

A meeting of the Widford Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 13th November 2012 at 8.00pm.

PRESENT

Chairman Dr Ian Brett, Vice-Chairman Mrs Jill Buck, Councillors Mrs Wendy Camp and Mrs Jenny Miller
District Councillor Mr Mike Newman and five members of the public.

APOLOGIES had been received from Councillor Mrs Frances Luck who was unwell and County Councillor Dr Roger Beeching who was attending another meeting.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2012 had been circulated and were now approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING

EHPTC – The next meeting will be held at Hertford Castle on Thursday 21 November and a following one at “Wallfields” on 15th January 2013 when East Herts Councillor ,Mr Mike Carver will be present.

The Chairman has attended all the meetings and so far has not found much benefit from the group formed to try and establish an improvement in receipt of plans for planning applications which are now only received “on line”. The plans are not always easy to find and are too small to be of any use on which to comment satisfactorily. It is difficult to obtain full scale plans from the District Council who, if pressed, will provide copies for major developments.

Village Archives . It is understood that a grant has been obtained by the school for the necessary building to house the documents but no further information is available to date. A School Governors meeting is to take place in week beginning 19th November which will be attended by Councillor Mrs Miller.

Fp 17. The controversial problem of a public footpath being designated through land in church ownership had gone to the Secretary of State on Appeal and had been dismissed. Subsequently, a request has been made to the Secretary of State for a Public Enquiry to be held and this is to take place within the next eight months.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING - 8th January 2013, Village Hall, 8.00pm

CORRESPONDENCE

HCC Information re; Adoption of Waste Core Strategy and Development. The Polocies Document states there are no new sites – It forms part of the Herts: Development Framework.

Ringway Staff Information (was Highways).

With the abolishment of the Highways Department, the new system outsourced to Ringway came into operation on 1st October. Our new contact will be Raj Goutman.

We are sorry to lose the previous Highway Engineer, Robin Noades who has given us excellent service.

Affinity Water – seeking local views on future strategies. No comment.

Update on Stansted Airport - possibility of additional runways in the south east after 2015 in spite of previous affirmation that there would be no new runways in the south east !.

REPORTS

District Councillor Mike Newman spoke of the Local Plan which will replace the current District Plan. Since the delay to the abolition of the East of England Regional Plan, consultation on the draft District Plan Strategy cannot be open to public consultation which has now been put back to April 2013 instead of January 2013. Future development now lies with the District Councils who need to form a Core Strategy.

How much housing do we need? Do we focus on Towns, Villages or even form a New Town. The public consultation counts on the Strategy counts – is it sound? (Stevenage document was thrown out as it was not sound!)

The Core Strategy is to be ready next Spring after which the Local Plan can be written so is unlikely to be ready before 2015. If the plan is not too much at variance with the National Plan, all should be all right. The possibility of 10,000 houses North of Harlow is still an option, but currently does not appear to be a preferred option.

Over a period of twenty years the East Herts Council will have to provide between 10,000 and 17,000 homes, that is approximately 615 new homes in a year. These could be infill in Bishops Stortford, Ware, Hertford, perhaps 10% in all the villages, or a New Town, which appears not to be the Members choice, based on population projection.

Also, he referred to the new Community Car Scheme and Furniture Scheme which we are being asked to publicise, grants that are available for specific improvement and the new “Go” – pay car parking by mobile ‘phone plan where a motorist can extend parking time while shopping for instance, already being used satisfactorily in London.

Police News – There is to be a Rural Police Locality Meeting at Scots Barn on 5th December at 9.30am, open to all. There has been no Police input to the Parish Council meetings for several months and this will be a question raised at the meeting.

IB Parish Paths Partnership – No claim on the available grant from Groundwork is necessary for this year but could be used if necessity arises. It is understood that the money is available for repair to the bank/Lily Bridge this year. Two posts have been replaced on Fp 17.

Our previous contact with Countyside Management, Nicholas Maddex now has to extend his area under the new management Groundwork and therefore does not have so much time in Widford as before. As we have no particular schemes in mind there has not been an annual meeting this year.

JB Playing Field – The usual Halloween fun and games took place on the playing field with fancy dress and decorated pumpkins which the children enjoyed. The Chairman, Mrs Anitha Rogers has retired for personal reasons and a new committee is being formed. The AGM takes place on 19th November.

Village Hall – Going well. A Cabaret and supper is scheduled for 8th December. The AGM is to be held on 20th November.

The reason for the reduced funds resulting from the annual Bike Ride appears to have arisen as a result of a new venue offering refreshments at Roydon. It is not known whether this is a “recognised” venue. Marshalls were not effective in directing cyclists into the Cricket Field and they were emerging without guidance onto the Ware Road or not entering Abbots Lane from the Hunsdon Road as is the recognised route. Investigation is underway.

JM Allotments have been disappointing – the Clear up day on 6th October drew only one allotment holder together with Dr Brett and his Grandson and Mrs Miller. The Compost Bin is not being put to good use. The pathways are looking good under the work of Paul Prior. There will be vacancies next year – the holder of Plots 10 and 11 still has not cleared his site. The Parish Council has made every effort to get him off but will now leave it until the letters go out for the end of year (30 April) and AGM.

PLANNING

3/12/1324/LB. Priory Farm – Conservation Application

3/12/1325/LB Priory Farm – Residential Development 3 five bed houses ,2 three bed houses and conversion of the workshop premises to two bedroom bungalow

The Parish Council was happy to accept development on the site but had considered this application overdevelopment and was therefore disappointed at the decision of Conditional Permission on 7 November .Councillors Mrs Luck, accompanied by Vice Chair Mrs Buck had spoken at the meeting putting the Parish Councils point of view. The District Councillor had abstained from voting as had one other member of the committee.

3/12/1474/FP Coombe Villas – replace the roof with steeper pitch. Conditional permission. 7 November.

FINANCE

The Precept for 2013/14 was considered taking into account increased costs including Clerks’ annual salary, and an increase in Clerks expenses raise from £80.00 per year to £130.00,

Insurance increase including the New Village Sign, additional costs for the Grass Cutting from £384.00 to £492.00 to include strimming and weeding , and general anticipated rising costs, it was agreed to precept for £4,500.00.

Due to building of new dwelling and ion line with Government Direction, Parish Councils will receive a sum of money for a five year period, for any new buildings. Already this Council has received £320.00 for a development in Benningfield Road .In due course after the occupation of the houses in Priory Farm we could receive £1,800.00 and there are also two Restored dwellings attached to the Green Man PH.

It was agreed at this meeting that any money received from this source should be kept for Capital Expenditure. This may bring £300.00 per occupied property for five years and we need to keep a check on the number of houses that have been built.

Cheques were signed as follows :-

Litter Picker 18/8/12 to 8/9/12).....	£200.60
15/9/12 to6/10/12).....signed on 1 October.....	£100.30
M B Hollylee..reimbursement for litter 13/10/12 to 3/11/12)	
Clerks’ annual expenses).....	£180.30
Mrs J English..Litter...10/11/12 to 01/12/12.....	£100.30
Mrs J English..Litter...8/12/12 to29/12/12.....	£100.30
Paul Prior.....Groundwork in Allotment Gardens.....	£100.00
Royal British Legion Poppy Wreath.....	£ 40.00

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nether Street – Post at White Railings. Disintegrated. Site inspected October.Not a priority but will be replaced.

QUESTION TIME

Will the Parish Council be considering the proposals for boundary change put forward by the Government.

Should it come about ,yes.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Chairman.....

Dr Ian Brett

Date.....8th January 2013.....

