



North Weald Bassett Parish Council

Parish Hall at Thornwood Common, Weald Hall Lane,
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Clerk to the Council.
Susan De Luca

1st March 2023

TO: ALL COUNCILLORS

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are summoned to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council which will be held on **MONDAY 6th March 2023 at 7.30 pm** to transact the business shown in the Agenda below.

This meeting will be held in the **Thornwood Common Parish Hall, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood**, with any necessary measures put in place by the Government at the time.

Susan De Luca
Clerk to the Council

Members of the public and press are invited to attend this meeting

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To **NOTE** any apologies which have been received.

2. OTHER ABSENCES

To **NOTE** any absences for which no apology has been received.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 🖐

📄 To **AGREE** the Minutes of 6th February 2023 Parish Council meeting which are attached at **Appendix 1**.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 🖐

To **RECEIVE** any Declarations of Interest by Members.

A Member with a personal interest in a matter must consider whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Non Pecuniary or Other Pecuniary Interest, and declare it accordingly. A Member who is unsure as to how to declare their interest should seek independent advice.

5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public for a period determined by the Chairman of the Meeting. **Please NOTE if the Clerk has not been previously notified of the Question Council may have to note questions and respond to them after the Meeting.**

6. REPORT OF THE CLERK

To **RECEIVE** a report or update from clerk on Parish Council matters, which at the time of printing the agenda include:

- **Latton Priory Consultation** - Report from Meeting held on 27th February 2023.

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- **Weald Common Tree Project** – As previously advised the main works have been completed, however some additional works are necessary to increase the mulch around some of the trees. The Chairman and office staff met at the end of February to agree a management plan for Weald Common going forward, and a further meeting will be held regarding the installation of benches, information boards, corner fencing, etc. Tom Moat, ECC, has confirmed that he is progressing the grant funding receipt in February. The Chairman of the Parish Council will provide Members with a Verbal update regarding ongoing maintenance.
 - **Letter received from Resident adjacent to Allotments** – This was passed to Clerk and Chairman – The Clerk has responded to the Resident and advised that Allotment Tenants will be politely asked to lock the gate, however tenants will be advised to undertake this at the Allotment Meeting in March
 - **Staffing Matters** – The Clerk is on a phased return to work (for one month).
 - **Coffee With Cops** - The PC have been Liaising with PC Cook and NWVH and have secured an evening date for hall hire for an evening Coffee with Cops event – this will be held on :
Date: Friday 17th March 2023 Time: 6pm – 7.30pm - Location, North Weald Village Hall.
 - **Essex County Council Recycling Centres** – The Clerk has received a number of complaints from local residents regarding the fact that Essex County Council has made the following changes to their Recycling Centres from Monday 13 March 2023. The changes are that there is now a booking system in place which will be trialled for all vehicles visiting Essex County Council recycling centres to help manage waiting times, reduce congestion, and improve the customer experience. Blue Badge holders, pedestrians and cyclists are not required to make a booking. This can be done online, or by calling Essex County Council. If booking online, once residents have chosen their recycling centre, a calendar will appear displaying the time slots. Fully booked slots will be greyed out, and available slots will be green. The capacity of each slot can be viewed in the bottom right-hand corner of the time slot so residents can see how busy each slot is. Once the booking is complete a confirmation email will be sent. Residents will need to bring the booking confirmation and proof of address. If residents have limited internet or accessibility issues that may restrict them from booking a slot online, there are alternative options to book a slot. In the first instance, they could receive assistance from a friend, family member, colleague, carer or neighbour? Alternatively, they can phone the Essex County Council contact centre on 0345 743 0430 on a Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm who will make the booking on their behalf.
 - Booking slots can be made available for up to two weeks in advance.
 - Bookings will close one hour in advance.
 - To ensure fair usage, residents will be asked to try and limit visits to one booking per week. This is a just a guide and the booking system does not restrict multiple bookings.
 - Bookings for cars will have a 15 minute timeslot. Residents can arrive at their designated recycling centre at any point within this timeslot.
 - A booking slot does not allow priority access. If residents arrive and there is a queue, residents should not try and skip the queue as they will be refused access.
 - Any residents that park up outside and attempt to walk waste in will be reported and refused entry.
 - If residents miss their slot, they may need to book another slot and visit on another day.
 - If residents wish to cancel their booking, the booking confirmation email will contain a link called 'return to my booking'. If they click this link, they will be able to follow instructions to cancel their booking.

Members are asked if they wish to make any **COMMENT** on this matter, or to simply **NOTE** that this is for a trial period.

7. REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY ARE ASKED TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT TO THE CLERK WHICH CAN BE DISTRIBUTED TO OTHER COUNCILLORS. THIS WILL ENABLE THE MEETING TO RUN EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY. COUNCILLORS WILL THEN BE ABLE TO BRING UP ANY POINTS THAT THEY FEEL ARE RELEVANT TO THE PARISH COUNCIL AND ASK QUESTIONS OF THE COUNCILLOR WHO HAS SUBMITTED THE REPORT.

To **RECEIVE** any reports from Members who wish to give a report and/or who are representatives on Committees, Working Groups, Outside Bodies, and other meetings that Members or the Clerk have attended and which, **if available**, will be reproduced at **Appendix 2** if they have been submitted by Members for inclusion, as follows:

a) Chairman's Report

b) Vice Chairman's Report

c) District & County Councillors Reports - District Councillors are invited to submit a written report if they are unable to attend the Parish Council Meeting

d) Parish Councillors Reports - verbal reports will be received if no written report has been submitted

e) Queens Hall Charity Report

f) Epping Forest District Local Plan

As many of you know the Local Plan, created by Epping Forest District Council, sets out the policies and land allocations which will guide future development within the Epping Forest District up to 2033, which includes the Parish of North Weald Bassett. On 9th February 2023, after over 12 years of work by EFDC, the Inspector issued his final report which confirmed the Local Plan was 'Sound', meaning this can now be formally adopted by Epping Forest District Council as the development plan for our future. The Parish of North Weald Bassett features heavily in the plan, with the following Housing allocations included:

- North Weald Village – a minimum of 1,050 new homes
- Thornwood – a minimum of 172 new homes
- Hastingwood (Latton Priory) – a minimum of 1,050 new homes

This is in addition to a number of employment allocations, including North Weald Airfield and Woodside Industrial Estate amongst others. Now the plan has been found Sound, you can expect a flurry of activity to progress the housing development sites. For full details, including maps of where the development sites are, visit www.efdclocalplan.org.

g) Neighbourhood Plan

As a result of both COVID and the delays and uncertainties associated with the EFDC Local Plan, the Parish Council agreed to halt work on the Neighbourhood Plan until such time as there was greater clarity as to the outcome of the Local Plan. Towards the end of 2022, Councillors considered this issue again, and felt that it was vital the Council finished what it had started and should continue with the Neighbourhood Plan, given the high level of involvement by local residents. Now that the Local Plan has been found Sound, the framework alongside which the Neighbourhood Plan sits is now clear. Just to remind you that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot stop development, but it does allow local communities to specify matters of design, protection of heritage, and set out what new development should look and feel like. In our case, the overriding feedback from residents was that that new development should not detract from the fact that we are three villages – not towns – and new development should both respect and reflect this.

h) **Highways Report** – No Report at the Current time.

8. FINANCIAL

- a) **Payments** - To formally **APPROVE** the list of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts up to 28th February 2023 – these will be emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting.
- b) **Investments** – To **NOTE** the relevant forms have been submitted.
- c) **Internal Audit** – Members are asked to Note the following date for Internal Audit as 25th May 2023

9. FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS

- **Parish Council Elections – 4th May 2023.** Information concerning nomination papers - Papers are expected to be received from EFDC at the beginning of March – the Clerk has been advised that she will receive Nomination Papers for ‘sitting councillors’ - other parish residents who wish to stand will be advised to contact EFDC Elections Office to pick up the necessary Election Paperwork. This will ensure they receive the exact details regarding as to how they should deposit their electoral documentation with EFDC as they are the Electoral Authority.
- **Details of the Pre-election period of heightened sensitivity (previously known as 'Purdah') commencing on 22 March 2023 are detailed below:**

Some local town and parish councils (this includes North Weald Bassett) will be holding elections on Thursday 4th May. At this time we do not know if these will be contested or un-contested. During the pre-election period of heightened sensitivity, additional rules come into play as set out within the Recommended Code of Practice for Local Authority Publicity.

Comprehensive guidance including the code, and frequently asked questions can be found on the [Local Government Association website](#).

Guidelines and restrictions on decision making and publicity during the pre-election period

The pre-election period starts in Epping Forest District on Thursday 22 March 2023. These restrictions apply to all elections (including district, town and parish) between **22 March and the local elections on Thursday 4 May**.

From the start of the pre-election period, councils must comply with restrictions outlined in Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986. In addition the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity published in 2011 makes clear that particular care should be taken in periods of heightened sensitivity, such as in the run up to an election. The Act defines publicity as “**any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or to a section of the public.**”

Generally, the Act says that councils should “**not publish any material which, in whole, or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.**” The Code of Practice recommends that councils should generally not issue any publicity which seeks to influence voters and that publicity relating to individuals involved directly in the election should not be published unless expressly authorised by statute.

Decision making

In relation to decision making within the council, the position remains that it is ‘business as usual’ unless there are very good reasons why this should not be the case. In the vast majority of cases, the pre-

election period will have no impact on normal council business, including the approval of planning decisions.

Councillors and candidates are expected to reach out to local residents.

The code is not intended to silence political debate in the pre-election period. Typical campaign tools include:

- Face to face
- Local newspapers and radio
- Social media
- Leaflets and posters

However – **it is not appropriate to use public money or resource** in the form of council staff, activities, buildings, facilities or activities that could influence voters – especially so in the period of heightened sensitivity leading up to the elections.

What this means

- The primary restriction is on proactive publicity (including photography) by the council which particularly relates to candidates and other politicians involved directly in the election.
- The council can still issue media releases on factual matters provided that these do not identify individual councillors or groups of councillors.
- Councillors are still free to respond to enquiries received from the media in a personal capacity.
- Individual councillors can issue their own statements, write letters to the local newspaper(s) for publication, contact the media directly or say what they like in a personal capacity, but must not use council resources to do so.

Thanks to Thomas Carne

Corporate Communications Manager EFDC for issuing this advice

10. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD WASTE DEPOT

Following the Meeting of EFDC Cabinet on 6th February which was held in closed session and the statement which was released by the Parish Council on the on 30th January advising as follows:

North Weald Bassett Parish Council is extremely concerned to see an item included in the Cabinet Agenda for the EFDC Cabinet meeting on 6th February considering the possibility of a Waste Depot on North Weald Airfield. The Parish Council has previously raised concerns with EFDC about the future of the HMRC site, and is yet to receive a satisfactory formal response, however it is unclear if the possible Waste Depot is being considered for the same site. Unfortunately there are no details of what is being considered and/or proposed, and what the Waste Depot would consist of, however the Council will again be raising this matter directly with the Leader of EFDC, and will scrutinise in detail any proposals being considered as to how they may affect the Parish and its residents, for example waste will undoubtedly attract birds and what does this mean for the future operation of the Airfield and residents. The Parish Council has not been formally consulted or advised on any plans for a Waste Depot on the Airfield.

Members asked at the last meeting that the Meeting Clerk arrange a formal meeting with Nigel Avey the Portfolio Holder and this Council, the result of which was that a meeting was held on Wednesday 22nd February, where this matter was discussed at considerable length. However it should be **NOTED** that it was brought to the attention of Cllr Avey and also Officers at that meeting that this Council felt that there should be some financial benefit for the community of the Parish if residents are going to have the ongoing long term impact of a Waste Depot in the Parish of North Weald Bassett, and this financial benefit should come via the Parish Council who are best placed to ensure that it is spent within the Parish appropriately. Members are advised that this matter will be discussed by EFDC on Monday 13th March at their Cabinet Meeting.

11. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

Members are advised that the clerk was contacted at short notice and asked to attend meetings with the Chairman of the Parish Council and Officers and Members of the District Council, in relation to North Weald Airfield. A verbal report will be given to Members in relation to this matter.

12. CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

Members are advised that over the last year the National Association of Local Councils and other Local Government Organisations such as the NHS and Local Authorities have been drawing up and promoting the Civility and Respect Pledge. Over 1000 Organisations have signed up to this Pledge so far. Copied on **Appendix 3** is the document which has been reproduced from the National Association of Local Councils on behalf of Councillors and Parish and Town Councils and which is Supported and Seconded by the Society of Local Councils, on behalf of Clerks and Deputy Clerks.

What is civility and respect?

In its very simplest form, Civility and Respect is about how we treat each other at work our differing type of behaviours and disrespect can become common place. People report that bullying and harassment is prevalent in any organisations and any rude and unkind behaviour can have a detrimental impact on staff and councillors wellbeing and the way residents perceive us.

Any type of uncivil and disrespectful behaviour is unacceptable. It is unprofessional, unnecessary, and has no place in our organisation. And Local Government as a whole.

We must recognise that levels of bullying and harassment must come down if local government is to achieve its aim of becoming one of the finest places to work with a reputation of being an understanding and caring employer.

The Civility and Respect Pledge is asking us to sign up to a vision which places a compassionate and inclusive culture at the very heart of Local Government and emphasises that all employees and Councillors responsible for tackling bullying and harassment and the importance of creating a civil and respectful culture.

The national civility and respect programme aims to support and promote cultures of civility and respect throughout Local Government regardless of the tier, creating positive working environments that are kind, compassionate and inclusive for all.

Members are asked if they wish to sign the Council up to the Pledge and if so, they should place the Civility and Respect Logo on their Website and also issue a Statement advising that they have signed the Pledge. The suggested statement is shown below:

NORTH WEALD BASSETT CIVILITY AND RESPECT STATEMENT

At their Parish Council meeting on Monday 6th March 2023 North Weald Bassett Parish Councillors signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge, this is in line with many other town and parish councils across the country.

We recognised that throughout the sector, there are growing concerns about the impact of bullying, harassment, and intimidation on local councils, councillors, clerks and council staff and the effectiveness of local councils. For this reason, the National Association of Local Councils has been working together with partner organisations in putting civility and respect at the top of the agenda in order to start a culture change within the local council sector.

North Weald Bassett Parish Council has signed the pledge to demonstrate it is completely committed to standing up to poor behaviour across the sector and to driving through the positive changes that support both civil and respectful conduct. This is the result of the growing concerns about the impact of bullying, harassment and intimidation on local councils, councillors, clerks and council staff and the effectiveness of local councils.

Members may add more or less if they wish, however this is the basic statement. Some Councils have included in their statement why they have signed up to this – such as some councillors/ staff have been subject to harassment, on social media or via email (examples of councils statements can be given) , also some Councils have said things such as ‘ they realise that they can’t please all the residents all the time – but they do their best etc’. However The statement above in red does seem to be the most positive and sometimes ‘less is more’.

13. REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR BLANKS

This Report was circulated to Councillors at the last meeting by Cllr Blanks under Members Reports, however as it was not a specific item on the Agenda it was not able to be discussed. Members in attendance at the February Meeting have seen a copy of the Report. Cllr Mrs Jackman asked that the Report be placed on the March Agenda for perusal and or discussion by Members of the Parish Council, to which Members agreed. The Report from Cllr Blanks is attached at *Appendix 4*.

14. RIDE LONDON 2023

At the last meeting Members were advised that on 28th May 2023 this years Ride London Event will be taking place. This event is a partnership between ECC and London Marathon Events, with an estimated 25,000 cyclists expected to take part. These two bodies have now agreed the route, which will remain the same as that for 2022 with the addition of a range of enhancements and improvements developed from the feedback and engagement process, including:

- No area being impacted by road closures for more than one day
- Improved local access plans for communities on the route
- Increased provision of managed vehicle crossing points on the route
- Additional local drop-in sessions in February for further engagement with residents and businesses
- Improved communications with social care providers
- Enhanced engagement programme with businesses on the route to plan ahead
- Working with schools and community groups on the route to develop cycling and active travel initiatives around RideLondon-Essex

The Clerk attended a public event on the 24th February which was organised by ECC/London Marathon but facilitated by the Parish Council as this was for local Parish Residents to attend and ask Questions of the Organisers. The organisers advised that there will be additional Crossing Points, additional Marshals, and Carers having to get either into or out of North Weald will be able to do so as long as they contact the Organisers in plenty of time. The event in May is expected to end by 12.20pm. The organisers advised that they would advise the Parish Council as to the number of residents who attended the public event. Members are asked to note that the event had been widely advertised.

15. MEMORIAL PLAQUE FOR COUNCILLOR GEORGE MULLINER

Members are asked to **CONSIDER** if they would like to place a plaque in the North Weald Village Hall in recognition of all the work undertaken by former councillor George Mulliner. Councillor Alan Buckley will provide a verbal update for Members to consider.

16. EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN

Members are asked to **NOTE** that EFDC has issued its new Corporate Plan.

- The Current Corporate Plan finishes at the end of March 2023. In this respect EFDC has issued a new Corporate Plan to commence when this one finishes. Members are advised that they can view the new plan by going to the EFDC Website and adding the following
- To view the Corporate plan to : <https://eppingforestdc.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2829f2f9cd423b7b98cf093fe&id=41eba2bf45&e=891c6d69dc>

17. NORWEGIAN MEMORIAL NEAR SQUADRON ON NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

Members will recall from the last meeting that the sum of £500 was precepted for the possible maintenance of said memorial which is located at the revetment near the Squadron subject to the memorial being moved to a different location on the airfield, given the poor state of the current memorial and surrounds and the cost to maintain it.

A lengthy discussion ensued at the last meeting and Members went over the historical facts and moral liabilities to the Norwegians and Cllr Tyler and Cllr Mrs Etherington asked that 'stating that out of respect this should be maintained and suggested the decision should be revisited',

After further discussion it was agreed that the meeting clerk would ask EFDC if they were financially contributing to its maintenance or maintaining it, and that Cllr Tyler would speak to his contact at the war graves commission.

The Clerk has undertaken some research and contacted EFDC, Darren Goodey has agreed with the Clerk that the stone which was put on top of the Revetment is classed as a 'Memorial' even if the Revetments are not, however there is no way that he feels that the Memorial Stone could be moved elsewhere. He did agree that the area around the Memorial Stone should be maintained, however the land that it stands on is leased to a company on the Airfield. The Clerk and the Chairman will take this matter up when they meet to discuss the North Weald Airfield Report, and will give Members a Verbal Report at the meeting.

18. RE-SITING OF DEFIBRILATOR FROM NORTH WEALD METHODIST CHURCH

Members are advised that the Parish Council is no further down the line with trying to get the Defibrillator re-sited from the Methodist Church to another business in the High Road. Further attempts have been unsuccessful, therefore the Clerk has suggested contacting other shops and businesses along the High Road to see if they would be willing to host the Defibrillator.

19. STREET LIGHT HASTINGWOOD

As agreed at the last meeting, the meeting clerk raised a query on 8th February with ECC Street Lighting team to ascertain if there were specific rules regarding luminescence of streetlights at junctions, as well as asking for a contact in the legal department to start discussion regarding permission to place a street light on the verge at the junction of Hastingwood Road and Mill Street. As no response was received, this matter was escalated to ECC Cllr Whitbread to obtain a response.

20. EV CHARGING POINTS

The Parish Council has had an approach from EFDC regarding the Parish Council providing EV Charging Points. One site that was suggested was the Parish Hall at Thornwood. The Clerk has advised that the Hall is normally accessed via locked gates unless there is a hiring and the problems that this may cause with regard to access, and also there are concerns regarding the rising cost of electricity. The officer in charge of the project at EFDC did not think the access arrangements would be a problem and these could be overcome. With regard to electricity cost, the PC would be able to set and change the tariff and retain a margin to cover admin costs or even make a profit. The staff EV chargers at Epping Civic Centre are

currently charged at 23p per kWh which covers a small Podpoint admin charge plus a small admin margin on top of what they pay for electricity (until April covered by the government's price cap for businesses). Most public 7 kWh chargers currently cost at least 30p per kWh with some at 45p, so depending on the PCs own electricity tariff it could easily be revenue generating. On that basis, if the capital cost were covered by grants, it would not actually matter too much if the car park were locked a lot of the time, provided people were made aware that it is not 24 hour access. You could also make the chargers 'closed group' access so for example only local residents or others you approve would be able to use them and they would not need to appear on the public EV charging sites like www.zap-map.com

Over time a much wider range of people will use EVs and the EFDC area already has more battery-only EVs on the road than any other council area in Essex. The public charging opportunities though are poor in Essex, so those with no off street parking to allow home charging are holding back on converting to EV.

Members are asked if they would like the Parish Council to investigate this matter further, if so the Clerk or Councillors can meet with the Officer in Charge of the Project either in person or via Zoom/teams .

21. EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL EMERGENCY PLANNING LIVE REST CENTRE EXERCISE - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – VOLUNTEERS

The Clerk has been contacted by an Officer at EFDC regarding a live Emergency Planning exercise which will take place in June 2023 – Date to be confirmed and will be held between 10:00hrs – 16:00hrs.

At this stage they are looking to rally some volunteers from North Weald Bassett parish who may be interested in playing evacuees . They would most likely keep numbers at approx. 60 of mixed ages and family groups where possible. They are insured for all ages, however would be looking sensibly at the demographics once they have an idea of interest. They will also be reaching out to their community champions and a couple of other parishes to make up numbers and give them a real time flavour of issues they hope to exercise.

They are only at early planning stages at this time, so cannot give any details, however the exercise will run between 10am and 4pm and although would like 'all day' volunteers, understand and welcome anyone who can perhaps give a few hours. They would like to hear from Volunteers by the end of April. Members are asked if they have any **SUGGESTIONS** of groups who may be interested in participating

22. CHANGE OF DATE FOR ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Members are asked to agree to the change of date for the Annual Parish Assembly and the Civic Awards from Monday 13th March to Thursday 16th March.

23. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

In the event that the Agenda contains Exempt (pink) pages, or an item needs to be discussed confidentially, to **CONSIDER** the following motion to be proposed by the Chairman:

“That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed. However an item may be placed in the Confidential part of the meeting so long as it is accordance with the Statutory Guidance.

There are 3 confidential items to be considered
