



## North Weald Bassett Parish Council

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*Clerk to the Council.*

Susan De Luca

26<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**TO: ALL COUNCILLORS**

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### NOTICE OF MEETING

You are summoned to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council which will be held on **MONDAY 3rd March 2025 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.**

Susan De Luca

Clerk to the Council

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

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#### 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 the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025, as 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 Chairperson 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 the Clerk on Parish Council matters that staff have been working on.

- a) Cemetery Matters
  - b) Passenger Transport Grant Bid (Support Letters & Liaison with Central Connect Bus Services, Analysis of Survey Monkey & Liaison with EFDC Transport Officer)
  - c) Office Move
  - d) Planning
  - e) Wayleave
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- f) Annual Report
- g) Annual Meeting
- h) Civic Awards
- i) Neighbourhood Plan

## 7. REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS

**Councillors are reminded that, if possible, members reports should be submitted in written form for noting only, this enables the meeting to flow smoothly and allows adequate time for discussion of matters appertaining to the Parish.** Written reports, if available, will be reproduced at **Appendix 2**.

### 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

e) **Queens Hall Charity Report** - Request Asbestos Survey – Detailed on Agenda

f) **Highways** - Various Reports received regarding a number of Road closures

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORTS

a) **List of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts up to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

b) **Investments** – Latest available report will be given

## 9. NORTH WEALD MODEL FLYING CLUB

The Clerk received an email from North Weald Model Flying Club, who are currently situated on the on the Old Golf Range, North Weald Airfield. I have reproduced the majority of their email below, for Members perusal:

*As a flying club we have been and active club since the 70's, we have around 40+ members from 17-90 years old and have always been located at the airfield, we used to be at the apron where the flying school is now but 5 years ago we were told by ECC that we had to move to make way for the flying school and the Met police, we were offered a new location, the old golf driving range where we are at present, we have been there for 5 years now and have enjoyed our new location, we put a lot of time, effort and money into creating this facility for our members, however we have just been informed by ECC that due to the sale of the land to Google the market has to relocate and the new location will be on our flying site so we have to move off. Now I don't know if you have any details about the market moving or where too but if you can help me in anyway, even in advice how we can move forward it would be so much helpful. As stated we have quite a few older members who look forward to meeting for a chat and a fly, take this away and were taking part of their life, for some it's there only contact with people outside their home and it's very upsetting to think this could all come to an end, as of yet ECC have not given any guidance if they will help us re-locate yet again or not, this time seems more the case they just want us off and don't care. We are actively trying to find a new site to carry on but this is proving very difficult without any help, going by what we know we have until poss Sept to find something which in all context is not going to happen*

Councillor Clegg has visited a member of the Model Flying Club and also had a brief resume of the club, and can reiterate the history as detailed above. Members are asked to **CONSIDER** this matter in regard to supporting the club's concerns.

## 10. ARTHUR MORETON

Members are advised that the Clerk received an email from the family of Arthur Moreton advising that he had passed away on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 following an illness. Arthur Moreton was a remarkable individual who moved to North Weald in 1995, however his association with the Airfield goes back much longer, to the times of the Fighter Meets. He dedicated much of that time to serving his community with unwavering

commitment. Arthur was a loyal Ambassador for North Weald Airfield and a devoted parish councillor who exemplified the true spirit of community service and leadership. He had a passion for aviation that was evident in his tireless efforts to promote and support North Weald Airfield. He embraced his love for the 'Norwegian Connection' – keeping this alive and to the forefront. His advocacy not only helped to preserve this vital piece of our heritage but also inspired countless individuals to explore this to the full. Through his work, Arthur ensured that the airfield remained a beacon of opportunity for generations to come. As a parish councillor he was a pillar of strength and integrity. His dedication to the well-being of our community was unparalleled, and he addressed the concerns of residents. His leadership was marked by a deep understanding of the needs of our community and an unwavering commitment to making it a better place for all.

## 11. HASTINGWOOD VILLAGE HALL

Members are advised that the Clerk assisted the Hastingwood Village Hall in applying for Grant Funding from the Shared Rural Prosperity Fund to completely replace their wooden hall floor. The Parish Council also gave a contribution of £5,400 (which was budgeted for and came out of the S106 fund held for Hastingwood Community Fund) as a contribution to the remaining 20% balance that was needed.

A letter which is attached to this Agenda at **Appendix 3** has been received from Hastingwood Village Hall advising that following the replacement of the floor, which was the original floor that had been in situ for well over 100 years since the hall was built, it is necessary to carry out some other essential repairs. The main concerns are the drainage around the hall and the problems with the guttering's around the roof.

They are seeking additional funding to install an outside drainage system for the hall, which is over 100 years old and has had little or no maintenance, up until the present committee and the Parish Council took such an active interest in the hall for the people of Hastingwood. Unfortunately due to the age of the building, the lack of proper drainage has led to water damage and erosion, threatening the structural integrity of this important community building. Installing this drainage system will prevent further deterioration, protect the hall's foundations, and ensuring it remains a safe and functional space for community events and activities.

The Clerk, Chairman of the Council and Ward Councillors have attended numerous events at the Hastingwood Village Hall and have seen for themselves the benefit of having a facility such as this, in their local community. It is a small community hall which serves at the heart of a village, providing a central space for various activities and fostering a sense of community. Despite its size, the hall plays a crucial role in the social, cultural, and economic life of the village. The following items are of significant benefit:

- **Community Gatherings:** The hall offers a venue for residents to gather for meetings, celebrations, and events, strengthening social bonds.
- **Support Networks:** It provides a space for support groups, workshops, and classes, helping residents connect and support each other.
- **Educational Activities:** It serves as a venue for educational programs, promoting lifelong learning and cultural exchange.

It can also help the Economic Impact by:

- **Local Economy Boost:** Events held at the hall can attract visitors, boosting local businesses.
- **Cost-Effective Venue:** It offers an affordable space for private events, reducing the need for residents to travel to distant locations.

In conclusion maintaining a small community hall is essential for fostering a strong, connected, and vibrant village community. It supports social cohesion and economic vitality, making it an invaluable asset to a small village.

## 12. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Throughout February, questionnaires have been delivered to each and every home in the Parish asking residents to provide an update on matters of importance to them, and to establish if the community still feels the same as it did at the time of last survey. This information will be fed into the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation. Councillors will receive an update on this matter.

## 13. RURAL HOUSING NEEDS

The Clerk has received a communication from a Rural Housing Needs Supplier with regards to possible local needs for affordable housing within Thornwood Common, for providing affordable housing under the Rural Exception Site (RES) policy. It is understood that the average house price in North Weald Bassett over the last year was £648,000 and the RES policy ensures that the affordable housing delivered remains affordable in perpetuity, and also with a priority for those with a strong local connection to the local ward. The housing providers work closely with Epping Forest DC on such projects, and they are supportive of RES delivery to support affordable housing in rural areas.

It is understood there has been an approach by the Church Commissioners who are willing to work together on a site they own, with the community and rural specialist housing association Hastoe Housing (preferred supplier of rural housing in Epping Forest District), to develop some affordable housing to benefit the residents of the ward. This process usually begins with a Housing Needs Survey. This survey goes to all the households in the ward and gives residents the opportunity to state if they have a housing need in the next 5 years. A RES will be guided (in size, number and tenure) by the housing need identified in a Housing Needs Survey – this is not about over development. It is a community led process designed to ensure the community are involved extensively in the process.

Members are asked if they wish to **CONSIDER** this matter further. A map of the proposed site is attached for Members perusal at **Appendix 4**.

## 14. QUEENS HALL

The Queens Hall Community Centre was built in the mid 1980s, and a local resident has asked to view its Asbestos Register. It was the understanding of the Queens Hall Charity that as the Community Centre was built in the 1980s there is no Asbestos present, and that an Asbestos Register was therefore not required. Having looked at the regulations it is now understood that any building prior to 2000 does need to have an Asbestos Register whether the organisation believe there to be asbestos present or not.

Then Queens Hall Charity have written to the Parish Council to see if they are able to assist the Charity with funding to carry out an asbestos survey at the Queens Hall as this now needs to be carried out as a matter of urgency. Asbestos can be a hazardous material that poses significant health risks if disturbed, including lung cancer, mesothelioma, and asbestosis. Conducting an asbestos survey is crucial to identify and manage any asbestos-containing materials in our community, ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents.

The Parish Council Financial Officer has been in contact with a company who can have one of their operatives carry this out as soon as possible. The estimated cost of the asbestos survey is £650, which will include a report fully if there is any asbestos, and where it is located. Members are asked to **CONSIDER** if they would fund this survey and report.

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## 15. FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THORNWOOD VILLAGE HALL –TUESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER '25

Members are advised that the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Thornwood Village Hall will be celebrated on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr Shirley Hawkins is liaising with local Thornwood resident Jimmy Waters and they will organise the event between them, with Jimmy Waters providing a display of local items.

## 16. COUNCILLORS SURGERY

Members will recall that Councillors surgeries have been hosted in the Parish Hall in Thornwood for District /County Councillors who requested this facility. The only group to have requested to use this facility so far have been the Conservative Councillors. We have now had a request from the Independent Councillor for the use of Parish Council premises (new offices in Queens Hall) for this facility. The Clerk has been given three dates for this use:

- **March 29<sup>th</sup> 10:00 - 12:00, July 12<sup>th</sup> 10:00 - 12:00, October 11<sup>th</sup> 10:00 - 11:30**

Members are firstly asked if they would agree to this use, and secondly if a Councillor would be able to be in attendance on the second two dates (the Clerk is able to attend the first one), as there are safeguarding issues in a Councillor being in attendance on their own.

## 17. ANNUAL ALLOTMENT MEETING

Members are reminded that the Annual Allotment Holders Meeting will be held in the Parish Hall on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April at 11 am. The relevant documentation will be sent out to all tenants.

## 18. REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Councillors are asked to **REVIEW** this Council's policies and procedures, including updating the Financial Regulations following the NALC update in 2024, Standing Orders, Financial Risk Assessment, and other general policies. A separate email will be sent to all Councillors with full details of the documents to be considered. Councillors are asked to review these prior to the meeting, in readiness for discussion at the meeting.

## 19. ATTENDANCE AT EFDC PLANS MEETINGS

The Clerk attended an EFDC Plans A Committee Meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February, to make representation on two planning applications. One being Rear of Avenue House, London Road Hastingwood, Erection of 6 Dwellings and Associated Parking, the other being Methodist Church North Weald, Change of use from Class F1 (place of worship) to Class E (g)(i) (offices) (Revised Scheme to EPF/1202/24). Unfortunately, it does now seem that due to the new Government policies, including those of Grey Belt, the Parish Council's representations have very little weight, even in a public forum. Members are encouraged to view the meeting and to question whether they feel that it is the best interest of residents to continue to represent them in this forum, or to simply solely send in the council's comments when the application is discussed at the Parish Council Planning Committee.

## 20. 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 currently <b>NO</b> confidential items to be considered
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