

A meeting of the Widford Parish Council was held in the Village Hall at 8.0pm on Tuesday 5th November 2013.

PRESENT

Chairman Mrs Jill Buck, Councillors Mrs Wendy Camp, Mrs Jenny Miller and Mrs Frances Luck. Co-opted Councillor Mr Frank Parker who signed documents Accepting the Office of Parish Councillor and completing a form for Registrable Interests, the latter of which has to be returned to the Monitoring Officer of East Herts Council.

Also in attendance CC Dr Roger Beeching, DC Mr Mike Newman and sixteen members of the public.

The Chairman opened the meeting with a request that there should be no public participation throughout the business of the meeting until Question Time.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 September had been circulated and were now approved.

MATTERS ARISING

Lily Bridge .The new gate replacing a stile is in place and appears to be quite satisfactory.

The Conservation Area Report had received full committee approval and does include the items requested by the Parish Council.

Refuse Vehicles using Bridleway 9 and BOAT 22. Confirmed by East Herts Council – not an authorised use. Councillors to report any further siting of refuse vehicles using these routes.

JB **District Plan and Green Belt Review meeting 18th November.** Mrs Buck to attend.

Damaged Bollard outside Hillside – has been repaired by Ringway.

Chevron Board at “Chapel House” has been replaced. Request for “Concealed access” sign Not allowed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Tuesday 7th January 2014 – Village Hall. 8.00pm.

CORRESPONDENCE

a) Confirmation of date of Green Belt Meeting – EHC. 18th December.

b)Highway Liaison Meeting – Clerk’s invited to attend – Wallfields,November 27th at 7.00pm

c)Letter from Mr D Gough regarding repeat of previous identified problems i.e Junction with B.180/B1004.overtaking, requires “STOP” , introduction of a 20mph restriction at the school. And the flooding and untidy hedgerow on the south side of the B1004 between Ives Cottage and Rose Cottage.(Letter acknowledged by Mrs Buck)

d)Early Information regarding consideration of 20mph road restrictions.

e)Grants available from EHC .

PLANNING

Decision – 8 Daintrees – rear Dorma WindowCP 3/13//1306FP

New - Wilmoor – 3-3bed houses and 2-2 bed houses with associated car parking.
Parish Council comment returned on 2 October `No objection`. (The plan had been seen several months earlier by the Parish Council before it was submitted to EHC.)

Wanns Cottage – infill side extension - Parish Council had No objection 3/13/1771LB

“Toad Abode”

A letter had been sent to the Head of Planning with regard to the apparent change of use without planning permission of an area of land in Pegs Lane, recently sold as Grazing Land.

A request for comments from the Planning Officer for this meeting had not been met.

GRASS CUTTING

The Old Churchyard

The Bizzy Lizzies were pleased to be considered to cut the grass and strim the Old Churchyard through 2014 at a little extra cost (£90.00) from the previous year.. A new contract has been prepared.

Benningfield Green – Mr Jim Turner had agreed to cut the grass through 2014 at the same rate (£250.00 including provision of petrol for the season) as through 2013.A Contract prepared.

REPORTS

COUNTY COUNCILLOR Dr Roger Beeching

Street Lighting – which had been agreed would be turned off at night, will continue to be monitored regarding economic business case, carbon savings/personal injuries and crime data.

There will be more flexibility for Local Members to make changes at railway stations, cul-de-sacs regarding night time economy, adjust periods of lighting on main roads, and return to full night lighting along routes always used by pedestrians at night.

Hertfordshire won the prestigious National Transport Award for HI Tech bus information, encouraging walking and cycling, sustainable transport and road safety initiatives.

Harm from smoking (tobacco) in Hertfordshire is subject of a Public Health report .Premature deaths from smoking in 100,000 population are, 24 from heart disease,31 from lung cancer,21 from respiratory disease and 7.5 from strokes.

Therefore reduction in smoking initiatives are being put in place by Public Health Officers.

Need to enforce the law on sales of tobacco, have clear standards by 2014 for local government control of smoking, protect residents from harm of secondary smoking and prevent illegal supply of tobacco products.

The County Council is Currently looking at the possibility of introducing more 20mph restrictions – (not applicable to Class A roads). The two day scrutiny shows it would not be easy to meet necessary standards—it is not easy to find 600yards in which to provide information leading to a restricted area. Restrictions of 20mph are only considered in places where traffic average is 25mph at present.

The County Councillor could be approached for help if the Parish Council considers a 20mph restriction outside the School would be an advantage.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR Mr Newman

The new Blue Lid dustbins will be brought into use on 11th November but they should not be left on the pavement. It is hope the new system will lead to increased recycling. Cardboard must no longer be put in the Brown bins. An instruction Book will be available.

The District Plan will be discussed at the meeting on 18th November as will the Green Belt Review Part 1. In the twenty years it covers, the District Council must provide 15,000 new homes – this may be done by 10% increase of each village or major development North of Harlow ,where no infrastructure is included or Ware. Members had first sight a few weeks ago and at present Category 2 infilling may be the way forward.

Broadband improvement is at least 18months away – or 15 months to enhance Rural Broadband. Hertfordshire CC and Buckinghamshire CC received a grant matched with BT. High Density population could subsidise to make it work. BT are looking after Eastwick and Gilston to provide 2mg per second. Possibly no impact on Widford which already appears to up to the standard.

POIICE NEWS – **Locality Meetings** are held four monthly , various venues ,and the Rural Locality Police for this part of the County is has an Annual meeting.
Nothing else to report.

Parish Paths Partnership

It has been confirmed by East Herts Council that Drivers of Refuse Vehicles have been told not to use Bridleway 9 or BOAT 22 as a collection route.

Footpath 3 was lost during the Harvest periods and the signpost knocked down but the route has now been restored and the sign replaced.

Footpath 6 – sign needs replacing.

Footpath 17 – Infill of steps by County Council still outstanding.

JB Playing Field

The Football Pitch needs attention – the grass cutting is regular but leaves ruts in the ground – ways to overcome the problem are being sought.

No Halloween event this year due to School Half Term but it is hoped to stage a bigger and better event next year.

FL Village Hall

The Art Exhibition staged by the Friends of Widford Church had been a huge financial success and a sum of £1,500 .00 had been donated to the Church.

The Booking Clerk is now Mrs Linda James. Decorating is going ahead. The Cabaret on 18th November was first class and the Village Hall funds are – comfortable !

JM Allotments

The Groundsman allotted 20 hours at £10.00 an hour had not proved adequate. Much needed doing to the common areas and the allotment gardens that unfortunately are not in use.

Bizzy Lizzy s had been asked if they were interested in taking on the clearance needed and had come back with a cost of £240.00 for 7 hours work. While keen to use local assistance, funds are a bit limited and it was suggested that 7 hours may not be sufficient to complete the work.

Councillor Parker reminded the meeting of the previous tidy up which had been carried out by Community Workers, supervised, at no cost.

It was agreed – to look into this course of action and ex Councillor Dr Ian Brett was to be contacted for details as he had organised the previous occasion.

It was also suggested that the unused allotments might be kept to grass instead of the expense of covering with plastic sheeting.

Mrs Buck thanked Mrs Miller for all she had done on behalf of the allotments.

FINANCE

The 9th Edition of Arnold Bakers Local Council Administration had been purchased£ 80.45
Gift to retiring Chairman (S.137).....£50.00
Mrs J Miller, reimbursement for Allotment Water Bill to September..... £ 53.79
Clerk's Annual expenses (Increased from £80pa to £500pa in line with Central Govt:...£500.00
Legislation.
Royal British Legion Poppy Wreath.....(£40.00 in 2012).....£ 50.00
Litter Picker to 30/11/13.....£103.20
Litter Picker to 28/12/13.....£103.20

PRECEPT – In considering the requirement for 2014/5 we take into account increase in costs Known and unknown.

Grass cutting, Clerks pay and expenses, British Legion donation, Audit fees, Insurance cover. It has therefore been agreed that the amount received 2012/2013 .of £4,500.00 should be increased to £5,500.00 (*representing an increase of approx.: 4p per household*).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30 Benningfield Road

The most part of the access surface is now satisfactory but due to the inclement weather, it has been noticed that the join at the crossover has dropped and may need further remedial work in the Spring.

To be kept under observation and the owners have been advised of the likely work needed,

Telephone Box

The Kiosk had been used in conjunction with the Village Art Exhibition by the Friends of Widford Church which was a great success.

A suggestion as been made that a Christmas Tree would look good for the festive season.The electric light inside had needed adjusting.

It is noted that electricity for the 8Watt bulb is [provided by Telecom for 5 years, expiring April 2015.

Locality Budget

County Councillor Beeching reminded the meeting that he has a budget for use in helping with reasonable community projects which would benefit the local community.

Trees within the Highway – B 1004 opposite Rose Cottage

Due to the recent high winds a tree had fallen across the road onto Benningfield Green adjoining land in ownership of Rose Cottage and causing danger to traffic. Photographs of the trunk revealed the tree to be seriously rotten and it was feared the two remaining trees may be in the similar condition. The situation had been reported to the Ringway Office (Highways)on Sunday 3rd November when the Clerk was told it was put on High Priority.As no action had been seen to have taken place, a second report was made on Tuesday 5th November when it was said an inspection would take place as a matter of urgency. The possibility of accidents resulting from the obstruction of the tree across the road was averted by the tree being moved by helpful local residents.

Planning application ref: 3/13/1712/FP, Development of three 3bed dwellings and two 2 bed dwellings has caused concern to residents living in North View cottages opposite the site. Residents in these houses do not have anywhere to park their cars except on the roadside outside their homes. This is perceived to be a danger as the available visibility travelling west is restricted by the parked cars and a slight curve in the road. Although in a 30mph restricted area, residents claim much greater speeds of 50 and 80 mph have been noted ,especially in the early hours of the morning.

The residents had written their concerns to the Planning Officer but said they` would have liked an opportunity to have been consulted by the Parish Councillors before their response of no objection to the development had been returned to the Planning Officer.

Although a Police check on visibility had taken place at the request of the Parish Council at an earlier stage, it was not seen as a danger zone.

However, as Councillors had also considered it uncomfortable to pass the parked vehicles, it was agreed to send an additional comment regarding this issue to the comments returned to the Planning Officer on 2 October.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 9.45pm ,when the Chairman thanking everyone for attending.

Chairman.....
Mrs Jill Buck

Date.....7th January 2014.....