

An Ordinary Meeting of the WIDFORD PARISH COUNCIL followed the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 7th May 2013 commencing at 8.15pm.
(The ordinary meeting had been advertised to begin at 8.15pm and the short interval between the two meetings was ably filled by an interesting description of a Cruise on the Indian Ocean recently enjoyed by Dr Roger Beeching.)

PRESENT

Chairman Dr Ian Brett, Vice-Chairman Mrs Jill Buck, Councillors Mrs Wendy Camp, Mrs Jenny Miller and Mrs Frances Luck.
County Councillor Dr Roger Beeching and four members of the public.

APOLOGIES received from District Councillor Mr Mike Newman

MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council and the ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH held on 5th March had been circulated and were now approved as a correct report.

MATTERS ARISING

From the Ordinary meeting.....

EHPTCA Meeting on the 8th March when East Herts Councillor Mr Mike Carver had addressed the meeting, was attended by Dr Ian Brett who reported slow progress being made on the District Plan, delayed due to outstanding technical work on education planning and transport, unlikely to be available before June.
Options for development still include the possibility of Harlow North but it is understood that the preferred option may be 10% development in each village.

Footpath 17

The Village Hall will have made a financial gain over this project as the inquiry scheduled booking for three days was accomplished on the first day, 16th April ! To date, no information on the result of the inquiry to allow a public designated footpath to pass along the church path.

Village Archives are still awaiting re-housing due to funding for the proposed school building has yet to be found.

30 Benningfield Road – At last, the owners have agreed to the Parish Council requirement to make good the damaged Green by the end of May. Work is now on going to refill the damaged areas and place a suitable strip (Grasscrete) on the track from the footpath to the site. The driveway cannot be used at present.

The request to lop the tree on the Green is not seen as necessary or possible as the tree is in the Conservation Area and is considered too far away from the property to cause a nuisance.

Signs at Chapel House – Nothing to report.

Lilley Bridge

At last, the County Council has formally closed the dangerous bridge and has suggested work will be undertaken within two months. Financing the work is a problem and 'other sources' are being investigated by the County so that work can begin as soon as possible.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 2nd July 2013 - Village Hall 8.00pm.

CORRESPONDENCE

IB Localism and Standards – A Toolkit for Town and Parish Councils. The Chairman has 'signed up' for this.

Consultation of East Herts Draft Park and Open Spaces Strategy 2013 . No comment.
Community Involvement March 2013 – Draft Statement . Appears to be a reasonable draft(inquire from CC and DC re Neighbourhood Development orders and Community right to buy orders,)

New proposals for Gilston Park (not Harlow North)

County Councillor Beeching said ;-

“Places for People” have bought the land – it’s a natural progression and a new scheme –
By 2031, 17,000 houses need to be provided – within the villages is not yet ruled out.
Nobody appears pleased or excited about the present proposal.

The Flood Plain is a natural plain and the Wildlife campaigners would not want buildings through from Bishops Stortford In this area.

No change in the infrastructure. East Herts are still going through the Options list – No 10 could be solved by 2031 by one development , simply because of the delay in the District Plan. This proposal puts pressure on the District Council to deliver the Plan but if this is not forthcoming, a developer could approach Central Government for permission to develop.

County Councillor Dr Beeching is on the Local Plans Committee – there are 3 Policies for Development Control and with the Local Plan and the Policies in mind leads to good open debate in Councils re options.

The proposal is misleading, but it has a long way to run.

REPORTS

Cc Dr Roger Beeching began his report on the change to the overall control of the County Council following the elections. It had been Conservative Control but now there are 46 Conservatives, 15 Labour and 14 Lib Dems , quite healthy for debate – the Conservatives will not have it all their way !

Scale of County Activities with a population of a million people plus 82,000 in 10 years.

Ageing population 65 plus is 10% and estimated to rise up to 50% in 2031.

There are 28 settlements, it is the second most densely populated county, 70% is Greenbelt, 5th largest economy outside of London, Larger population than Cyprus, Malta or Luxembourg, greater GDP than 5 EU states.

What we do – Schools, children and adult social care, waste disposal, waste planning, highways fire and rescue, public health, libraries, police, further and higher education.

No Libraries have been closed.

There is more money into Highways than ever before.

Finances –

Revenue £1,820,100,000, Capital £230,592,000, Total 2 Billion – in four years 8 billion.

Adult Care and Health 446 Million, Education 938 Million, Environment 130 Million, Children’s safeguarding 96 Million, Council Tax freeze four years worth £160 on Band E property in 3012/14.

Parish Bands D – Eastwick/Gilston 25.54 Hunsdon 29.96, Sawbridgeworth 52.94

Stansted Abbotts 49.67, Wareside 13.95, Widford 20,28, Hertford 94.21

Complaints about Pavement Parking and Obstructions, Road improvements, Local Concerns as they arise, Rigorous Scrutiny of Health Service changes and its interaction with Social Services.

The Locality Budget is still available as is also the Highway Budget of £90,000.00.

There are health service changes which are not yet clear – grouping of some 60 practices Doctor’s surgeries within North and East Herts. Pressure is needed to ensure the job is done effectively.

The Chairman thanked Dr Beeching for his full report.

District Councillor Mike Newman, absent from this meeting, had asked the Clerk to refer the meeting to his remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Parish since when there is nothing to add.

There was no report from the Police other than that at the last Local meeting held in Much Hadham it was understood there is a change to the Neighbourhood Watch system but no details are known.

IB Parish Paths Partnership – A sum of £42 has just been awarded for 2013/14 and a programme of works by the Parish Council is to be returned before receipt of the money.

JB Playing Field
The Annual Meeting is scheduled for 24 May, There have been no Committee meetings since the last Parish Council meeting.
A Special Cricket match has been arranged by Mr Julian Pawle and he is asking permission to be allowed to use the Playing Field for Car Parking.
In order to protect the Football pitch, a Contract is to be drawn up to ensure no damage is sustained. It was hoped that friendly cooperation would promote better relationship over the access way.

FL Village Hall
Through April there was nothing to report. An enthusiastic programme for the future is planned.
Financially, the Local Elections and the Hire of the Hall for the Public Inquiry had added to the revenue and Finances are healthy.
The Hall is to be refurbished before the forthcoming Arts Festival.

JM Allotments
The Annual Meeting was held on 30 April. Mrs English and John Gilmore are the elected allotment committee members for this year. Three plots are vacant at present and one outstanding, possible vacancy, is being investigated. A problem site has been overcome and a new owner will be working the plot. A Groundsman is now employed to maintain the footpaths and orchard. The water tanks are now working satisfactorily.
We look forward to better weather this season than last.

PLANNING

3/13/0004/FP Rear extensions and new front garden wall at Porch Cottage – Refused
3/13/0082/LB Porch Cottage as above.....Withdrawn
3/13/0040FP 12 Hunsdon Road Extensions to convert garage to Living Rm. Conditional Permission.
3/13/0235/LB Abbots Farm. Replacement windows.....Permission.

FINANCE

The Annual Accounts and Return had been Audited and were now approved and signed.

Received:

½ Precept for 2013/14.....£2,250.00
Grant from EH Tax Support (for reduction in tax base.....£ 219.96
Cheques signed.....
½ Annual Grant to Playing Field for Grass Cutting.....£ 500.00
Clerks' Council Direct – one copy per month for the year.....£ 12.00
Hire of Village Hall for 7 meetings, May 2012/April 30 2013.....£ 56.00
Jim Turner Grass Cutting, Benningfield Green (1 of 3).....£ 83.33

Mrs C Parrott.....Grass Cutting, Closed Churchyard (1 of 3).....£ 128.00
 AoN Annual Insurance inc: Village Sign.....£ 650.27
 Litter Picker 27.4.13 to 18.5.13.....£ 100.36
 Litter Picker 25.5.13 to 15.6.13.....£ 100.36
 Widford Village Hall – Excess from Grant (£1000.00) for Parish Plan...£ 114.87
 Dr Ian Brett – Various..allots;£12.99, Key for water meter £8.35..).....£ 64.34
 Gift to Internal Examiner for Audit of Books.£33.00)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Village of the Year Competition.

Following on the success of the Village Event in celebration of the Queens’Diamond Jubilee it had been suggested at the Annual Meeting of the Parish that this year we should enter the competition.

Mrs Buck had made several enquiries but there had been no enthusiasm to enter.

QUESTION TIME

A resident of Nether Street asked if anything could be done to prevent the type of traffic, some heavy, using Nether Street as a result of SAT NAV.

It was explained that the County Council will not make up the B O A T to a standard any greater than for a Bridleway and that there appears to be no other way of preventing traffic. Signs which once had been in place were now no longer legal. The best way forward is for the resident to place a suitable sign within the curtilage of the property suggesting the road ahead is not made up and unsuitable for through traffic

There were no further questions and the meeting ended at 9.45pm

Chairman.....

Dr Ian Brett

Date.....2 ... July..2013.....

