

The WIDFORD PARISH COUNCIL met in the Village Hall for an Ordinary meeting commencing at 7.15pm on Tuesday 4th March 2014.

PRESENT

Chairman Mrs Jill Buck, Councillors Mrs Wendy Camp and Mrs Jenny Miller.
District Councillor Mike Newman and 14 members of the public.

We were pleased to welcome two new members to the Council replacing retired members Frank Parker and Mrs Frances Luck.

Neil Rogers and Paul Riddle signed forms of Declaration of Acceptance of Office and register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

APOLOGIES had been received from County Councillor Dr Roger Beeching.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman proposed Mrs Wendy Camp. – seconded by Mrs Jenny Miller.
Mrs Camp was willing to take office.

MINUTES of the meeting held on 7th January 2014 had been circulated and were now approved.

MATTERS ARISING

District Plan produced by East Herts Council had now reached consultation stage and comments are to be made not later than 22 May.

A meeting will be held in HUNSDON VILLAGE HALL on 17th March at 7.30pm when the East Herts Council representative, Councillor Mike Carver, will be speaking.

It is essential that this plan is brought into force as soon as possible in order to keep development up to 2031 as locally required. Without a satisfactory plan, it is understood Central Government could step in with regard to residential development. There are 'preferred options' to be considered and it is recommended that as many people as possible will attend the meeting which will include possible development North of Harlow. Stop Harlow North Group on which Widford is represented by Dr Ian Brett ask for support.

Village Sign – The sign near the entrance to Widfordbury west of the Church appeared to have been vandalised and wrenched from the supporting posts. This has been reported to the Highway authority who have recently removed it and we anticipate its replacement shortly.

Fence in the Twitchel (Fp 18) – The site has been inspected by County Council Footpath Officer and the Highway (Ringway) representative and both have confirmed the replaced fence is inline with the existing fence and there is no infringement on the Highway. It therefore appears to belong to the Green Man Public House.

Beningfield Road – possible improvement to car parking arrangements are being investigate by the Highway authority but it seems unlikely that the grass verges will be removed due to cost and little benefit to be gained.

Additional Salt Bin – The Highway Authority is not able to provide an additional bin in Benningfield Road but suggest the Parish Council might purchase one. CC DR Roger Beeching had kindly offered to help with cost from his Community Budget. To date, costing had not taken place.

However, from the floor, a resident kindly offered a spare bin he had on his premises. With its concrete base it was a difficult object to move!
This will be overcome by the offer of our local farmer who suggested he could help and remove the bin to its new resting place.
All we need now is a supply of salt which it is hoped will be supplied by the District Council at the appropriate time.

Grass Cutting

Contracts have been renewed for Mr Jim Turner who mows Benningfield Green. There is no change to be made to his remuneration.

The Bizzy Lizzies are happy to continue maintenance of the Closed Churchyard but their costs have risen.

It has been agreed to ask them to work for an additional month (8 months now). Their charge has risen from £12.00 last year to £14.00 per hour this year and will include strimming and additional reasonable requests within the time limit. The total cost will be £896.00 (was £384.00).

Village Archives – It appears there will be plenty of space in the School extension to house a filing cabinet, table and chair.

It has also been suggested that it might be beneficial to photograph all documents and this could be done by Adrian Evans.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.....Village Hall.....7.15pm.....6th May
Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council.....".....8.00pm.....6th May

Police Locality Meeting.....Village Hall.....5.00 to 6.30pm.....6th March)*
NB. D C Mike Newman kindly offered to fund this meeting from his Community Budget.)

CORRESPONDENCE

Police Annual Report and Crime Panel.

Police – proposed "Parish Watch" – similar to existing Neighbourhood Watch but would not interfere with OWL but would hope to enhance them. –
Could refer to meeting on 6th March*

Proposed Solar Farm at Wareside – circulated to households but not to East Herts Council who are unaware of the proposal. No one attended the gathering on site on 3 February as far as is known

ACRE - re Library Service – comments required by 14 March.

Grants from East Herts Council that are available until 4 April

Emergency Numbers/Contacts in case of flooding. (passed to Parish Magazine)

PLANNING

3/14/0325/FP Owletts Corner – Stable and Tack Room on existing hard standing with post and wire fence. Parish Council has no objection in principle, but unnecessarily close to neighbours boundary.

REPORTS

Footpaths – Fp 6 – new posts have been put in together with discs now in place.

Fp 7 – Wobbly stile reported to Countryside Management Officer. He will contact the owner.

Playing Field – Nothing to report other than the next meeting is scheduled for 7th March.

Reports continued.....

Village Hall – Nothing to report

Allotments- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for 25th March at 7.30pm.

Since Christmas a further six hours of work has been done by Lewis Hosier for which a cheques for £60.00 will be sent to him.

There are seven vacant plots and some gardeners have asked to change their plots from the rather wet area.

Plot 3 has not been worked this year and the adjoining gardener would like to take on the extra land.

Under the Rules of Tenancy for Allotment Holders, holders of unworked plots can be asked to vacate and would not be allowed a new plot. In view of the constant lack of use of Plot three, the holder will be sent a letter advising him of the decision and asking him to remove any equipment from site by 30 April.

With regard to the tree which was blown down in the heavy wind, the requested quotation has not been received from Kevin Martin. Frank Parker had said he will ask Lewis Hosier to help him remove the tree when the wet conditions improve.

FINANCE

The Mandate to be updated, removing Dr Ian Brett and Mrs Frances Luck and adding Neil Rogers and Paul Riddle. The resolution passed at the meeting on 7th January 2014 remains unchanged.

Cheques signed as follows :-

Mrs English. Litter picking 01.03.14 to 22.03 14.....	£ 103.20
Mrs English Litter picking 29.03.14 to 10.04.14.....	£ 103.20
Stop Harlow North.. Donation.....	£ 50.00
Clerk's Annual Salary.....	£1200.00
Lewis Hosier – six hours groundwork on allotments.....	£ 60.00

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

White Railings along Nether Street would benefit from a coat of paint – communal Nether Street effort perhaps !!
Enquiries to be made re provision of suitable paint.

Bridleway 22 – Concern regarding uneven condition of the Bridleway which serves as an emergency access to St Elizabeths ' Home.
Countryside Management to be approached for infilling of surface.

Fp 2/Abbotts Lane

Dog walkers once again are leaving the filled plastic bags in the hedge row and a ewuest for a Dog Bin was made.

It was agreed to look into the cost of purchase. DC Newman said it would cost £150.00 for it to be emptied by East Herts Council.

request.

There was no further business and this meeting closed at 7.55pm.