

WIDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Widford Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 10 November 2015 at 8pm in the Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllr Jill Buck, Chairman (JB); Cllr Barbara Edwards (BE); Cllr Glen Parcell (GP); Cllr Paul Riddle (PR); Cllr Neil Rogers (NR)

County Cllr Roger Beeching (RB), District Cllr Robert Brunton (RB), and eight other members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 8pm

- 15.045 Apologies for absence** **ACTION**
1. Councillors: None – all present
2. Others: None
- 15.046 Declarations of Interest**
Cllr Rogers declared an interest in Playing Field matters, his wife being Secretary of the Playing Field Committee
- 15.047 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, 1 September 2015**
It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 September were a true and accurate record.**
The Chairman signed the Minutes.
- 15.048 Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council Planning Meeting, 28 September 2015**
It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council Planning Meeting held on 28 September were a true and accurate record.**
The Chairman signed the Minutes.
- 15.049 Police report**
The latest police crime report had not been received. However, two items were noted:
1. On the Hunsdon notice board there is a notice with a phone number to report to the police any suspicious activity. The Clerk was asked to see if such a notice could be acquired for this parish. **Clerk**
2. Cllrs Riddle and Edwards attended the Police Locality Meeting on 30th October with Sgt Duncan Wallace, PC Nicola Hunt and PCSO Karen Broad. Hunsdon and High Wych representatives also attended. Traffic speed was the main issue. Widford has no real issues at the moment, certainly compared with other local parishes. It was noted that High Wych has a DriveSafe scheme in operation.
3. Cllr Riddle expressed concern about traffic speed coming into Widford up Medcalf Hill. The possibility of a traffic calming measure was discussed, but was felt to be difficult in practical terms.
- The Chairman noted that the 30mph sign in Bell Lane has rusted out and fallen over – this has been reported. **JB**
- 15.050 Chairman's announcements:** None
- 15.051 Planning**
- 1. New Applications**
- 3/15/2104/FUL Youngs Little Acre, Medcalf Hill:** Siting of 2 refrigerated units (Retrospective) **Clerk**
NO OBJECTIONS – BUT COMMENTS MADE
- 3/15/2095/LBC Westbury, 46 Bell Lane:** Removal and replacement of 4 windows to cure condensation and water penetration of existing metal frames **Clerk**
NO OBJECTIONS
- 3/15/2055/FUL Greenacres, Ware Road:** Erection of 2 No 3 bedroomed dwellings with garages with access from Ware Road – Amended scheme **Clerk**
NO OBJECTIONS – BUT COMMENTS MADE

3/15/1810/FUL Chestnut Tree Cottage, Nether Street: Demolition of existing garage and replace with proposed outbuilding to provide garage/store and annexe
NO OBJECTIONS (RATIFIED)

2. Decision Notices

3/15/1590/HH 2 Benningfield Road: Single storey front and rear extensions and two storey side extension **GRANTED**

3/15/1576/HH Swan Barn, Hunsdon Road: Insertion of window to front elevation and infill extension to front entrance with 2no glazed panels. Insertion of roof light to rear elevation and replacement of 2no rear roof lights. **GRANTED**

3/15/1475/LBC Swan Barn, Hunsdon Road: Insertion of window to front elevation and infill extension to front entrance with 2no glazed panels. Insertion of roof light to rear elevation and replacement of 2no rear roof lights. **GRANTED**

3/15/0507/LBC Adams Farm: Alterations to layout and fenestration from previous application 3/09/1344/LB to form 3 dwelling houses **DECISION AWAITED**

The Clerk was asked to ascertain why work is continuing when a decision is still awaited **Clerk**

3/15/0386/VAR Priory Farm: Removal of Condition 2 of previous application
GRANTED – BUT PC HAVE REQUESTED CLARIFICATION
D Cllr Brunton previously said he would check for reason why the condition was removed. **Clerk/RB**

3. Other planning matters: including matters received too late for the agenda:

- 1. Late applications: None
- 2. Pegs Lane update: Nothing to report

15.052 Finance

1. The report of the Council's finances for 1 Aug to 30 Sept was received (Appendix A)

Finance Summary from 1 Aug to 30 Sept	£	
Opening available balance 1 August:		8,210.61
Plus income to 30 September:		4,250.00
Minus expenditure to 30 September:		1,572.40
Minus July cheques presented in Aug/Sept:		<u>583.33</u>
Balance available to Council 30 September		<u>10,304.88</u>
Plus unrepresented cheques as at 30 September		50.00
Bank balance reconciled with statement #315, 21 Oct 2015		<u>10,354.88</u>
Plus unrepresented Sept cheques as at 30 September		<u>528.08</u>
Bank balance reconciled with statement #314, 30 Sept 2015		<u>10,882.96</u>

Clerk

It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Accounts Statement be accepted.**

The Clerk said an accounts summary is published in the Minutes on the website

2. Reconciliation of Accounts and bank statement

In accordance with new Financial Regulations and the Transparency Code, Cllr Parcell checked, verified and signed the Accounts and bank statement as correct. It was noted that the Parish Council has only one bank account and only uses only one cheque book at a time. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the reconciliation of the Accounts and bank statement.**

GP/Clerk

3. Current financial position against the budget

The Clerk presented a report based on actual income and expenditure to 10 November and the anticipated financial for the remainder of the fiscal year. The projected bank balance at year-end was £4,280. This included legal advice and a donation to the Playing Field not allowed for in the projected balance in September. The Clerk reminded the Council of the need to retain reasonable reserves. It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the current financial position be accepted.**

Clerk

4. List of payments. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the invoices presented for payment:**

Clerk

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq	Power
18/9	Stop Harlow Nth	Donation	50.00	929	LGA 1972 s137
28/9	Clerk	Salary September	226.32	930	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
28/9	HAPTC	Cllr training	90.00	931	LGA 1972 s111
30/9	HMRC	PAYE (Month 6)	169.20	932	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
28/9	J Buck reimb	Paper & ink	42.56	933	LGA 1972 s111
3/10	J English	Litter 12/9-3/10	105.76	934	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
20/10	A Buxton	Allotments water	54.53	935	SHAA 1908 s26(1)
30/10	Clerk	Salary October	225.00	936	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
10/11	HAPTC	Cllr training	135.00	937	LGA 1972 s111
10/11	Clerk	Travel/phone exp Sep/Oct	24.50	938	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
10/11	Clerk reimburse	Office expenses	33.78	939	LGA 1972 s111
10/11	J English	Litter 11/10-31/10	105.76	940	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
10/11	Hedleys	Legal advice	672.00	941	LGA 1972 s111(1)
10/11	British Legion	Poppy wreath	50.00	942	LGA 1972 s137
10/11	C Parrott	Closed churchyard grass cutting 4/4	224.00	943	LGA 1972 s215
10/11	Playing Field	Donation 2 of 2	500.00	944	LG(MP)A 1976 s19
10/11	Petty cash	Petty cash float	50.00	945	LGA 1972 s111

Cheques were signed at the end of the meeting.

5. Painting the phone box

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to reimburse the costs incurred by the volunteer resident in painting the phone box.** The Chairman to make arrangements and thank the resident for doing this work.

JB

6. Essential urgent tree work in Closed Churchyard

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to agree the quote of £360 (incl VAT) for removing a dangerous branch from a diseased chestnut tree in the closed churchyard.**

Clerk/JB

7. Necessary relocation of security light in Closed Churchyard

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to agree the quote of £180 (incl VAT) for relocating the security light to an unobstructed position in the closed churchyard.** An electrical certificate will be obtained.

Clerk/JB

8. Playing Field: second annual payment

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to agree to pay the second annual donation of £500 to Widford Playing Field for cutting the grass.** It was noted that this was for the benefit of parishioners and was not to underwrite costs associated with the Ware football club.

Clerk/NR

9. Herts Air Ambulance donation

Brought forward from the last meeting: The Council received a request for a donation and since it was agreed this worthy service is potentially for the benefit of everyone in the Parish, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to donate £50 to Herts Air Ambulance.**

Clerk

10. Transparency Fund grant application

The Clerk reported on his application to HAPTC/NALC for a grant from the Government's Fund to help parish councils comply with the new Transparency Code regulations by purchasing computer equipment, and to cover additional administration costs related to the new system. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to ratify the application for the Transparency Code grant.**

Clerk

11. Petty cash Float

The Clerk explained the advantages of having a petty cash float for small items of expenditure so that councillors and officers did not have to be out of pocket when making agreed purchases on behalf of the Council, remunerated against receipts. It was

unanimously **RESOLVED to have a petty cash float of £50, to be held by the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer.**

Clerk

12. Budget for 2016/17

The Clerk presented draft budget ideas for consideration by members. The budget and the precept for 2016/17 will have to be agreed at the January meeting. It was decided that councillors would meet to discuss this as soon as possible.

Clerk/
ALL

15.053 Correspondence

The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:

- Mark Prisk MP: Invitation to meeting to discuss Broadband upgrade for the area, 6th November (*see brief report below*)
- EHC: Consultation on EHC's Review and adoption of a Statement of Licensing Principles for 2016-18
- HCC: Herts Town & Parish Conference, 5th November
- EHC: Development Management Committee meeting, 14 October
- HCC: Hertfordshire Transport Vision 2050 - Stakeholder Engagement. Herts long-term transport strategy
- Playing Field Committee: various items of correspondence (15.052.8)
- Mrs A Buxton: re water bill for the allotments (15.052.4)
- Herts Police: Invitation to Police Locality meeting, 30th October (15.049.2)
- Dr I Brett: Offer to paint phone box (15.052.5)
- Mrs J Miller: Offer to help with a defibrillator (15.059)
- Lorraine Hart, Neighbourhood Planning consultant (15.057)
- Mr James re poppy wreath (15.052.4)

Late items received:

- EHC: warning against unauthorised fly-posting
- EHAPTC meeting with EHC on 25th November has been cancelled
- Letter concerning issues at Bennington Green.

Broadband: Cllrs Riddle gave a brief report of MP Mark Prisk's event that he and Cllr Rogers had attended. The BT broadband rollout will be done by 2017, Widford being at the extremity of the area that will be controlled from Bishop's Stortford. Gigaclear, by contrast, will be rolling out their option by Spring 2016 with the offer of faster speeds by fibre straight into homes rather than to the nearest box and then via cable into premises. Gigaclear reportedly require a 30% take up of interest before providing the service to an area.

15.054 Village Reports

1. Village Hall:

1. Cllr Riddle reported that the AGM was held on 9th November and the Committee elected for the ensuing year. The Bank balance stands at £10.5k. Bad weather had adversely affected the success of the bike ride and there was a question mark over whether to continue the event next year. The Widford Calendar is due to go on sale for £7.50. The Christmas Bazaar will take place on 28th November, and a Jazz event on 5th December. There is the possibility of a Comedy event in the Spring. The VH would be happy for the AED to be located on its outside wall if that location is considered the best option.
2. There was no update on the boundary issue.

PR

2. Allotments: The Chairman said there was nothing to report at this time.

JB/GP

3. Playing Field:

1. Cllr Rogers reported that 3 of the 6 trustees had resigned leaving 3 trustees (plus himself as the Parish Council's representative trustee). The gang mower used to cut the grass has created some problem by leaving ruts when used when the ground is soft. Insurance cover has been looked at. The Halloween event made £87 profit. It was noted that the childrens' play area was in need of refurbishment and smartening up. The Clerk reminded the meeting that EHC grants are available.
2. The solicitor's report on the Custodian Trustee legal position and responsibilities was received.

NR

15.055 Highways, footpaths and byways

1. Reports from C Cllr Roger Beeching and D Cllr Bob Brunton

C Cllr Beeching reported that, in preparation for winter, HCC had 61 gritting vehicles ready and 12,000 tonnes of salt in stock. Each outing sees up to 300 tonnes used on over 1,500 miles of highway. Bins have been topped up and stocks are available for parishes to use. The Clerk said daily Highways action reports sent to him will be forwarded to councillors when appropriate. Cllr Beeching mentioned what he said was the surprising statistic that the hourly traffic flow on the A414 roundabout at Hertford showed a decrease in vehicular activity. Cllr Riddle suggested this was actually due to gridlock stifling the traffic flow rather than fewer vehicles on the road.

Clerk

The Highways locality budget has identified Bell Lane to be micro-surfaced by the end of the financial year. It was noted that the last resurfacing was actually undertaken on the wrong section of the Lane – the cul-de-sac.

Cllr Beeching said that anyone can now put themselves forward for consideration to be part of a pool of governors who may be assigned to schools as needed. He also said the option to keep children born between April and August from starting school in September could affect 6,000 of the 14,000 annual intake. However, all children would move on to secondary education at the same time.

Cllr Beeching also reminded the Council that he has a Locality Budget that is available for parish projects. The Clerk again reminded the meeting that the play area qualifies for funding from this budget. County will be looking at its total 2016/17 budget in February/March.

Cllr Brunton said had nothing further to add to that which had already been reported, except to say the he too had attended the Broadband meeting with interest.

2. Footways and kerbs: Report – the lack of maintenance continues to be a concern. In response to the faults reported in June, Ringway said their site visit could not even locate a footway! C Cllr Beeching took note.

3. Footway and verge opposite Ash View: Still under review for follow up.

4. FP7: New kissing gate, handrail and safety improvement to steps: Completed.

5. FP18: Volunteer parishioner not present to report on status.

6. FP25: Damaged bridge repairs in hand by land-owner.

7. Ditch outside Meadowsweet: Still under review for follow up

8. Bell Lane: garage layout and bank: Still under review for follow up

9. Modification Order to FP 13, 18, 26 & Wareside 84 – The Chairman reported that she had attended the public meeting on 22 October and had taken the opportunity to make comment on the proposal, which, in the current climate, is generally considered to have been an extraordinary waste of time and public resources.

Late item: Bennington Green: Issues raised that will be considered.

Regarding the Highways faults website, the Chairman said that she had recently reported the fly tipping of discarded tyres, a mattress and domestic rubbish in the lay-bye on the B1004. She encouraged everyone to report problems when spotted.

15.056 Website

Cllr Riddle reported that the Parish Council’s website has been revamped is now kept up to date as and when updates are required. There was a unanimous vote of thanks to Cllr Riddle for the excellent work he has done, and that he continues to do, on the website.

PR

15.057 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Riddle reported on the HAPTC training event he attended last week with Cllr Buck and Cllr Edwards. There are only one or two other parishes in East Herts not already involved in a Neighbourhood Plan and Widford is therefore very much behind the curve. The cost and the amount of work involved in going it alone are eye-watering. A Neighbourhood Plan would give the parish power to change its village boundary and although it could not stop development, it would give some control over what development

takes place. The Chairman re-emphasised that the Parish Council is not against development per se, but it did want the parish to have an input into the type of housing built, where it is located, and the associated infrastructure. Councillors are meeting NP consultant Lorraine Hart next week to discuss the best way forward.

ALL/
Clerk

15.058 Stop Harlow North (SHN)

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to ratify Poppi Smith and Andy Darnell as the parish representatives on the SHN committee.**

15.059 Defibrillator

Mrs Jenny Miller was invited to report on the best location and practical requirements for having an AED in the village. She said that in Widford, an ambulance would normally take at least 8 minutes to attend an emergency. The survival of someone suffering a cardiac arrest hinges on very fast action being taken. Ready access to an AED can make the vital difference. The machine needs to be housed in a heated cabinet, for which an electricity supply is needed, and should be located as centrally as possible in the village. Several suitable locations have been identified and the Village Hall has agreed to its outside wall being used if that is considered the best site. Training by St John's could also take place in the Village Hall. Mrs Miller said that she and Cllr Jill Buck were continuing to gather information about purchase and the practical necessities.

JB/JM

15.060 Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and Data Protection Act (DPA and SAR)

1. The Clerk had prepared draft FOI Policy and FOI Procedure documents. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to adopt the FOI Policy and FOI Procedure documents as drafted.**

Clerk

2. The Clerk had prepared draft DPA Policy and Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure documents. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to adopt the DPA Policy and Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure documents as drafted.**

Clerk

All these documents will be published on the Parish Council website.

PR

15.061 Urgent matters received too late for inclusion on this agenda:

- The receipt of the letter regarding Bennington Green was noted

ALL

15.062 Items for future agendas:

- Budget and precept – January meeting
- Pegs Lane update

The Chairman said she would suspend the meeting if parishioners had any further comments to make

There were none

15.063 Date of next Parish Council Meeting

The next meeting was agreed for Tuesday 12th January 2016 in the Village Hall (provisionally 8pm, but time to be confirmed).

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10pm.

Signed.....Dated.....