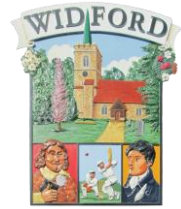


# Widford Parish Council

Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting  
Tuesday 6th July 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom  
under Coronavirus legislation



**PRESENT:** Cllr Ian Collins (IC); Cllr Babs Edwards (BE); Cllr Mark Rome (MPR)

Cllr Eric Buckmaster and three members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman was absent and Vice-Chair Cllr Ian Collins presided

The Vice-Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

**ACTION**

**21.063 Apologies for absence**

1. Councillors: Cllr Mike Allen (business)  
Cllr Michael Ripsher (holiday)
2. Others: PC Nicola Hunt; Cllr Buckmaster that he would be arriving late due to East Herts business.

**21.064 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations**

1. **Interests**  
Cllr Babs Edwards: as noted on the agenda, a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Playing Field matters, her husband being Treasurer of the PFMC. Cllr Edwards has a dispensation in respect of this interest.
2. **Dispensation requests:** None

**21.065 Approval of Minutes**

1. Draft Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parish Electors, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, were received and noted. To be approved by attendees at the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2022.
2. **RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were a true and accurate record.**
3. **RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were a true and accurate record.**

**21.066 Police report**

No report received.

**21.067 Chairman's announcements**

The Vice-Chairman said it was nice to finally see everyone face to face after the long coronavirus restrictions on meetings. He thanked everyone for their support.

**21.068 Reports by County and District Councillor Eric Buckmaster**

Deferred until Cllr Buckmaster's anticipated arrival.

**21.069 Planning**

**1. New Applications:**

None

**2. Decision Notices.** The following were noted:

**3/21/0040/FUL Land adj to Wayside**

**REFUSED**

**3/21/1180/HH Chestnut Tree Cottage:** Erection of garden room

*Decision awaited*

It was agreed that Cllr Ian Collins would check with EH Development Management the Listed Building status of Chestnut Cottage

**IC**

**3/21/0858/HH 3A Benningfield Road:** Side, rear and front extensions.

*Decision awaited*

**3/21/0982/HH Linwood, Hunsdon Road:** Front and rear extensions.

*Decision awaited*

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT<sup>1</sup>

3/21/0354/VAR Land off Ware Rd, Abbots Lane: Variation to 3/18/1957/FUL *Awaited*

3/20/2616/HH The Old Rectory: Replacement extension. *Decision awaited*

3/20/2617/LBC The Old Rectory: Replacement extension. *Decision awaited*

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

#### 1. Late planning applications

3/21/1667/HH 29 Benningfield Road: Demolish conservatory; build extension.

**RESOLVED: To delegate powers to the Clerk; councillors to discuss and advise Clerk of majority decision for consultee comment to EH Planning.**

ALL  
Clerk

2. Gilston Development update: Nothing further reported. The Hunsdon & Gilston Neighbourhood Plan referendum result (approved) was noted.

3. EHC Planning Service update was noted. The Vice-Chair to speak ask the Chairman if he will write to other East Herts Parish Chairs to see if a joint letter can be sent to EH Planning expressing concerns about lack of planning enforcement.

4. RUR/2021/20: The outcome of the name for registering 6 houses off Ware Road was noted as Tree Top Close, in line with the Parish Councils preference.

### 21.070 Finance

#### 1. Report of the Council's accounts for the first quarter to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Finance Summary	£
<b>Opening bank balance 1 May</b>	<b>39,026.93</b>
Plus: income to 30 June	0.00
Minus: expenditure to 30 June	2579.05
Minus late presented payments	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Balance available to Council at 30 June (cashbook balance)</b>	<b>36,447.88</b>
Plus unrepresented cheques/payments Chq 300006	<u>49.99</u>
<b>Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement at 30 June</b>	<b><u>36,497.87</u></b>

**RESOLVED: that the Accounts Statement to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 be approved.**

#### 2. Bank reconciliation.

**RESOLVED: to agree the bank reconciliation as presented.**

#### 3. Performance vs budget for the first quarter to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

The Clerk's detailed report on the financial performance vs budget for the first quarter to 30<sup>th</sup> June was received. There were no untoward transactions to note.

**RESOLVED: that the financial performance report for the first quarter to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 be accepted as presented.**

#### 4. List of payments. **RESOLVED: to approve the list of payments as presented by the Clerk**

Clerk

**RESOLVED: to approve the list of payments as presented by the Clerk:**

*All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence.*

4/5	Cllr B Edwards reimburse	DPM for allotment weed control	94.22	15.70
23/5	Jo English	Litterpicking 2 of 12	125.00	
12/5	G Hessian Chq 300006	Allotment battery	49.99	
28/5	Clerk	Salary May	400.37	
28/5	HMRC	PAYE May	100.00	
18/5	CPRE	Annual membership	36.00	
21/5	EHC	Annual dog bin contract	636.10	106.20
4/6	David Jarrett	Tree work, allotment	84.00	14.00
28/6	Clerk	Salary May	400.17	
28/6	HMRC	PAYE May	100.20	
22/6	Jo English	Litterpicking 3 of 12	125.00	
10/6	Cllr B Edwards reimburse	Laminating pockets	19.50	
30/6	TP Jones LLP	Payroll April-June	58.50	9.75
30/6	Unity Trust Bank	Quarterly service charge	18.00	
1/7	Caroline Parrott	Closed Churchyard 2 of 4	310.00	

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT<sup>1</sup>

6/7	Clerk	Expenses June-July	17.75	
6/7	J Turner	Benningfield Green cutting 1 of 3	100.00	
21/7	Jo English	Litterpicking 4 of 12	125.00	
26/7	Clerk	Salary June	400.17	
26/7	HMRC	PAYE June	100.20	
<b>Recoverable VAT included</b>			<b>145.65</b>	

## 5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21

Noted: The AGAR is being processed by the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn.

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

- Parishioner: Missing bench at the Green Man bus stop (21.073.3.1)
- PFMC: Enquiry about another dog bin (21.072.2.2)
- EHC: Request for name suggestions for registering 6 houses off Ware Road (21.069.3.4)
- Parishioner: Request for Bridleway 10 to be cut (21.073.1.1)
- HAPTC: QEII Platinum Jubilee initiative – Queen’s Green Canopy (21.073.3.2)

*Cllr Eric Buckmaster arrived at 8.10pm*

**21.068** Cllr Buckmaster’s report was given at this point. He commented on a few items from his July report, the full text of which is reproduced in the Appendix below.

### 21.072 Village Reports

#### • 1. Village Hall and archive.

**Archive:** Cllr Mark Rome said that he has looked at the archive and he will discuss with the archivist to establish how it can best and most practically be preserved and presented. He will prepare a report for consideration at September PC Meeting.

MPR

**Village Hall:** A report by Cllr Michael Ripsher of the 14<sup>th</sup> June VH Committee was received. Among the topics it was noted that the VH Chairman again raised the point of selling off the old village hall and rebuilding a new pavilion on part of the playing field. He would like the Parish Council to organise a village vote to decide whether it is for or against and begin a feasibility study. It was agreed that Cllr Ian Collins would discuss with PC Chairman Cllr Mike Allen the way forward in engaging with the community to identify the appetite for rebuilding the Village Hall (as a “pavilion”) on the Playing Field. It was noted that the Parish Council has limitations in taking the lead vs being supportive if the will of the parishioners was known. The Clerk noted that the Parish Council has a conflict of interest, being the custodian trustee of both the Village Hall and the Playing Field.

IC/MA

#### 2. Playing Field

1. **Report:** None received
2. **Play area:** The PFMC has requested a letter to confirm the Parish Council’s commitment to financially support the grant for the new equipment.
3. **Dog bin request:** The Clerk to check with East Herts whether a new dog bin can be added to the schedule at this time and serviced at the location, and whether it can be independent of the Parish Council.

MA

Clerk

#### 3. Allotments

Cllr Babs Edwards reported:

- A tree has been removed, but it was not the one intended. Another tree that was top-heavy and dying has been dealt with.
- Another plot is needed and there is a vacant plot that needs clearing. **RESOLVED: to hire a skip and clear the plot.** Cllr Edwards to liaise with Cllr Rome to organize the skip.

BE

BE/MPR

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT<sup>1</sup>

4. **Closed Churchyard.** There was nothing to report. Clerk
- 21.073 **Highways, Public Rights of Way, and other Parish matters**
1. **Footpaths and PRoW.**
1. Noted: That Bridleway 10 is being cut as requested Clerk
2. **Highways and footways**
1. Verges, gutters and overgrown footways: It was agreed to take photos as these are identified and report them on the Herts Highways fault line. IC
2. It was agreed to consider how to encourage a local initiative to clear up the verges etc without it being a Parish Council project that would require H&S oversight. IC
3. **Other parish matters and concerns**
1. Missing bench at The Green Man: It was noted that the bench has been located.
2. QEII 2022 Platinum Jubilee initiative: Queen's Green Canopy. The initiative to plant trees to commemorate the Jubilee was discussed and Cllr Eric Buckmaster's reference to it in his report was noted. Cllr Ian Collins to discuss with Chairman Cllr Mike Allen the possibility of planting trees on the area of scrub land at the allotments. IC/MA/BE
- Cllr Eric Buckmaster left the meeting at 8.45pm. The Vice-Chair thank him for attending.*
- 21.074 **Benningfield Green**
1. **Annual vehicular access licence**  
**RESOLVED: to offer the licence again for 2021/22 for the right to pass and repass over the Green, but to add a proviso that the licence may be revoked if the conditions are not strictly adhered to and that vehicles must not be parked on the Green.** The precise wording to be agreed before the Clerk sends out the renewal letter and licence for signing. MA/ALL/  
Clerk
- 21.075 **Neighbourhood Plan**  
Nothing reported MA/Clerk
- 21.076 **Urgent matters** received too late for inclusion on this agenda: None raised.
- At 8.59pm the meeting was suspended for Public Comments:*
- Concerns were raised about the safety of the old blue former barn door in the Priory Farm wall and concerns that it could fall into the road. It was agreed that the Clerk would find out who's responsibility it is, what is Herts Highways position, and whether any action can be taken to mitigate the risk. Clerk
- The meeting was reconvened at 9.04pm*
- 21.077 **Items for future agendas:** None raised
- 21.078 **Date of next Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7.30pm:** Village Hall venue to be confirmed subject to prevailing Covid-19 legislation. Clerk/MA
- There being no further business, the Vice-Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

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

## APPENDIX

**District and County Annual report for July 2021**

**Council ambition for 1.2 million new trees in Hertfordshire by 2030**

The idea being presented to members at last week's new environment cabinet panel meeting,

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT<sup>1</sup>

HCC councillors have welcomed the organisation's ambitions to grow over 1 million new trees and 100km of hedgerows across Hertfordshire.

## **Sustainable Hertfordshire**

Preparations are well underway for a Hertfordshire COP 26, with a series of virtual events being planned.

The Conference of Parties (COP) is the UN's Climate Change Convention and this year the event will take place in Glasgow in November 2021. Climate change is a global problem which needs to be tackled by us all, even at a local level. Since the County Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, significant progress has been made to approve the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy and Action Plan with all directorates now implementing the actions attributed to them. Hosting a Hertfordshire COP will give the opportunity to inform residents, schools, businesses and others across the county, showcase the achievements made to date and amplify the message to take action locally.

In addition to the work being undertaken 'in-house' we are also actively engaged and involved in the delivery of the work of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership; HCC officers have supported the delivery of the Water Action Plan, the Biodiversity Action Plan and the Carbon Action Plan – each of which have been approved and are now being implemented. The fourth action plan will cover the theme of Transport.

**Hertfordshire Heroes** are advocating for veterans to share their service history with their GPs who can grant priority access to support and care when necessary. This additional support for ex-servicemen and women includes direct referrals to both specialist physical and mental health services such as the NHS' Op Courage Service, as well as referrals for social prescribing for supportive military charities such as The Royal British Legion.

Helping Hertfordshire GP practices become more veteran friendly has been a key priority for the Armed Forces Covenant Board, as the partnership looks to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant locally and ensure that veterans have access to all the services available to them.

**Hertfordshire (Essex) Rapid Transit HERT** To support our ambition to help improve life for everyone in the county and deliver a step change in our public transport network, we are proposing a new transport spine across Hertfordshire and into West Essex, enabling us to meet our sustainable growth needs now and in the future.

Hertfordshire – Essex Rapid Transit (HERT) scheme will set out our plans for a public engagement during the Autumn of 2021.

The Hertfordshire - Essex Rapid Transit will improve the passenger transport network through an accessible, reliable and affordable east-west system. The HERT will connect people to where they live, work and visit across both counties in a more environmentally friendly way and will support our local economies.

The HERT will be a Mass Rapid Transit system. This is a new, sustainable passenger transport network to carry people in greater numbers than a typical private car and provide greater convenience and reliability than a traditional bus service.

A project of this scale will take some years to develop and requires substantial investment from local and central government, together with private sector partners.

We are in the early stage of developing proposals on the HERT and have a number of steps to go through before it can be built. We will be consulting the public at each stage, with ongoing stakeholder engagement throughout the duration of the scheme. We will engage with local communities, civic groups, businesses and other organisations across the county to ensure the widest possible spread of voices is heard during this process.

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/HERT](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/HERT)

## **Recycling Centres**

Three of Hertfordshire's largest recycling centres now open seven days a week

As reported by In Your Area, Hertfordshire's three largest household waste recycling centres - Ware, Stevenage and Waterdale (Garston) - are now open seven days a week as the county council responds to high use of the network.

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT<sup>1</sup>

**Reuse Centres go from strength to strength.** The newly refurbished Harpenden Reuse Centre, located next to the recycling centre, will be opening in the summer. This is the third centre where residents can buy good quality items, at a reasonable price, that would otherwise have been needlessly thrown away and destroyed. Increasing the diversion of different waste types which can have a second life is also a priority for the service and following liaison with trading standards and the council's insurance team a trial sale of electrical items is scheduled to take place in June.

our fourth reuse centre which is being provided as part of the new recycling centre at Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City.

## **First Net Zero Carbon School**

A trust has been appointed to run the much-needed First School in Buntingford following an approval process for the trailblazing sustainable project.

The Scholars Education Trust has been appointed to run the school, and approved by the Department for Education, following a recommendation by Hertfordshire County Council in conclusion to the extensive competition process.

The plans would see a two-form entry First School for four to nine-year-olds open in September 2022 – the first school in the county to be built and operate at net zero carbon. In addition to this, the architects appointed to the project have registered with a specialist company who will monitor the carbon emissions throughout the design and build process and will donate trees to mitigate any excess carbon emissions.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Cabinet Member for the Environment said: "The school will make history for Hertfordshire – being the first net zero carbon school in the county, which will help us work towards achieving our climate change goals, while meeting the burgeoning need for a school in the area.

"We do need to ensure that Hertfordshire meets its commitment to address the increased requirement for school places with a long-term sustainable approach. This pilot will explore how we can achieve greater sustainability for our future generations."

As with any school construction project, Hertfordshire County Council is taking a robust approach to ensure all costs relating to this pilot are in-line with industry-recognised rates established by the Department for Education. Our 'value engineering' process is currently underway within the construction design process to ensure the project is fulfilled and fully delivered to best value.

The final design of the school buildings will be subject to a consultation where views of the local community will be sought through the town planning process.

More details on Hertfordshire County Council's sustainability strategy and action plan can be found here: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/sustainable-hertfordshire/sustainable-hertfordshire.aspx>

## **Hertfordshire County Council is investing £9.6m in supporting its residents, businesses and communities to recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.**

In recognition of the repercussions of the pandemic on the lives and livelihoods of residents, the funding will support those most in need and is part of the county council's wider COVID-19 Recovery Strategy.

The cross-service funding includes a £2m joint 'Building Life Chances' package from Adult Care, Children's and Public Health services to tackle some of the impacts on families, including crisis intervention funding, community projects and financial advice to support families in, or at risk of poverty.

The new funds also include a 50 percent increase in Member Locality Budgets, from £10k to £15k per member, a source of community funding which proved vital during the pandemic.

Over the last 18 months, the county council has been working tirelessly with its partners to help residents and businesses deal with the impact of the pandemic, spending around £144m on its response. This included funding adult care providers with staffing and protective PPE as well as delivering over 120,000 packages of essential food and medicines to vulnerable shielding people.

As the focus starts to move beyond critical crisis response, plans are now underway to ensure services are effectively restored and communities helped to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT<sup>1</sup>

The funding, which will boost Hertfordshire's economic recovery, is being outlined in a COVID-19 Recovery Strategy Panel report being presented to Full Council on 20 July.

The two-year funding package includes £3m for Children's Services to finance initiatives such as the 'Coming Back Stronger' programme of educational recovery, including mental health support for pupils and mentoring delivered by Herts for Learning.

A further £3m for Adult Care Services will fund programmes including supporting carers of vulnerable adults, residents with learning disabilities and autism and support for victims of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

The county council will also be investing more than half a million pounds in apprenticeships for care leavers and support for youth employment and £600k in enhanced support for families through its family centre network, plus other new parent support.

An additional £440,000 has been earmarked for the SaverCard Plus scheme - a three-year extension of the SaverCard scheme to include 20 to 25-year olds, providing half-price discounts on bus travel.

## **Adopt an Area litter campaign launches in East Herts**

Litter-conscious residents in East Herts will now get extra support to help keep their streets and parks free of litter by signing up to our Adopt An Area scheme. East Herts District Council (EHDC) alongside North Herts District Council have launched the campaign to support both existing volunteers who have already been litter picking in the district, as well as to appeal for new volunteers to adopt an area and make a real community effort to reduce litter. Volunteers will be asked to let the council know the area they wish to adopt and will be provided with safety information and dedicated bags. Anyone who adopts an area will be able to have their litter picked waste collected alongside their normal scheduled waste and recycling collections. The launch coincides with the Great British Spring Clean, organised by Keep Britain Tidy - an annual litter picking campaign which calls on people to be litter heroes and be the change they wish to see, because what is good for our environment is good for our mental and physical health too.

This new 'Adopt an Area' scheme will complement existing street cleaning across the towns and villages in East Herts. The scheme is open to individuals, schools, and community groups. Any litter picked will be collected by EHDC's waste contractor. Initial volunteers will receive litter-picking equipment and bags, hi-viz vest, gloves, and advice on health and safety. Numbers of kits are limited to first come first served but residents can still take part with their own equipment. Community groups can be provided with sets of 10 packs at cost, for more information email [wasteandrecycling@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:wasteandrecycling@north-herts.gov.uk)

## **Hertfordshire hits record high number of officers**

Hertfordshire Constabulary now has more officers than at any time in its history.

The latest intake of 18 new recruits means there are now 2,212 officers in the county, the previous high was 2,202 in 2007.

To mark the milestone Police and Crime Commissioner David Lloyd and Chief Constable Charlie Hall welcomed the latest student officers at Police Headquarters in Stanborough, Welwyn Garden City.

The final target at the end of the uplift is planned to be even higher with 2,314 officers in post by April 2023.

The Constabulary are now offering these new entry routes to become a police officer:

- Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) – join as a police officer and achieve a BSc (Hons) degree in Professional Policing Practice. This is a three-year, work-based, practical and vocational degree;
- Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) – aimed at those who have a degree in any subject. In your first two years, you will achieve a Graduate Diploma in Professional Policing Practice whilst you train as a police officer.

County and District Councillor Eric Buckmaster July 2021