

WIDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Widford Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 10th May 2016 at 8pm (following the Annual Parish Council Meeting) in the Village Hall

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

C Cllr R Beeching, D Cllr R Brunton, and fourteen other members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8pm

ACTION

16.056 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: None – all present
2. Others: None

16.057 Declarations of Interest: None declared

16.058 Approval of Minutes of Meetings, 1 March 2016

1. **Parish Council Meeting, 1 March:** Being proposed and seconded, it was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 March were a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes
2. **Annual Meeting of the Parish, 1 March 2016, draft minutes:** The Council unanimously agreed that the draft minutes were an accurate record. To be approved by electors and signed at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Parish.

JB/Clerk

16.059 Police report: None

16.060 Chairman's announcements: None

16.061 Planning

1. New Applications

3/16/0879/HH 10 Daintrees: Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of replacement conservatory.

NO OBJECTIONS

Clerk

3/16/0873/HH Little Goddards, Abbots Lane: Single storey side extension

NO OBJECTIONS

Clerk

2. Decision Notices

3/16/0532/FUL Priory Farm House: Erection of 1 new two storey detached residential dwelling and double garage, driveway, and other associated development.

AWAITING DECISION

3/16/0397/HH & 0398/LBC Honeysuckle Cottage, Nether Street: Demolition and replacement of single storey side extension.

GRANTED

3/16/0325/FUL Priory Farm House: Demolition of existing barn. Construction of new barn, new gravel driveway and new post & rail fence.

REFUSED

Contrary to GBC3, ENV1, ENV11, BH6, Dev Plan and NPPF

3/16/0186/FUL South Paw Farm: Erection of fencing, brick wall and gates (retrospective)

AWAITING DECISION

3/15/2055/FUL Greenacres, Ware Road: APPEAL AP/15/0116/refuse: 2 no 3-bedroomed dwellings with garages – amended scheme

APPEAL DECISION AWAITED

3/15/0507/LBC Adams Farm: Alterations to layout and fenestration from previous application 3/09/1344/LB to form 4 dwelling houses. *EH Planning has confirmed that permission is for 4 dwellings, not 3.*

LBC DECISION AWAITED

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

1. Late applications

Cllr Parcell declared a DPI in the following item because he lives in Benningfield Road. He left the room at 8.15pm.

3/16/0944//FUL 9 Benningfield Road: Continued use of dwelling for child minding for a temporary period of up to five years. *NO OBJECTIONS, but comment made to EHC. There are general concerns about traffic and parking problems in Benningfield Road and a resident has undertaken a survey. It was noted that the number of children has reduced for 30 to 16, and that no further parking issues arise from the application because children are only dropped off and collected.*

Clerk

Clr Parcell returned to the room at 8.20pm

Due to interest in Benningfield Road matters by members of the public, it was proposed and, at 8.20pm, **RESOLVED to suspend the meeting for public comments.**

- A parishioner commented that, regarding the planning application, no parking issues arise because children are only dropped off. It was also stated that a van parked there has nothing to do the childminding business.
- Another parishioner commented that a worker at the business parks there. Also that parking in general in the road is often inconsiderate.
- The Chairman commented that it is a very difficult road in which to park. Cllr Riddle said they wanted to encourage employment and enterprise, and wondered whether the removal of the grass verge would help alleviate the problem caused by parking.
- Concerning the application, it was noted that the owner has done what they can to help with parking and that there is no grass verge outside their house.
- Cllr Parcell said there was no objection to the childminding business itself, and again noted that the number of children is now considerably less than 18 months ago.
- County Cllr Roger Beeching said the survey should be sent to Highways and comments emailed to District Cllr Bob Brunton.

2. Report on Stonebond plans for the Martlets site

Stonebond have had a number of meetings with EHC, who are now awaiting a formal planning application. The question is now when rather than if the development will go ahead. Therefore the next question is what will the parish be able to get out of it. Concerns have already been raised about overdevelopment of the site and access and egress issues. District Cllr Brunton has raised whether Stonebond would support a couple of apprentices working on the development.

3. Pegs Lane update: The Chairman and Cllr Riddle recently had another meeting at Wallfields with Planning Enforcement Officer Paul Dean. EHC continue to monitor the situation. The retrospective application for the gates and wall comes up for a decision shortly. An application for the hard standing and caravan is still awaited, but EH Planning are well aware of the position.

Other matters

The occupants of the caravans in the layby have been spoken to by councilors and a parishioner. Herts Highways say it is of no concern to them because there are no parking restrictions on the layby. The police are aware but not taking any action. East Herts Environmental Health have visited them and ascertained that, at the moment, there are no environmental issues concerning the disposal of waste etc. This will be monitored by EHC.

16.062 Finance

1. The report of the Council's finances for 1-30 April was received (Appendix A)

Finance Summary from 1 to 30 April	£
Opening available balance 1 April	5,395.06
Plus income to 30 April	4,930.58
Minus expenditure to 30 April	882.35
Plus un-presented September cheque 929 (SHN) now out of date	<u>50.00</u>
Balance available to Council 30 April	9,493.29
Plus un-presented April cheques as at 30 April	<u>330.76</u>
Bank balance reconciled with statement #321, 30 April 2016	<u>9,824.05</u>

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

It was noted that September cheque 929 to SHN had not been presented and was now out of date.

Clerk

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 that the Accounts and the 30th April bank statement 321 reconciled. 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 321.**

GP/
Clerk

3. List of payments. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the payments:**

Clerk

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq	Power
2015/16 cheques noted					
22/3	J English	Litterpick to 19/3	105.76	977	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
29/3	Clerk	Salary March	226.32	978	
29/3	HMRC	PAYE Jan-March	169.20	979	
2016/17 cheques					
4/4	IT Ltd (Defib shop)	AED cabinet	501.60	980	PHA 1936 s234
4/4	HAPTC	Local Councils Manual	49.99	981	LGA 1972 s111
16/4	J English	Litterpick to 16/4	105.76	982	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
28/4	Clerk	Salary April	225.00	983	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
10/5	Grafters Gardens	Allotments clearance	500.00	984	SHAA 1908 s26(1)
10/5	Hormead PC	Reimburse 1/3 subs	5.67	985	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	Clerk	Travel/phone exp Mar/Apr	54.92	986	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
10/5	Clerk	Petty cash top up	29.95	987	LGA 1972 s111, s112
10/5	HAPTC	Annual subscription	266.38	988	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	J Turner	Cutting B/fld Grn 1/3	83.33	989	OSA 1906 s9, s10
10/5	C Parrott	Closed churchy'd 1/4	224.00	990	LGA 1972 s215
10/5	J English	Litterpick to 14/5	105.76	991	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
10/5	Zurich Mun'pal	Annual insurance	358.26	992	LGA 1972 s114, s140, s111
10/5	J Gillmor	New allot's stopcock	18.99	993	SHAA 1908 s26(1)
10/5	Accountancy Serv	Internal Audit	80.00	994	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	HAPTC	Delegate fee	35.00	995	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	CPRE	Subscription	36.00	996	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	Hormead PC	Reimburse keyboard	19.99	997	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	Clerk	Reimburse printer ink	34.00	998	LGA 1972 s111
10/5	David Jarrett	Churchyard Lime tree	384.00	999	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
10/5	Clerk reimburse	CPALC subscription	6.00	1000	LGA 1972 s111
		VAT included	150.77		

Cheques for 10th May were signed at the end of the meeting.

4. Insurance company for 2016/17

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to continue with Zurich Municipal for the coming year**

Clerk

5. To ratify Steve Vine as internal auditor

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to ratify the appointment Steve Vine of Accountancy & Book-Keeping Services as the internal auditor for the 2015/16 Annual Return**

Clerk

6. Approval and signing of the 2015/16 Annual Accounts

A full set of accounts, cashbook and supporting financial documents had been submitted to the Council by the Clerk/RFO.

1. It was noted that the Internal Auditor had approved and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report (Section 3) and had approved the Accounts and Internal Controls with no adverse comments.

2. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the Annual Return**

Clerk

3. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve and sign the Accounting Statements (Section 2) of the Annual Return**

The Chairman and Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer signed Sections 1 and 2 as required.

Clerk/JB

16.063 **Correspondence**

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

- EHC Planning Village policy discussion paper
- Magpas Air Ambulance: request for donation
- EHC: Arboricultural Office re tree works in closed churchyard (16.064.4)
- Pensions Regulator: To note staging date of 1 May 2017
- Planning Inspectorate: Modification Order – notification of receipt of representations and consideration of whether to hold a public enquiry

16.064 **Village Reports**

1. **Village Hall:**

- Cllr Paul Riddle reported the VH meeting had taken place the previous evening. The redecoration is progressing, albeit slowly. The work is done by professions on probation who are continuously overseen. It is cost effective, but messy.
- Two further fundraising events are planned for later in the year: Comedy Club and a Quiz Night.
- The accounts are healthy, with a current a/c of £1,045, and deposit a/c of £7,978.

2. **Allotments:**

- Cllr Babs Edwards reported that the Working Group has settled down well and the Terms of Reference agreed.
- Of the 29 available plots, 9 users are renting and working 14 plots, 12 plots are going to be rented under licence for exercising sanctuary dogs, and 2 plots remain vacant.
- The overgrown plots were cleared at a cost of £500 – this proved to be a much bigger job than originally envisaged, and was very well done.
- The possibility of a separate water supply for the allotments was discussed on a site visit by Affinity Water. The access would have to be via Benningfield Road and would cost would be in the region of a prohibitive £1,500 to £2,000. The present arrangement will therefore have to continue.

BE/JB

3. **Playing Field:**

- As reported at the Annual Parish Council Meeting, there are currently only two trustees. It was agreed by the trustee present for the Clerk to introduce them to a charity expert to see what the options are and the best way forward.

Clerk/JB

4. **Closed Churchyard**

- The Chairman reported that the lime tree has now been pollarded as recommended by Malcolm Amey, the East Herts Arboricultural Officer.
- The sycamore tree is in severe decline and needs working on to keep it safe. Two quotes have been obtained by tree surgeons, ranging from £450 + VAT to £550 + VAT. A third quote is to be obtained – Cllr Parcell agreed to contact someone else. The Clerk agreed to look at Mr Amey's letter to clarify what work is permissible.
- In preparation for the work to be done, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to appoint a tree surgeon to take whatever action is professionally deemed necessary at the best price. Clerk has delegated powers to act once in possession of three quotes.**

GP

JB/
Clerk

16.065 **Report by County Councillor Roger Beeching**

- The Locality Budget for Councillors has been cut from £10k to £5k, and £5k has been cut from the Highways Locality Budget for his division. However, the intention is for the money saved to be invested wholly in cleaning road signs, cutting back vegetation and verge repairs.
- He recommended the County Show, this year at Redbourn
- He has been re-elected as Vice-Chairman for the coming year, but does not intend to stand again at the next election in 2017.

- C Cllr Beeching invited everyone to his Music in the Garden event at his home on 19th June, all proceeds going towards work being done with paraplegics at Rivers.

Report by District Councillor Robert Brunton

- Cllr Brunton said he was very pleased to see the Parish Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the Wallfields meeting with EHAPTC the previous week.
- He is presently waiting for the Planning Policy report to come through – he said he would forward it when it materialises.

16.066 Highways, footpaths and byways

1. **Footways and kerbs:** Nothing to report.
2. **Benningfield Road parking:** Previously discussed under Planning, 16.061.3
3. **Other matters:** None

Clerk

16.067 Website and Broadband

- **Website:** Cllr Riddle said that the website forum didn't provoke interest and has now been replaced by the Widford Bulletin, which is available to everyone who wants to go on the mailing list. At the present time about 25 people have signed up.
- **Gigaclear** have a 73% take up of the target number required for them to install in the village. Much Hadham has almost reached its target, whereas Hunsdon has met 100% of its target. Update information from the Gigaclear website.

PR

16.068 Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Paul Riddle reported:

1. LAIS 1388
 - Up to date information on the PC website and the Widford Bulletin. Information circulated by HAPTC LAIS 1368 highlights the proposal by central Government to speed up the planning process by splitting it into two parts, of which only Part 1, the initial application, will open to consultation. Part 2 dealing with conditions, obligations and the specifics will have no consultees and not be open to appeal. This would impact Neighbourhood Plans.
2. EH Village Policy Discussion Paper:
 - We now know that had the Village Hierarchy been adopted, Widford would have remained as a Group 2 village but, unfortunately for us, this approach was extremely unpopular with a number of other parishes. Now the intention is to do away with all village Groups and with village boundaries altogether.
 - At an emotive meeting at Wallfields last week it was explained that many of the current policies would therefore disappear. For instance, without a village boundary the concepts of infilling and ribbon development are meaningless.
 - Some parishes, however, welcome the scrapping of village boundaries as this will tend to lead to more open, less congested villages.
3. Impact of both documents
 - By the end of 2016 the number of new homes built in the village will have exceeded the target total for the next 15 years. However, that does not mean there will be no more development for the remainder of the period.
 - Both consultation at the initial planning stage only, and the scrapping of village boundaries, will have an impact on any Neighbourhood Plans, which will certainly have to be amended to conform.
 - Removal of these planning controls will result in the planning process being driven by the SLAA (plan supplied).
 - Villages may tend to become more open because development would not be defined by their boundaries. Some see this as a positive aspect since it could preserve village centres.
 - Some also feel the new policy could help the building of more affordable homes.
 - Applications in process are already being considered as if there is not a boundaries policy, eg Martlets.

PR

16.069 Defibrillator: It has been agreed to locate this in the Village Hall porch and will be installed very shortly, together with PIR light. A First Aid and first responders course will be held at the Hall on 19th May.

16.070 Stop Harlow North: Poppi Smith to check on the donation cheque from last September that was never presented.

16.071 Dog-waste bin: It was agreed to defer this to the July meeting.

16.072 Urgent matters received too late for inclusion on this agenda: None

16.073 Items for future agendas:

- To consider the purchase and location of a second dog-waste bin
- A parishioner asked whether they could hire a rotovator for their allotments plots. The Council had no objections to the proposal.

The Chairman said the Council would consider suspending the meeting if parishioners had any further comments to make:

There were none

16.074 Date of next meeting:

Tuesday 5th July at 8pm in the Village Hall

16.075 To consider exclusion of press and public for Agenda item 16.075, Benningfield Green

In view of the time, it was **RESOLVED** to defer the Benningfield Green matter to the July Parish Council meeting

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

Signed.....**Dated**.....