

Widford Parish Council

Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 5th September 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall



PRESENT: Cllr Jill Buck, Chairman (JB); Cllr Carol Blackett (CB); Cllr Babs Edwards (BE)
Cllr Paul Riddle (PR)

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster, District Cllr Robert Brunton and eight other members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.45pm

ACTION

17.079 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: None (all present)
2. Others: PC Nicola Hunt; CC Eric Buckmaster apologised that he would be arriving late

17.080 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

1. **Interests:** Cllr Babs Edwards - as wife of the Playing Field Committee Treasurer
2. **Dispensation requests:** None received

17.081 Casual vacancy: No applications received

17.082 Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 4th July 2017

It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th July 2017 were a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

JB/Clerk

17.083 Police report. No report. It was noted that parishioners can sign up individually to receive Neighbourhood Watch notices via the website.

17.084 Chairman's announcements: Following concerns regarding responses to planning applications, the Chairman said that in future the Council will call Extra-Ordinary Planning Meetings as necessary when the comments deadline cannot be extended to the next PC meeting. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to call Extra-Ordinary Planning Meetings as necessary, giving the statutory 3 clear days' notice.**

JB/Clerk

17.085 Planning

1. New Applications

3/17/1821/FUL Platts Bungalow, Howletts Road: replacement dwelling and garage.

The Parish Council had NO OBJECTIONS

Clerk

3/17/1703/FUL Ash View Nursing Home: Erection of Care Home. *The Parish Council had NO OBJECTIONS to this application, but to ask for the following concerns to be addressed and taken into consideration: 1) Concerns at the number of trees to be cut down. 2) The new extension is not in keeping with the houses surrounding it. 3) Concerns about the increased traffic on a very narrow Lane, which is already used regularly as a rat run. The traffic survey says that it would only bring some 11 extra entrances and exits per day, but there would have to be either a lay-by or a widening of the sight lines to allow oncoming traffic time to see the new entrance. 4) The traffic survey also does not take account of the dangerous poorly sited cross roads where the lane joins the B180, and where there are already applications for 18 houses and a further three besides Ainsborough cottages. 5) If taking a patient to the Harlow hospital, would use the Lane be used rather than the main road as at present? 6) Concerns that there may not be adequate parking for the enlarged site.*

Clerk

3/17/1592/FUL Wayside, High Street: Erection of 3 detached and 2 semi-detached dwellings. *Parish Council OBJECTED to this application on the following grounds: 1) The proposal represents over-development of a narrow, sloping site. 2) In the EHD Plan Pre-Submission Consultation 2016, South-East Quadrant, Sheet D, Inset map 22, the south-east part of the site is a designated Area of Archaeological significance. 3) In the 2007 Plan, Inset Map 17, this is a designated Wildlife Site which is covered by Policy ENV21. 4) In the 2007 Plan, Inset Map 17, the area is designated a Landscape Conservation Area. 5) Pegs Lane is only a narrow lane but*

is an important access for both the sewerage works and the water pumping station. 6) The Parish Council had severe concerns on behalf of the road itself, and the cross roads due to dangerous speeding and poor sight lines, which have resulted in a number of serious accidents in the past.

Clerk

3/17/1448/HH 2 Priory Farm: Single storey rear extension.

The Parish Council had NO OBJECTIONS

Clerk

2. Decision Notices

3/17/1559/FUL & E/17/0106/ENF: Stables, Pegs Lane: Change of use of land for stabling and residential. 1 static caravan, 1 touring caravan, parking and development for one Romani Gypsy family – part retrospective. *The Parish Council was given an extension to make comments. It OBJECTED to the application on the following grounds: 1) In the EHD Plan Pre-Submission Consultation 2016, South-East Quadrant, Sheet D, Inset map 22, the area is a designated Wildlife Site. 2) In the 2007 Plan, Inset Map 17, this is a designated Wildlife Site which is covered by Policy ENV21. 3) In the 2007 Plan, Inset Map 17, the area is designated a Landscape Conservation Area. 4) Pegs Lane is only a narrow lane but is an important access for both the sewerage works and the water pumping station. The Parish Council has severe concerns on behalf of the road itself, and the cross roads due to dangerous speeding and poor sight lines, which have resulted in a number of serious accidents in the past.*

5) Added to these are concerns that this proposal, together with development on the adjacent land, will create a precedent here for the development of a site for the traveller/Romany community, who's rights seem to be favoured above the rights of local electors. 6) This site has been used for the same purpose by the present owner for many years. There are concerns that this change is the prelude to further development and the Parish Council asks East Herts Planning to follow very closely what develops here and, should this be given approval, vigorously enforces all the conditions that it imposes.

Clerk

The applicant was present at the meeting and clarified that this application was purely for personal use and there was no intention to divide up the land in future for development of any kind. He said he was presently awaiting an ecology report. He also pointed out that a neighbouring property has erected a fence too close to the road, leaving insufficient room for large vehicles to get down the Lane, which is the reason for the fence being damaged. The Chairman thanked him for his comments and assurances.

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster joined the meeting at 8.15pm

Regarding the issues of the verge and fence in Pegs Lane, Cllr Buckmaster said he was aware of them from the parishioner concerned and would take them up with Highways.

3/17/1228/HH Chapel House, Hunsdon Road: Demolish indoor leisure complex and erect 2-storey side & rear extension. **GRANTED**

3/17/1211/FUL Land rear of Coombe Villas, Medcalf Hill: Erect 1 no. dwelling **REFUSED**

3/17/1182/FUL Corner of Levenage Lane & Hunsdon Road: Change of use of land and erect 3 houses. **DECISION AWAITED**

3/17/1111/HH Widfordbury Farm: Alterations to enable change of use to B1 office, residential, and B1 light industrial; demolition of sheds. **GRANTED**

3/17/1008/FUL Long Meadow, Ware Road: Demolish agricultural buildings and erect 4 no. detached 4-bedroom dwellings. **REFUSED**

3/16/1164/FUL Land South of Martlets: Erection of 1no 5 bedroomed dwelling, 5no 4 bedroomed dwellings, 5no 3 bedroomed dwellings, 5no 2 bedroomed dwellings and 2no 1 bedroomed dwellings, and associated works. **GRANTED SUBJECT TO s106 AGREEMENT**

3/15/0507/LBC Adams Farm: Alterations to layout and fenestration. **GRANTED**

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

1. Late planning applications

3/17/1796/PNHH 12 Benningfield Road: Single storey rear extension – Max depth 4.7m; Max height 3.2m; Eaves height 2.65m

The Parish Council had NO OBJECTIONS

Clerk

2. Enforcement investigation into Priory Farm hedge reinstatement: No update report received yet. Check to be made re the Farm wall reinstatement which has never been completed. Also, to check with PROW Officer re FP7, at present in a rough state.

Clerk/JB

3. Gilston Area Concept Consultation: Next meeting at the Plume of Feathers, Gilston, Saturday 9th September. The Clerk said he had been informed that leaflets and posters are being sent to the Chairman for the following meeting on 16th September in Hunsdon.

JB

4. Councillors' meeting with Mark Prisk MP on 21st July

Cllr Paul Riddle's notes, as follows, were received at the Meeting:

Over Development

Mr Prisk was genuinely concerned at the level of development in Widford over the last few years. He felt that the proposed Bellis project of 40 houses was quite inappropriate and he promised to object strongly. He mentioned he might speak to Bob Brunton so I told him that Bob had told me that East Herts District Council had given Bellis the thumbs up and if the Parish Council were to not object to the development it might be possible to get Bellis to pay for a new Village Hall as a separate agreement with the Planning Application but separate from Sect 106 agreement.

Gilston

Mark is objecting to the Gilston new town but believes that it may go through anyway. It is certainly being approached in the wrong way. No infrastructure has been funded or planned. Traffic surveys have not been carried out. The new 7 villages should be planned by a separate company not just built by the developers to stop them being just suburbs of Harlow. The airfield should be put into a trust for the local residents now so they have faith in the process.

Gypsy Sites

Discussed the precedent set by two gypsy/traveller sites in Pegs Lane. East Herts District Council do not appear to be concerned about this. An enforcement visit simply led to a retrospective planning application which was approved. No clauses to limit the selling off of small plots each of which would support a gypsy site.

Enforcement

Discussed recent complaints to East Herts District Council enforcement team which have led to no action at all.

Village Archive

This was mentioned briefly as it is the sort of local project that an MP might want to be seen to be involved with.

- It was noted that the recent circular letter from Anglian Water reporting the status of water levels and giving instructions about saving water had a very threatening tone – this was not appreciated!

5. The District Plan participation and representation statements deadline of 5pm, 11th September, was noted.

17.086 Reports by County and District Councillors

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster

The Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) scrutiny has been completed on the closing of a respite facility in west Hertfordshire. How the County's statutory duty to provide respite services and the CCGs duty to commission health services will be met in future are being considered this week. The current position is that funding provision will only continue until January 2018

District Cllr Bob Brunton

Reported that his time has been fully taken up with the Gilston project. He had attended a difficult public meeting in Hunsdon at the end of August which was also attended by Mark Prisk MP. The big issues of transport and utilities – water, electricity, etc – will be addressed by professionals.

Regarding water, Cllr Brunton noted that the statutory obligation of water companies is to provide 1 bar of pressure per household. (The Parish Council pointed out that a listed cottage in an East Herts village was burnt to the ground last Christmas with the fire service being unable to get sufficient mains pressure to contain the fire, but had to rely on a local farmer to provide some 100,000 litres of water. The water company should be obligated to ensure that water pressure would be adequate to deal with an emergency). Cllr Brunton said the water company is confident that the feeder supply pipes are large enough to take the extra pressure.

Similarly, the power company has said the overhead cables across the site are large enough to handle the extra capacity for 3.000 households.

Quod has said that if (say) 1,000 can't be sold, the infrastructure will be developed only to meet the actual need.

Rail capacity is being increased and new rolling stock bought. Road infrastructure is desperately needed; M11 Junction 7A will only happen if required. Various sums were quoted, such as £600m from a Section 106 agreement; also £500m from Places for People and a further £300m for attaining Garden City Status. It was commented that SHN is quoting £2bn.

Schools: possible plans for builds on separate locations; first phase will be primary schools.

Further consultation meetings are arranged for 15th and 16th September.

Under the District Plan, the East Ware development of approx. 1,000 houses will be open to public examination in hearing sessions over two weeks. The first commencing on 3rd October for general development matters; the second commencing on 10th October on specific issues.

17.087 Finance

1. Reports of the Council's finances for 1 July to 31 August were received (Appendix A)

Finance Summary from 1 July to 31 August

	£
Opening bank balance 1 July	8,073.33
Plus: income to 31 August	2,334.80
Minus: expenditure to 31 August	<u>1,324.82</u>
	9,083.31
Minus previous months' cheques cashed in period	<u>403.63</u>
Balance available to Council 31 August (cashbook balance)	8,679.68
Plus: un-presented cheques as at 31 August	<u>255.00</u>
Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement, 31 August 2017	<u>8,934.68</u>

Reconciliation of the Accounts to the bank statements was noted and it was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Accounts Statements for July and August be accepted.**

Clerk

The bank statement and accounts reconciliation was checked and signed as correct by non-signatory parish councillor Carol Blackett.

CB/Clerk

2. List of payments. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the payments as listed**

Clerk

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq	Power
22/7	J English	Litterpicking July	116.00	S/O	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
31/7	Clerk	Salary July	345.00	1104	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A) & s151; LA 2011 s41
1/8	Hormead PC	LCR subs - 1/3rd	567	1105	LGA 1972 s111
22/8	J English	Litterpicking Aug	116.00	S/O	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
31/8	Clerk	Salary Aug, plus Transparency pay	255.00	1106	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A) & s151; LA 2011 s41
1/9	C Parrott	Cutting Closed Churchyard 3 of 4	240.00	S/O	LGA 1972 s215
5/9	Clerk	Expenses July/Aug	36.31	1107	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A) & s151; LA 2011 s41
5/9	Clerk Petty Cash	Top-up July/Aug	13.50	1108	LGA 1972 s111
5/9	J Turner	Benningfield Green cuts 3 of 3	100.00	1109	OSA 1906 s9 & s10

5/9	D Stephenson (late addition to the payments list)	Cut Allotments	30.00	1110	SHAA 1908 s29(2)
Recoverable VAT included			Nil		

Cheques for 5th September were signed at the end of the meeting.

JB/Clerk

3. Annual Return 2016/17:

- a) Certification not yet received from BDO for the Parish Council to accept and approve.
- b) The qualification notice for Box 9 was noted: defibrillator value changed to nominal £1 as instructed by BDO (having not been purchased from Parish Council funds).
- c) Conclusion of Audit notice: not yet received from BDO

Clerk/PR

4. Financial Regulations

Additional to the draft, the Clerk advised that the following paragraph 3.6 be added:

3.6 The budget and precept should aim to give a minimum cleared bank balance at year-end equal to one half of the annual budgeted expenditure for that financial year.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to adopt the Financial Regulations as drafted, with the addition of paragraph 3.6, as advised by the Clerk.**

Clerk

17.088 Correspondence

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

- Parishioner: correspondence re SID placement (17.090.2)
- Re meeting with Mark Prisk MP (17.085.3)
- Stansted Airport: Notice of forthcoming community consultation
- SHN: various re campaign to object to Gilston Park (17.086)
- Definitive Map Officer: Restricted Byway Ash Valley order (17.090.1.2)
- Hundred Parishes: Re Widford entry in the HP Guide
- To parishioner and solicitor: re grazing licence changes
- Parishioner: re new churchyard (PCC responsibility)
- EH District Plan examiner: Deadlines for participation and representation statements: (17.085.3.5)
- Environment Agency and Circle housing re Twitchell ditch flooding concerns (17.090.1)
- Parishioner: re historic accidents and fatalities by Pegs Lane/B1004 junction (17.085.1)

17.089 Village Reports

1. Village Hall

No meeting recently and nothing to report.

2. Allotments

1. Report by Cllr Babs Edwards.

- Things are going well although we may possibly be losing 1 or 2 tenants.
- BJS has been made aware that the water to the allotments has gone off. Since the problem is on private land, Affinity Water has said BJS will have to get a plumber to attend the problem.
- BJS has said his solicitors are looking at drawing up a new Grazing Licence. In the meantime, the Council agreed to rope off the plot concerned until a new licence agreement is signed.

BE/JB

Clerk

BE

3. Playing Field

Cllr Paul Riddle said the AGM went well. VH Chairman Greg Prowse reported on the proposed Village Hall plan for a new facility on the playing field, although it was noted that not members of the Playing Field Committee are in agreement.

See Village Archive item 17.092 below for Cllr Riddle's statement on the Parish Council's position.

4. Closed Churchyard

Risk caused by leaning Wiseman family monument. The Parish Council is still awaiting a response from the PCC.

JB/Clerk

- 17.090 Highways, footpaths and byways**
- 1. Footways and footpaths**
 1. Twitchell ditch flooding concerns: The watercourse confirmed by both Circle Housing and the Environment Agency as being private property and the responsibility of the owners of the Green Man. **JB/Clerk**
 2. Restricted Byway Order, Ash Valley: the Restricted Byways Order was noted.
 - 2. Highways**
 1. Parish SID update: Discussed at Highways; more reports sent. Cllr Buckmaster asked for a map indicating the preferred locations. **Clerk**
 2. Levenage Lane: bollards have been moved back a bit further from the road.
 3. Traffic counting device, Hunsdon Road: Highways confirmed this was nothing to do with them and it may have been done by a developer.
 4. Pothole at Bell Lane junction. Reported again; Cllr Buckmaster aware. **Clerk**
 5. Traffic sign knocked down, Nether Street junction: Reported again. **Clerk**
 6. Unrepaired wall, coal yard bridge: Reported again; crash barrier would be more appropriate. **Clerk**
- 17.091 Website and Broadband**
- **Website:** Being updated regularly. **PR**
 - **Broadband:** No news to report.
- 17.092 Village Archive**
Cllr Paul Riddle made the following statement (ref Village Hall AGM agenda item 17.089.1 above): **PR**
- The idea of building an extension to the existing Village Hall was not thought to be practical because the Parish Council could not see how the necessary funding could be raised. Estimates would indicate a cost of £30,000 which is well beyond the scope of the Parish Council. Mr Greg Prowse's idea of demolishing the current Village Hall, selling the land for development and using the money raised to build a new community pavilion on the playing field was self-funding and is fully supported by the Parish Council as the best option.
- 17.093 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR):**
The new obligations from 25th May 2018, as outlined in HAPTC's bulletin, were noted. The Clerk said the obligations were onerous and cause for concern; he is attending an information briefing with HAPTC in October and will report further. **Clerk**
- 17.094 Defibrillator registration**
Registration with the emergency services is being done via The Community Heartbeat Trust and will be in place shortly once all the necessary information has been obtained. **Clerk/JB**
- 17.095 Urgent matters** received too late for inclusion on this agenda:
None received.
- 17.096 Items for future agendas**
None raised in the meeting.
There were no public comments
- 17.097 Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 7th November at 7.30pm in the Village Hall **Clerk/JB**
- There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.10pm.

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