only be displayed when the group are present in the hall on Saturday mornings. All Members **AGREED** and requested that the Meeting Clerk write to the group confirming this decision.

PH17.012 CLERKS UPDATE AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT – nothing to report.

PH17.013 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – nothing to report.

PH17.014 OTHER REPORTS

a) Regular Hall Hirers

- Mums and Tots – the Meeting Clerk reported that the Mums and Tots group would be liaising with the Booking Secretary to arrange a suitable date to go through and sort out the items in their storage area, as per the recommendation made in the Risk Assessment carried out on 9th February 2017.
- Flower Club – no report.
- Harlow Bowmen – no report.
- Thornwood Seniors – no report.

b) Booking Secretary Report

The Booking Secretary reported that May started off busy, there was something on everyday. The race night was a great success. The Slimming World group started on Saturday, 6th May, then the next week we have something every day. As has the week beginning the 15th.

Exterior Plas have hired the hall for a presentation on Friday, 26th May. The Booking Secretary informed Members that they had raised £11,000 for St Clare's Hospice and in light of all the work that they have carried out for the hall, were wondering if they could have a reduced rate. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that the Booking Secretary could offer a reduced hire rate for this event.

The Booking Secretary advised Members that she had received a request from a local resident who would like to hire the hall for a party for her 13 year old twins. Cllr Hawkins referred to the hall's policy of not having parties for teenagers, stating that he would not agree to the hall being hired for such an event. All Members **AGREED** that the hall would not be made available for hire.

c) Caretakers Report

The Caretaker reported that there was a problem with the urinal (there is no flushing water). The Chairman stated that he would make arrangements for a plumber to visit. The Caretaker advised that there was also a leak under one of the sinks in the gents toilets, he was unable to ascertain where the leak was coming from. The Chairman stated that he would ask the plumber to investigate.

The Caretaker asked Members if they recalled the matter discussed at the previous meeting regarding the wheelchair which had been left in the extension, blocking the fire exit route. The Caretaker advised that the wheelchair had been removed and was being stored in a safe place, however, no one had approached him or the Parish Office to claim it. Mrs Hawkins asked if the committee could keep hold of the wheelchair and suggested

hanging it on brackets in the extension so that anyone could make use of it. The Clerk to the Council stated that the wheelchair would be available for anyone who wanted to use it, adding that it had been stored in the garage for safekeeping.

The Caretaker informed Members that problems had again been experienced with the Spiritualist group setting off the alarm. The Seniors had also set the alarm off on one occasion during the past month. Members **NOTED** that the Clerk to the Council had requested that the Caretaker turn off the alarm prior to the Spiritualist's hire session and then turn it back on again once they vacated the hall. This would be for a trial period until the end of June.

The Caretaker drew Members attention to two of the windows in the hall which have started to mist up.

The Caretaker reported that the plug was missing from the sink in the kitchen. The Clerk to the Council asked him to purchase a replacement.

d) Financial

a) Electricity Supply Payments

Members **NOTED** that, following a request made at the previous meeting, a list of payments made to E.ON covering 13.1.2016 to 10.2.2017 was attached to the agenda for information. The Clerk to the Council asked who had requested the information and what was the reason they wanted the information as she was not in attendance at the previous meeting. Mr Cooper confirmed that he had made the request. The Clerk to the Council stated that there had been a saving of £1000 from the previous year (2015-2016). The electricity for this year is £2868 and the amount for the previous year was £3899. The Clerk to the Council asked Mr Cooper if that answered his query, he confirmed that it did. The Clerk to the Council stated that she had been speaking to the Chairman of the Parish Council about the electricity supply payments and ways in which savings could be made. It had been suggested that instead of the Caretaker turning on the heaters, the regular hall hirers could turn the heaters on themselves prior to their sessions. Each group would be given an extra 15 to 30 minutes free of charge so that they could heat the hall prior to their meetings. The Clerk to the Council stated that the Committee would need to decide how they wished to proceed with this matter.

The Clerk to the Council informed Members that if the Committee agreed to go forward with this suggestion, she would need to check with the Booking Secretary that there were not any clashes with bookings. The Clerk to the Council advised Members that the Caretaker was not paid to come into the hall and turn on the heaters. The Caretaker stated that it was dependent on the weather as to when he put the heaters on. Mrs Shelley expressed concern that in the Winter months it could take too long to heat the hall prior to their meetings commencing, adding that if the hall is cold, then it is not comfortable. The Caretaker reminded Members that regular hirers must switch off the heaters when they leave the hall, adding that at least one heater is found to be left on following sessions. Mr Cooper stated that the reason he leaves on one of the heaters is

to prevent the fire extinguishers from freezing if it gets too cold, warning that they could burst. The Caretaker stated that he had never had any knowledge of this happening.

Mr Drane suggested purchasing new thermostats for the heaters. The Clerk to the Council stated that she recalled this being discussed with the Chairman, who was going to look at a thermostat switch that would control all the heaters. The Chairman advised that new heaters would need to be purchase to do this.

Following further discussion, Members **AGREED** that there would be no change for now, however, a note reminding hirers to switch off the heaters when leaving the hall would be displayed on the window of the door exiting the hall.

b) Accounts

The Clerk to the Council referred to the detailed Profit and Loss Account for 2016/17 attached to the agenda and apologised to the Caretaker for displaying salary details, adding that the staff details are also displayed on the Parish Council Accounts.

The Clerk to the Council stated that there was a difference of expenditure overall amounting to £203.00, advising that she had spoken to the Chairman of the Parish Council today and that figure would be adjusted accordingly. The Clerk to the Council informed Members that the reason for the difference was because the microwave had been purchased early and had not been budgeted for this year's accounts.

The Clerk to the Council mentioned the cheque that had been received from Clearwater Care for £1000 as a donation towards the car park. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that the cheque could now be banked and he would be visiting Clearwater Care to obtain car registration numbers in order for permits to be issued from the Parish Office. The Clerk to the Council asked if anyone had any further questions with regard to the accounts, confirming that this was the second year that the hall had been in profit.

PH17.015 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Members **AGREED** that the next Committee Meeting would be held on Thursday, 6th July 2017, due to voting taking place on Thursday, 8th June 2017.

Meeting closed: 8.10pm

Signed

Chairman

Date