



MINUTES

Meeting: PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 6th October 2025

Time: 7.30PM

Venue: PARISH HALL, THORNWOOD COMMON

PRESENT:

Councillors (8) Cllr Buckley (Chairman), Cllr Clegg, Cllr Kinnear, Cllr Spearman, Cllr Blanks, Cllr Mrs Jackman, Cllr Tyler, Cllr Irvine,

Officers in Attendance (2)

Susan De Luca, Parish Clerk

Adriana Jones – Principal Finance Officer

Members of the Public (1) – EFDC Cllr Burrows

Members of the Press (1)

C25.103 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (5)

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Lambert, Cllr Ms Wood, Cllr Etherington, and Cllr Hawkins. Cllr Bedford had also offered his apologies, however Cllr Blanks proposed that these not be accepted stating that he felt it was wrong a Councillor could live in a different country but remain a Councillor for the parish. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Jackman. A vote was taken, the result of which was as follows:

2 – For

0 – Against

6 – Abstentions

Therefore, the apologies of Cllr Bedford were not accepted.

C25.104 OTHER ABSENCES (2)

Cllr Stroud, and Cllr Born.

C25.105 MINUTES

Subject to one typo on page 1, Councillors **AGREED** the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st September 2025. Cllr Blanks also asked for confirmation that the office at Queens Hall was classed as a Council Chamber, to which the Clerk advised it was another meeting room, but yes it could be.

C25.106 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Spearman declared a pecuniary interest in any item regarding the Local Plan.

C25.107 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

C25.108 REPORT OF THE CLERK

The Clerk provided an update on current matters, which included:

- a) Various planning matters, including liaising with resident and working with Cllr Bedford
- b) Various cemetery matters, which included attendance at Cemetery for appointments to view plots for purchase, interments & bookings, carried out Topple Test at Cemetery on memorials in the Hedges and Meadow Brook sections.

- c) Thornwood Village Hall, various matters, bookings and HR matter (further details on confidential pages). The Clerk also confirmed that the £20,000 national lottery funding towards solar panels on the new roof had been granted.
- d) Assistance to the Queens Hall Charity on hiring matter
- e) Numerous fly tipping matters, Clerk advising there had been a considerable amount recently with Cllr Bedford also assisting to resolve these issues.
- f) Street Lighting matters, detailed later in the agenda.
- g) Highway matters, including Beamish Close pathway, Hastingwood Road, Mill Street
- h) Wayleave at Thornwood Common, including viewing CCTV due to theft of equipment, liaising with contractors, solicitors and residents – contractors had two items stolen.
- i) EFDC Local Council Liaison Committee meeting – 18/9 – PFO attended
- j) Parish Council Liaison meeting – next meeting is 5th November at which the Clerk plus one Councillor can attend
- k) Attendance at four EFDC meetings
- l) Dealing with Allotment Matters
- m) Possible HMO - Rowley Mead with local residents becoming concerned. Cllr Bedford also assisted the Clerk.

C25.109 REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS

- a) **Chairman's Report** – The Chairman advised that works were progressing well with the garden outside the shops with the newly appointed contractor, and that the garden was looking great with all weeds and old plants now removed. New, more hardy plants, which do not need a lot of watering would be planted the following day. Long term, it was hoped to have some rocks in there too. Because of the difficulty finding somebody to manage the garden, the sponsorship amount had been reduced to £75. Going forward there would also be some sleeper maintenance needed. The new plaques had now arrived. Overall, the garden was now looking very good.
- b) **Vice Chairman's Report** – Cllr Mrs Hawkins had provided a brief written report to the Clerk, confirming that the prior weeks McMillan Charity event had raised £1,500. The meeting recorded thanks to all those involved.
- c) **District & County Councillors Reports** – Cllr Burrows advised that EFDC had recently supported the 3 tier unitary option in terms of Local Government Reform, which had been submitted to Government for consideration. Cllr Bromwich had submitted a written report which the Clerk tabled for Councillors and members of the public. Cllr Tyler mentioned that much of what Cllr Bromwich was dealing with were similar to the matters dealt with by the Parish Council.
- d) **Parish Councillors Reports** – Cllr Irvine advised he recently had a run in with some young men who were illegally riding trail bikes around the Rainbow and Dove public house, and going into the Forest. He had tried to talk with them, however they were not receptive to his approach. Cllr Irvine asked if a replacement for PC Cook had been confirmed yet, and what could be done about these trail bikes. The Clerk advised she had recently been dealing with John Berwick who seemed very helpful, and that she would provide his details to Cllr Irvine.

Cllr Spearman advised that both he and Cllr Hawkins had recently conducted their monthly allotment visit, with no real change from the previous visit.

Cllr Clegg advised that a community speedwatch session was run the prior Wednesday in Weald Bridge Road, with the highest speed recorded being 50MPH. Both himself and the other members

also witnessed trail bikers illegally riding, and seemingly in a show of disregard for the speedwatch team, these bikers wheeled all the way past them. This was reported to 999, however the report was a waste of time. Cllr Tyler asked if images could have been obtained with the chest cams, to which Cllr Clegg confirmed images were taken however the vehicles have no identifying number plates, so not much can be done with them.

- e) **Queens Hall Charity Report** – Cllr Kinnear advised that all was good with the hall. One regular hirer had been given notice to quit, and this was expected to be fully implemented by 31st December, with the hirer already reducing the days they hire. There had been plenty of interest in this newly opened up space.
- f) **Highways** – Various road closures and changes had been advertised. One was causing particular concern which was regarding the B181 closure in North Weald which is suggested on the OneNetwork website as being for reasons associated with resurfacing of Bassett Gardens. The Chairman advised that the yellow notification signs had been laid face down, and replaced with some red ‘tow away’ signs. Cllr Blanks asked why there were still gaps in the road surfacing past the Coopersale turning on the B181, and it was **AGREED** the Clerk would ask Cllr Whitbread to raise this matter with ECC via members enquiries.

C25.110 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Councillors **NOTED** the monthly cheque lists for September which had been emailed to Councillors.

C25.111 EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL – NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD MARKET

Following a number of posts on social media relating to a confidential item being on the District Councils Cabinet agenda regarding the possible closure of North Weald Market, the Clerk contacted the Leader of the District Council to ask if he would confirm what the situation was. This was in order to stop speculation increasing on said social media. Cllr Whitbread responded very quickly with the following comment:

Thank you for your email. Monday night's cabinet item on North Weald Market was a part 2 report and excluded the public as it contained commercially sensitive information. I'm pleased to say that Cabinet approved capital expenditure to create a new parking area for the market on the Airfield. This is required as the current parking area will be used by Google in the future, so we need to create a new parking area for the market. EFDC has developed an extremely productive partnership with Saunders Markets and (have agreed terms for an) extension to the lease. EFDC and Saunders market will continue to work and liaise with North Weald Parish Council to address any concerns over traffic and provide a popular market that does not have an adverse impact on local residents.

Cllr Clegg stated he was slightly concerned with this statement that the cabinet had approved capital expenditure, and queried what this capital expenditure was as the recent planning application considered by the Parish Council certainly did not suggest a reduced market size, nor was there a proposed larger car park. He stated that EFDC had implied to the Parish Council that the market size would decrease in size, which would result in a decrease in the traffic visiting the market and the associated problems, however the inference in the statement from Cllr Whitbread is that it would be the same. The Chairman advised that Cllr Whitebread had been due to attend this meeting to provide an update.

The Clerk advised that a revised planning application had been received regarding the parking and the market, and that this would be considered at the next Planning Committee meeting which would be in the next two weeks, with a date to be confirmed

C25.112 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW

Councillors **NOTED** that on 22nd September, EFDC Cabinet confirmed its support for a 3-unitary model of local government reorganisation. 4 business cases had been developed for 3, 4, and 5 unitaries, and after analysis, the councils backing at the last council meeting, and resident and stakeholder engagement, cabinet supported the 3-unitary model. This model is projected to deliver the best balance of financial sustainability, service quality, and local representation, with an estimated net benefit of £86 million after 5 years and a payback period of 2.7 years. The new structure would empower local neighbourhood committees, streamline services, and support economic and housing growth across Essex. The council's formal endorsement will be submitted to the government by the deadline of 26 September 2025. The supported 3 unitary model would see Epping Forest District Council merge with Harlow, Maldon, Chelmsford and Brentwood Councils to create the 'Mid Essex Unitary'. Further information was available at www.essexlgrhub.org.

Cllr Tyler asked when this goes forward, what happens to the District and Parish Councillors to which it was confirmed that as of May 2028, the District and County Council would no longer exist, with Unitaries being fully in control. EFDC had expressed their support for Parish and Town Councils to continue. The Clerk advised that there was expected to be new Neighbourhood Area Committees, to which Parish Councils would be invited to sit on, however at this stage there were no details about what this would mean. The PFO advised that it almost didn't matter what EFDC or ECC thought about the future, as it would be up to the new Unitary to decide how to move forward and whether or not to introduce new Neighbourhood Area Committees. The Clerk also advised that she recently read the reduction in Councillors was expected to be around 70%. Cllr Tyler advised that he didn't recall being asked to vote on whether or not this Council should be part of a Unitary authority, and expressed concern about having adequate representation. The PFO advised that the decision to support a 3 tier model was based on a balance of the financial ability to sustain the new unitary council, service provision, and adequate representation.

Cllr Blanks advised that he felt this was a way of getting rid of a lot of intermediary stuff, and if there was an option to reduce the cost to run EFDC then that would make sense. He also questioned what would happen to the Civic Offices, and felt there would be a lot of infighting.

C25.113 PATH AT DEBT OF HONOUR

Members were advised that following a recent asset inspection, a fairly large crack had been found in the pathway at the Debt of Honour leading up to the Norwegian Stone. The Debt of Honour is owned and maintained by EFDC, however the Parish Council are Guardians of the Norwegian Stone. The RFO has been to site to assess the path, and yellow and black tape has been fixed on it as a temporary measure. Councillors noted that Cllr Chris Whitbread had advised the Clerk that he will organise the repair of the path. We have advised that Remembrance Sunday events are due to take place there in November.

C25.114 TREES

Councillors noted that works relating to the recent tree risk assessment would be completed this week. The Clerk advised that as reported at the previous meeting, further assessments had been undertaken at two additional locations. Firstly, the ground between the Cemetery and the adjacent ditch is more than likely owned by the Parish Council according to land registry documents, meaning the Parish Council has a responsibility to the persons that use PRoW which runs along this land. A site visit has taken place and there are numerous trees that need either felling or cutting back for safety reasons. In addition, there are trees associated with the western ditch running alongside the Wheelers Farm Gardens allotments, some of which could pose a risk to persons on the Parish Council allotment land, even though some of the trees originate from the farmers side of the ditch. Again, a site visit has taken place and works are

needed to cut back some of these trees. The cost to complete works is £1,650 at each site. The Chairman advised that he recalled we had looked at the path adjacent to the cemetery around 3 years ago and thought some tree work was conducted at that time.

Councillors unanimously **AGREED** that due to the safety aspect of this additional work, it should go ahead.

C25.115 PATHWAY BETWEEN WEALD COMMON AND NORTH WEALD VILLAGE HALL

Following on from the item on the September Agenda, the Clerk emailed the Chairman of North Weald Village Hall on 5th September. Subsequently, on 16th September the Clerk received an email from the Trustees of the Village Hall Committee, setting out that they had reviewed the proposal to formalise the existing informal line as a permanent footpath beneath the mature weeping willow at North Weald Village Hall, however following an inspection by their appointed tree surgeon, the Trustees had voted against formalising a path in the current line. Instead, they will be closing off access beneath the willow by installing a low fence around the canopy's perimeter, as recommended by the tree surgeon, stating that this measure will help protect the tree's roots, reduce soil compaction, and minimise risk to the public. The Trustees had suggested that the Parish Council erect signs to clearly show where the current established bridleway exists, being BR87 201, for access to Weald Common.

The PFO had visited site and completed a full report on the matter, details of which were attached to the agenda. What was of concern was that there was potential that the proposed fencing could impact the Parish Council owned parking spaces on Weald Common, which the Village Hall does not have a right to do. In addition, people already used alternative routes across the Village Hall Land to Weald Common, using the access adjacent to the sub station. The recommendation put to Council was as follows:

- 1. It is the responsibility of Essex County Council to provide directional signage for public rights of way. The Parish Council does not have any obligation to direct people a certain way to Weald Common. We do not do this for any other land that we own, and this would potentially cause more problems. Residents need to work this out for themselves. It would however be a good idea for NWVH to place a notice on their fence explaining why they have closed it off.*
- 2. The Parish Council should request a drawing of the proposed fenced off area so that the Parish Council can check it against its records in terms of land ownership.*

The Chairman expressed his concern in that the play area and trees, etc, had been located on Weald Common as it had good access from the village, and to restrict the access could potentially result in a considerable reduction in the use of the common. The path under the willow tree had been used for well over 20 years, and was the most direct route to the common. The Clerk explained that the Parish Council had no legal responsibility to direct persons to any piece of land, and that people will generally follow their own route which makes sense to them.

Cllr Irvine advised that this Council had supported the village hall in the past, and asked if this Council felt the Trustees would be supportive of people using the other route onto Weald Common via the small sub station access. There was further discussion regarding if it was possible to provide additional parking spaces on Weald Common itself, however this was not thought to be a good idea. The Chairman advised that he'd had many conversations with the late Cllr Mulliner regarding this, and Cllr Mulliner felt the only official route to get onto Weald Common would be to use the official public right of way. It was noted that the tree is located on land owned by the Village Hall, and thus is their responsibility.

Cllr Blanks stated that this Council was not looking at this matter in the right way, in that if the tree exhibits any danger to members of the public, then it should be gone. If it endangers the Parish Council car parking spaces or people using them, then the owner of the tree has a legal obligation to do something about it.

Cllr Spearman asked who would pay for the fence around the tree, to which the Clerk advised it would be the responsibility of the Village Hall. Cllr Irvine advised that following a recent visit, he had spoken with some members of public using the Parish Council owned car parking spaces, and they had been advised by the Vets these were free of charge spaces and could be used by visitors to the Vets. The Clerk confirmed she had written to the Vets about this, as this was not correct. There was some further discussion about car parking.

Cllr Tyler asked why the tree simply couldn't be cut back, rather than the whole area cordoned off. Cllr Irvine agreed, suggesting the Trustees should be asked to prune it back. The PFO confirmed that the Parish Council had a legal right to cut back any branches which were overhanging their land. Cllr Irvine **PROPOSED** that the Parish Council write to the Village Hall Trustees setting out the NWVH legal responsibilities with regard to the tree, so that this letter would be formally placed in front of the NWVH committee for their consideration and action. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Blanks, albeit with an amendment that if no action is taken to ensure the safety of users of the car parking spaces, then further legal action may be needed. This was **AGREED** by Council. The Clerk confirmed she would liaise with this council's solicitors.

C25.116 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Members noted that preparations for this year's events were well underway. Invitations have been sent and posters were ready to go on the noticeboards. Lunch invites had been sent out to all known Village organisations and Councillors were urged to attend the lunch and, if they can, ask friends and neighbours if they wish to attend. It was noted that the Parish Council had received an offer by Stuart Poulton to print the service sheets this year. Members were advised that each year 400 Order of Service are printed and the cost of this is usually covered by Sponsorship from local businesses. The service sheets are normally printed around five days before. As the last date for responses is Monday, 20th October, this allows 10 days for chasing. This year we have 5 sponsors: TGM, LVM, Green Acres, Davis Estate Agents and Exterior Plas. All have sponsored £50 each and their Logos are placed on the front of the service sheet. If Members were minded to take up Stuart Poulton's offer, they need to bear the above in mind. If so, this Council would need to look at how our sponsors would fit in to this and whether he could facilitate the numbers and the time scale.

The Chairman advised that the Clerk had sent an email to Stuart Poulton asking if he could meet these time thresholds. The PFO expressed her concern as to bringing in a third party to the process, which has been undertaken flawlessly by the relevant office member for many years. There were often latecomers or changes to the order of service, which could necessitate a very late print, and to rely on an outside body to do this would bring an additional layer of complexity and stress that simply wasn't needed. Cllr Clegg stated that he would support this position, and if the process currently worked then there was no need to change it. Cllr Kinnear agreed. Cllr Blanks stated that he was unsure why Stuart Poulton had made this offer. The Chairman stated that he would visit Stuart Poulton the following day to see if he could meet the deadlines.

The Clerk also advised that two people had advised that the order of service used by this Council was incorrect. She had subsequently looked into this, and there were in fact two orders of service for an Act of Remembrance – one generally, and one specific to Remembrance Sunday. The one used by this

Council is based on the Remembrance Sunday order. Cllr Tyler stated he was more than happy to stick with the order of service used by this council for over 20 years. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

C25.117 YOUTH CLUB

Councillors noted that Cllr Ms Wood had advised that the Youth Club had started in in the Queens Hall, and it seemed to be very successful with local children attending.

C25.118 STREET LIGHTING

A) On 1st September, structural testing was completed on 47 of the Parish Council owned street lighting columns which were due this year. The testing provides a RAG rating for all street lights that were tested as follows:

- GREEN: Recommend that this unit has no structural defects that affect the columns continuing performance and we recommend the next inspection within 72 months or 36 months for a column that has received just a visual inspection – Risk Score 0
- AMBER: Recommend that this unit has a single or several structural defects that affect the units continuing performance and we recommend the next inspection, or replacement within 36 months - Risk score of 1 to 259
- RED or RED (UPGRADE): Recommend that this unit has a single or several very significant structural defects that affect the units continuing performance and we recommend the unit is replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable – Risk Score > 260

The results identified 1 red status light, 23 amber status lights, and 23 Green status lights. Given the status of the recorded red light, the Clerk had under delegated powers for reasons of Health and Safety instructed the replacement of this street column as soon as possible, the cost of which is £4,809.60, which would be taken out of the Rolling Street Light Replacement Earmarked reserve. Councillors confirmed they fully supported this move.

Out of the 23 amber lights (other than light 6080), the highest risk score was 112.50, and as a result, it had been recommended that the next inspection of these lights takes place within 36 months. Unit 6080 was indicated to have additional recommended works to conduct a retrospective design assessment according to BSEN40-3-3:2013 to ensure the column can safely carry the current loads, at the earliest opportunity. The PFO explained that this lamp column located in Upland Road was leaning, however had considerable other highway and sign paraphernalia on it, and that this was where the recommendation was aimed. The PFO had obtained a quote for these additional works which was £1,000. As a result, the PFO had also obtained a quote to replace the column, the cost of which was £2,250 for the new column and £5,535.76 for UKPN to complete connection. This extra cost is because UKPN advise the road is too narrow for temporary traffic lights and would need to have a road closure. Thus, the total replacement cost would be £7,785.76.

Cllr Tyler advised that although he could not speak on behalf of the surveyor, he believed this recommended work was due to wind issues as a result of the signs erected on the column, which could cause additional pressure to the column itself. Cllr Blanks suggested that ECC should be contacted and asked to remove their signs and pay for the repairs. The Clerk stated that this council could remove the signs, however it may be that there is an historical agreement for them to be on there. Cllr Blanks stated if so, ECC should then furnish this Council with said agreement, and still be charged.

Cllr Clegg stated that he had advised the office that this street light was out and not working, and that all he really wanted was for the street light to be working. After further discussion, the following was **AGREED**:

1. Contact this council's street lighting maintenance contractor, asking if he is able to safely get the light to work.
2. Contact ECC advising they have signs on the column and asking if they have a lease agreement for this.
3. Email to Councillors a copy of the report on the light, and place this on the November agenda for further discussion as to if it should be replaced, and what to do about the signs.

B) Street Light George Avey Croft

In addition to the 47 street lights tested above, the Parish Council had been advised of an issue with one light which underwent a structural survey test in April 2024 and as such was not due to further testing this year. This street light is located in George Avey Croft had been identified as leaning. The Clerk visited the site and looked at the light on 25th September, and viewed the 'lean' on the light column to be considerable, however the column is situated on a grass verge. The column is a concrete swan neck column. The Clerk therefore asked the Council's contractors to visit the site and assess the situation and see if the lamp column could be straightened. If not, the Contractor had advised that a new column would be necessary, with a connection via UK Power Networks. The Clerk advised that she had been informed a repair was possible, and that this had now been undertaken to straighten the column.

C25.119 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillors noted that the PFO and Cllr Blanks met to make the necessary amendments to the draft Neighbourhood Plan as previously agreed, and that this document has been submitted to EFDC for an informal review. The regulation 14 consultation is expected to take place in the coming month.

C25.120 THORNWOOD COMMON 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Members were reminded that the 50th Anniversary Celebratory event would be held on Thursday 28th October 2025, with a simple plaque unveiling. Councillor Shirley Hawkins has asked all Councillors to place this date in their diary.

C25.121 HASTINGWOOD VILLAGE HALL – INVITATION TO PARISH COUNCILLORS TO ATTEND AN OPEN EVENING

Councillors have been invited to attend a formal event to view the new flooring and works to the Hastingwood Hall, which were carried out with various grant funding. The Hastingwood Village Hall Management would like to welcome Councillors to the Hall on 22nd October at 7pm. Refreshments will be available and they hope to see as many councillors there as possible.

C25.122 ANNUAL ASSET INSPECTIONS

Members noted that the annual inspection of Council owned Assets were carried out over the last month by the Council's RFO and H & S Officer. A full report will be presented at the November meeting.

C25.123 UKPN WORKS ON THORNWOOD COMMON

Works to Thornwood Common commenced on 21st August, however these have not been without technical difficulties. Additional works have been necessary due to the requirements of UKPN which were outside the control of the contractors. In addition, the theft of the Excavator and the Dumper Truck from the site also caused some issues. This has resulted in the Clerk having to view the CCTV, and provide details to the police. However, it is hoped that the works should be completed within the next two weeks.

C25.124 BRIDGE BETWEEN WEALD COMMON AND WEALD COMMON WOODLAND

The office staff had been advised that the bridge between Weald Common and the Weald Common woodland seemed rather unstable. In addition, the chicken wire was becoming a little problematic. The

office staff contacted Countrycare to see if they can assess the problem as they have been maintaining this bridge since its installation. They have visited site and agreed to make the necessary repairs.

C25.125 BATTLE OF BRITAIN SUNDAY

The Parish Council hosted the Battle of Britain Commemorative Event on the 14th September at the Debt of Honour. 14 wreaths were expected to be laid (there was one no show at the event) however this was laid later on the day. All wreaths were taken the following morning to the Cross of Sacrifice. The Clerk has written to the PCC at St Andrews Church to ask if they wish to organise next years event, however no response has been received at this time.

C25.126 FLAGPOLE AT THE OLD ENTRANCE GATE TO NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

The Clerk advised she had received an email from the Airfield Manager advising that the flagpole has been removed as it is damaged beyond repair, and it will not be replaced in its current position.

C25.127 NORTH WEALD BASSETT CEMETERY PEDESTRIAN GATE

Members noted that the Cemetery Pedestrian Gate which has been in place for 27 years now has to be replaced as it is damaged beyond repair. A new gate has been ordered and will be installed by the Parish Councils contractor as soon as it has been received.

C25.128 FLOWER TROUGH BY SIGN ALONG THE HIGH ROAD

The Clerk has been advised that the 2 local residents who have been planting and caring for the plants in the flower trough under the entrance sign to the North Weald Bassett Village have advised that due to personal reasons they are no longer able to continue to do this. They have been looking after this flower trough for well over ten years all at their own time and cost. The Clerk advised that these residents have never wanted any recognition for the effort, or publicity, and as such the Chairman will visit them personally with a small token of appreciation. These residents have also found another local resident willing to take on the task. Thanks were formally recorded for their effort and support over the years.

C25.129 BENCHES WITHIN THE PARISH

Members are aware that the Parish Council owns and is responsible for numerous benches in the Parish. All Parish Council owned benches that are over 2 years old are treated with the relative wood treatments annually, and washed and cleaned every 3 months. However there are still a number of benches that do not seem to have any 'owners', and the Council was asked if it wished to take on the maintenance of these benches as follows:

- At the junction of Kiln Road & High Road, possibly owned by EFDC. Cllr Tyler advised the brambles behind often grow over the benches, but this would be the responsibility of EFDC.
- At junction of Dukes Close & High Road possibly owned by North Weald RBL
- Opposite North Weald Library
- Outside the Parade of Shops by the Garden – Lease checked and falls under responsibility of the Parish Council, and lease allows Parish Council to replace this seat, which will take place and be a seat similar to that of the EcoWarriors bench on Weald Common.

Council **AGREED** to maintain these benches if necessary and if no owner could be located.

C25.130 EFDC TOWN AND VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP

Councillors noted that following a meeting between the Clerk, the Chairman of the Parish Council, EFDC Officers and the Community Champion for North Weald early in September, further details had now been received regarding this project. The original understanding of the Clerk was not what was discussed at the meeting, with the expectation being the setting up a community partnership, with the Parish Council

working to identify all businesses operating within the parish and inviting them to attend a meeting to set up a partnership group. The Parish Council had thought that the remit of this project was completely different, and was a project to tidy up the High Street. As such the two hours that would have been allocated to a member of staff to undertake the project is not sufficient. In addition the funding from EFDC was set up at £1,000 for Administrative Costs and not £5,000 as originally thought. The Clerk was also unclear what the actual 'end game' would be for this. The Clerk had therefore advised that this Council was unable to take up EFDC on their offer of working with them on this occasion.

C25.131 DOG BINS

a) **Weald Common** – Councillors noted that the dog bin on Weald Common was incorrectly being used as a receptacle for household waste. This situation is being monitored

b) **Elm Gardens** - Councillors noted that the newly installed dog bin was not really being used. The Parish Councils contractor had advised that there was very often no dog waste in the bin and that he was monitoring the bins use at this time. If this bin continues not be used the Clerk advised she would consider its relocation at budget time. Cllr Tyler asked if the Co-Op could be asked to place rubbish bins outside their shop, as was there previously.

C25.132 WHEELERS FARM GARDENS STREAM

Following the District Councillors Surgery at Thornwood, the Clerk had advised Cllr Chris Whitbread of the problems this council was having associated with cutting back the undergrowth at the entrance to the Allotments at Wheelers Farm Gardens. This had now been resolved and Qualis contacted the Parish Council and have cut back the area. The area belongs to ECC and the Environment Agency, with EFDC cutting an area on behalf of ECC. Members agreed this was an example of partnership working and the speed that this was done as soon as the wheels were set in motion. The Clerk would be mentioning this in the annual report.

C25.133 COUNCILLORS SURGERY

Councillor Tom Bromwich will be holding his District Councillor Surgery on 11th October in the Council Chamber at the Queens Hall between 10am and 12noon. Posters have been placed on the Notice Boards, and will be advertised on the PC Facebook Page. The Clerk advised so far only one appointment had been taken, and that there was currently nobody to sit with Cllr Bromwich. Cllr Kinnear advised he could make arrangements for the hall alarm to be turned off so that the Clerk could hand Cllr Bromwich the keys for access.

C25.134 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The public and press were excluded for reasons that the Council believed publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

C25.135 PARISH HALL STAFF

It was **AGREED** that a Personnel Committee meeting would be arranged for a morning one day in the next two weeks to consider this matter.

Meeting closed 9.05pm

Signed

Date