

Widford Parish Council

Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 3rd November 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom
under Coronavirus legislation



PRESENT: Cllr Mike Allen (MA) Chair; Cllr Babs Edwards (BE); Cllr Michael Ripsher (MPR);
Cllr Mark Rome (MR); Cllr Ian Collins (IC)

2 members of the public; Cllr Eric Buckmaster

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

ACTION

20.083 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: Michael Ripsher (work) **Accepted**
2. Others: PCSO Leon De Bruyn

20.084 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 Mike Allen noted an interest as a trustee of the Playing Field Committee.

Cllr Babs Edwards and Cllr Michael Ripsher have dispensations in respect of planning item 20.071.3.2 due to their properties being adjacent to any proposed development there.

2. **Dispensation requests:** Cllr Mike Allen and Cllr Babs Edwards submitted requests in respect of agenda item 20.090.5.3, being consideration of an annual grant to the Playing Field. Cllr Allen is a trustee and Cllr Edwards' husband is the Treasurer of the PFMC. To keep the meeting quorate, it was **RESOLVED that delegated powers be granted to the Clerk to determine the dispensations.** The Clerk **granted the dispensations to both councillors** since without them the Council would not be able to consider the grant request, the outcome of which could impact the 2021/22 budget and precept.

Clerk's note: Dispensation granted under Localism Act 2011, S33 (2) (a).

20.085 Minutes of 8th September Parish Council Meeting

It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 8th September were a true and accurate record.**

MA/Clerk

20.096 Reports by County and District Councillor Eric Buckmaster

Brought forward

It was agreed at 7.33pm to bring this item forward. Following the report, the Chairman thanked him for it and Cllr Buckmaster left the meeting. The report is reproduced in full in the Appendix.

20.086 Police report

In PCSO Leon De Bruyn's absence, the Chairman read the following report he had submitted:

Period 1st – 29th October 2020

- *Theft from property – a residential property has had copper/metal materials removed from outside the yard area by unknown Suspects. Materials have been removed and Suspects left in an unknown direction. All lines of enquiry have been completed and Suspects have not been identified.*

We continue to promote Community Voice and have held 6 events across the local rural area's so far. The last Police Priority meeting has identified Hare coarsing, Fly-tipping and Speeding as the local priorities and we have been increasing our patrols in the area.

We have Halloween patrols this weekend which may be very different this year too.

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20.087 Chairman's announcements

Gilston Area group growth strategy team: Planning applications are anticipated to be submitted in the New Year. The Chairman said he will circulate information as it comes through.

The Poppy Wreath laying service will take place this coming Sunday at the open churchyard.

20.088 Planning

1. New Applications:

3/20/1787/HH Greenacres: Create vehicle crossover. **RESOLVED: No comments**

3/20/2019/HH Plovers: Swimming pool and pool house. **RESOLVED: No comments**

2. Decision Notices. The following were noted:

3/20/1539/HH 3A Benningfield Road: Erect side and rear extensions **GRANTED**

3/20/1535/HH Elm Cottage: Alterations to outbuilding. **GRANTED**

3/20174/FUL: Apple Blossom Cottage: Erect new bungalow (retrospective)
Certain concerns expressed by a neighbour to a councillor were noted. **GRANTED**

3/20/1624/FUL The Green Man: Change of use to residential **GRANTED**

3/19/1902/FUL The Old Orchard: Demolish store, erect bungalow. **APPEALED to P.I** *Awaited*

3/20/0565/PL Wineos Ltd, 4 Church Barns: Licence application (online a/cs only) *Unavailable*

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

1. Late planning applications: NONE

2. Adams Farm & Priory Farm proposed development: Nothing received

3. Mineral extraction decision at Hatfield Aerodrome site: It was noted that this refusal decision now puts pressure on the Briggins Estate site.

4. It was agreed that Cllr Ian Collins would take on the role of planning portfolio holder and that he would circulate his comments and observations on planning applications to members for consideration **IC/Clerk**

20.089 New Parish Council accessibility compliant website

Options were considered and following due process it was **RESOLVED to accept the quote from TEEC Ltd (MyParishCouncil) and to place the order with them.** The question of whether there are any intellectual property rights on the current site is to be confirmed before final migration of the content.

Clerk

MA

20.090 Finance

1. Report of the Council's accounts to 30th September 2020

Finance Summary from 1st to 30th September

| | £ |
|--|-------------------------|
| Opening bank balance 1 September | 34,605.91 |
| Plus: income to 30 September | 8,803.69 |
| Minus: expenditure to 30 September | 2,240.11 |
| Minus late presented payments | <u>0.00</u> |
| Balance available to Council at 30 September (cashbook balance) | 41,169.49 |
| Plus unrepresented cheques | <u>0.00</u> |
| Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement at 30th September | <u>41,169.49</u> |

Reconciliation of the Accounts to the bank statements was considered and it was unanimously **RESOLVED: that the Accounts Statement to 30th September 2020 be accepted.**

2. The Clerk's detailed report on the financial performance vs budget to 30th September 2020 (half-year) was received. There was no untoward expenditure, currently standing at £8,709 against the total budget of £18,214; Income included an unanticipated New Homes Bonus of £9,333, the income to date standing at £25,696 against the total budget of £16,725.

RESOLVED: that the financial report to 30th September be accepted as presented.

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3. List of payments for approval

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

Clerk

All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1/9 | Mrs C Parrott | Closed Churchyard grass 3 of 4 | 310.00 | S/O |
| 24/9 | Clerk | Salary September | 576.52 | Bacs |
| 24/9 | HMRC | PAYE September | 144.20 | Bacs |
| 22/9 | J English | Litterpick September 6 of 12 | 125.00 | S/O |
| | Dr I Brett | Allotment water project | 1,007.89 | Bacs |
| 28/9 | TP Jones LLP | Payroll services July-Sept | 58.50 | Bacs |
| 30/9 | Unity Trust bank | Quarterly service charge | 18.00 | Bacs |
| 1/10 | David Newton | Install Litter bin (Benningfield Gr) | 39.94 | 300002 |
| 4/10 | ICO | Annual Data Protection fee | 35.00 | D/D |
| 22/10 | J English | Litterpick October 7 of 12 | 125.00 | S/O |
| 26/10 | Clerk | Salary October | 400.37 | Bacs |
| 26/10 | HMRC | PAYE October | 100.00 | Bacs |
| 1/11 | Mrs C Parrott | Closed Churchyard grass 4 of 4 | 310.00 | S/O |
| 3/11 | Clerk reimburse | Safety Supply Co Litterpick tools | 42.78 | Bacs |
| 3/11 | Royal British Legion | Poppy Wreath | 50.00 | 300003 |
| Recoverable VAT included | | | 16.88 | |

4. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019/20

No report or comments received yet from PKF Littlejohn

Clerk

5. Donation and grant requests. The following requests were considered:

1. Essex & Herts Air Ambulance. **RESOLVED: donate £100**
2. East Herts Citizens Advice Service. **RESOLVED: donate £100**
3. Widford Playing Field Management Committee. **RESOLVED: Grant £1,000 per annum from 2021/22, to be reviewed annually.** Additional support towards the play area refurbishment was discussed; this to be the subject of further consideration next year.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

6. Budget and Precept for 2021/2022

A preliminary look at a potential budget and precept was considered against an outline provided by the Clerk. It was agreed that councillors would give this further due consideration before finalising a decision at the January meeting. It was agreed to add a new notice board to that budget. Cllr Babs Edwards to approve the specification.

Clerk

ALL

BE

20.091 Correspondence

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

- Email on planning decision re Hatfield Aerodrome gravel pit proposal (20.088.3.3)
- Parishioner/ PRow Officer re overgrown Bridleway 10 (20.093.1.1)
- Website companies re compliant website (20.089)
- 20s Plenty campaign (20.093.2.3)
- Parishioner: concerns about the parking agreement at Benningfield Green (20.094.3)

20.092 Village Reports

1. Village Hall and archive. No report received.

2. Playing Field. Meetings for next year's plans will be held subject to Covid-19 restrictions. It is possible for Amazon Smile charitable donations to be connected to the Playing Field. Some old play equipment is being removed for safety reasons.

MA

3. Allotments. Convert Water are due to return next week to complete their work.

BE

4. Closed Churchyard. Nothing reported.

20.093 Highways, Public Rights of Way, and other Parish matters

1. Footpaths and PRow.

Awaiting confirmation that PRow contactor has cleared Bridleway 10 as arranged.

Clerk

2. Highways and footways

1. Bus shelter repair: No update. The Chairman to check what repairs need to be done.

MA

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2. Verges, gutters and overgrown footways: The Chairman and Cllr Babs Edwards to walk round and take photos, with precise locations, for the Clerk to submit fault reports to Herts Highways

MA/BE
Clerk

3. 20mph speed limit campaign in Hertfordshire: It was agreed to support the campaign in principle, but it is understood that substantial investment would be required by HCC to cover the cost implications. The Clerk to get more information from Cllr Eric Buckmaster.

Clerk

3. Other parish matters and concerns

1. Kiosk book exchange update: Cllr Babs Edwards reported that it's going very well. Cllr Mark Rome agreed to circulate the Risk Assessment. A parishioner is monitoring the kiosk. It was suggested that the Widford Community Facebook Group could be updated occasionally with information as and when required to ensure local people are familiar with the activity being generated.

MR

20.094 Benningfield Green

1. New litter bin update: Installation has been completed
2. Notice board: A completely new board would require the existing concrete posts to be removed. It was agreed that Cllr Babs Edwards approve the specification for this to be added to the 2021/22 budget.

BE/Clerk

3. Parking on the Green: The issue raised has been dealt with as far as possible unless more information is forthcoming.

4. Tree maintenance and bird boxes:

1. Bird boxes: Will be looked at after tree work is completed.

BE

2. It was **RESOLVED to ratify approval of David Jarrett's quote for urgent tree work undertaken on safety grounds (work already in progress).**

Clerk

20.095 Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman said there was no update to report at this time. A budget of £15k would be about right. Most of the cost could be covered by grants. It is proposed to take this forward in the New Year and to add it to the March 2021 agenda.

MA

20.096 **Reports by County and District Councillor Eric Buckmaster:** Taken earlier in the meeting following 20.085 and reproduced in full in the Appendix below.

20.097 **Urgent matters** received too late for inclusion on this agenda: None raised.

Suspension of meeting for parishioners' comments

No comments made.

20.098 **New items for future agendas:** None raised.

20.099 Date of next meetings

1. **Ordinary Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 7.30pm:** Virtual meeting via Zoom, subject to prevailing Covid-19 legislation.

Clerk/MA

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.24pm.

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

APPENDIX

Agenda item 20.096

20.096 County Councillor report November 2020

Major Consultations

East Hertfordshire Growth and Transport Plan Opening date: 31 October 2020 **Closing date:** 31 January 2021

The draft East, and South East Growth & Transport Plan (GTP), covering the towns of Bishop's

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Stortford and Sawbridgeworth, down to Hertford, Ware, Hoddesdon, Broxbourne, Cheshunt and Waltham Cross, and the key transport links between these towns and to surrounding areas, will start the process of public consultation in October and is due to finish in December 2020. The consultation documents already includes feedback from workshops with County Councillors and District Portfolio Holders as well as officers for the area have been used to refine the initial schemes and packages that considers the key problems and opportunities which currently exist or may in the future on the transport network and identifies what types of interventions are needed to improve the transport network.

The East Hertfordshire GTP has been developed at the same time as the South East Hertfordshire GTP due to the number of linked trips between the areas.

The Eastern Growth & Transport Plan (EGTP) is a new transport strategy to help direct and plan transport improvements and investment in Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth and surrounding areas. <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/eastern-area-growth-and-transport-plan.aspx#>

The South East Hertfordshire Growth & Transport Plan (EGTP) is a new transport strategy to help direct and plan transport improvements and investment in Hertford, Ware, Hoddesdon, Broxbourne, Cheshunt and Waltham Cross, and to surrounding areas [.https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/south-east-central-growth-and-transport-plan.aspx#](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/south-east-central-growth-and-transport-plan.aspx#)

The GTPs set the following 6 objectives:

1. Connected - Improved transport connections between and within urban and rural locations and services to support economic activity, education, access to services and the development of new jobs and homes.
2. Reliable - Improved network resilience and journey time reliability for all users, so that transport networks and services provide consistent and dependable journeys throughout the day.
3. Accessible - Provide improved transport networks by all modes, including public transport services, to increase the choice available to transport users and reduce barriers to prosperity, development and growth.
4. Attractive Place - Enhance the function and character of East and South East Hertfordshire's neighbourhoods and public locations to support vibrant communities and preserve and enhance the local environment and quality of life.
5. Efficient - Make the most efficient use of resources and technology by reducing the need to travel and enabling a shift to more sustainable modes of travel.
6. Healthy and Safe - Promote measures to improve safety and reduce the negative impacts of motorised travel, in particular private car travel; to reduce the harm caused to public health, the environment, and to minimise safety risks.

The draft EGTP proposes 37 Packages and the draft SEGTP proposes 40 packages comprising multiple interventions, including some significant larger scale schemes as well as smaller scale projects focusing on locations.

Sustainable Hertfordshire: This public engagement is open from **02 November 2020**

We invite your views on climate change and sustainability in Hertfordshire. Here is a summary of the County Council's ambitions. Further details can be found via the survey.

The county council's ambitions for leading in our own operations are:

- Carbon neutral for our own operations by 2030
- All operations and services are ready for future climates
- Improve biodiversity on our land by 20% by 2030
- Reduce what we throw away. Send nothing to landfill by 2030

The county council's ambitions for enabling and inspiring a sustainable county are:

- Net zero greenhouse gas county before 2050
- Our communities are ready for future climates
- Improve wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050
- Clean air for all by 2030
- Increase resource efficiency threefold in the County by 2050

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/environment/sustainable->

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[hertfordshire-strategy.aspx#](#)

Diversity & inclusion Strategy

This consultation opened on **21 October 2020**

The council's current Diversity & inclusion Strategy is due to end this year. This survey is asking you to inform how we deliver a new strategy that:

- Works with communities to ensure that our services are responsive to our diverse population
- Works in partnership across all sectors to make Hertfordshire a safe and inclusive County of Opportunity for all its residents.

Hertfordshire County Council provides a number of services. This includes: Adult Social Services, Children's Services, Education, Libraries, Roads, Fire and Rescue, Citizenship Services and Public Health. A full list of services can be found [here](#). To help us understand both the needs of our communities and how we can work better together, we would be grateful if you could complete the short set of questions below.

The Equality and Diversity team has worked with a number of stakeholders over the last year to identify how to develop the new strategy that meets the needs of Hertfordshire's diverse population. The below sets out our proposed added-value themes for our new Diversity & Inclusion Strategy alongside some questions designed to help us determine the actions we may need to take to deliver on these aspirations.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/equality-strategy-2016-20/diversity-and-inclusion-survey.aspx#>

Hertfordshire County Council's proposed school admission arrangements for 2022-23

Consultation start date: 26 October 2020 Consultation closing date: 6 December 2020

The county council proposes the following changes to its admission arrangements for 2022-23:

1. to amend the wording and definition of Rule 5 to:
Children for whom it is the nearest school or academy. This includes all schools except those which allocate places on the basis of faith (membership or practice) before allocating on the basis of distance/location.
2. to clarify our policy on twins and multiple births by amending the definition to:
Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), as the admission authority will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school.
3. to reduce the published admission number at Markyate Village School and Nursery
4. to maintain the existing relevant areas used for consultation purposes.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/schools/school-admission-arrangements-for-2022-23.aspx>

Under 11s - Applying for primary, junior and middle schools in 2021

The process for applying to primary, junior and middle schools in Hertfordshire opens on Monday 2 November.

If your child is due to start primary school or move on to a junior or middle school next year, make sure you apply for a place in good time.

The easiest way to apply for a school place for September 2021 is to visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions and complete the online application form.

Online applications can be amended at any time before the closing date and you can access your school offer before allocation letters are received and accept your school allocation online.

Last year, 99 per cent of parents applied this way and found the system quick, easy and secure. Terry Douris, Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Localism, said: "We have a good track record of offering children a place at one of their preferred schools and we understand how important this is to parents and carers. Last year nearly 98 percent of children in Hertfordshire were allocated one of their four ranked primary, junior or middle schools.

A leaflet explaining how to apply will be distributed to families at the beginning of November. They will be posted directly to families with children of reception age and distributed by schools to children in year 2 in infant schools and year 4 in first schools.

Before making an application, parents and carers are strongly advised to read the information

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on the website thoroughly to help them make their preferences. Parents/carers should contact schools directly to find out more.

The closing date for Under 11s applications is Friday 15 January 2021 and it is vital that parents make their applications on time.

All the information you need about the Under 11s process is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

Parents without internet access can request a paper application form that must be returned direct to the Admissions and Transport team. Application forms cannot be returned to any Hertfordshire school.

The on-time application process for admission into secondary, upper, studio schools and university technical colleges, to start in September 2021, closes on 31 October. Parents and carers can continue to make late applications for this process at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions The last date to make an application to be considered for allocation day is 1 February 2021.

Parents are advised to check www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions for any updates to the published admission arrangements or timescales and for advice on where to find extra help about applying for places. Details about new schools and additional places will also be published on the website.

Hertfordshire County Council supports new joint committee for Good Growth

Hertfordshire County Council is the second of 11 councils on the Hertfordshire Growth Board to officially announce its support for the new statutory joint committee. Building upon the success of the Growth Board collaboration over the last two years, the new committee, made up of Hertfordshire Council Leaders and Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership, will work within a democratic framework in all its future decision making.

This increased openness and transparency in the meetings of the Growth Board will provide a means for businesses, stakeholders and residents to understand how the work of the Board will support the delivery of good growth with long-term benefits for Hertfordshire.

Councillor David Williams, Leader of Hertfordshire County Council and Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board, said: "The joint committee is a positive step and an important evolution of the Growth Board governance. The county council supports the work of the Growth Board and its commitment to ensuring residents, businesses and stakeholders are part of the county's Growth journey, from meetings right through to delivery. We welcome the increased openness and transparency this joint committee will bring."

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Watford Council have also given their formal support for the new joint committee.

Hertfordshire County Council statement on support for families

Cllr Teresa Heritage, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, said:

"We remain committed to supporting families at this difficult time and want to reassure all our residents that help is at hand for those who need it right now. We work closely with families across the county and support several schemes and initiatives providing additional extra help, including financial support, food and provision of other household supplies to families in need.

"Over the past six months we have provided additional support to more than 3,500 children and young people. We've worked more closely than ever with local voluntary and community groups, including providing £120,000 of funding for local foodbanks, enabling them to use their local knowledge to best meet the needs of their communities. We've offered grants to families facing financial difficulties to help with the costs of food, bills and the purchase of other household essentials, and these grants are still available. We have created a brand-new social care team to provide support to families adversely affected by the pandemic, including many who wouldn't previously have accessed services.

"We understand the strength of feeling around the issue of holiday hunger in our communities, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on many families across the county. Ultimately, no child in Hertfordshire should be going hungry and we are working hard to ensure this doesn't happen."

"If you need help, please contact HertsHelp at www.hertshelp.net, email info@hertshelp.net or call 0300 123 4044."

Hertfordshire's First 'Supersite' Recycling Centre Opens in Ware

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The newly redeveloped Ware Recycling Centre has been officially opened. The first of its kind in Hertfordshire, the new 'supersite' is four times larger than its predecessor and has been designed to handle up to 300,000 visits and up to 10,000 tonnes of waste a year.

Featuring a split-level design allowing the majority of waste to be deposited without the need for lifting or carrying up steps, the new centre offers 38 spaces for parking and unloading. A purpose-built Reuse Centre has also been unveiled, offering residents the opportunity to deposit, browse and buy reusable items that would have otherwise been thrown away. Accessed via a newly created internal road to keep centre users off the main road, the facility also features a designated area for the removal of full containers to minimise disruption to the public during opening hours.

David Williams, Leader of Hertfordshire County Council, said: "The opening of the new recycling centre in Ware marks a key milestone in our ongoing commitment to sustainability in the county."

"This is an important investment in Hertfordshire's infrastructure, which will help make the county more environmentally sustainable and ready for the future. With 100,000 new homes due to be built in Hertfordshire in the next 15 years, it's vital that we upgrade facilities such as these so that we can cope with the expected growth."

The new recycling centre has been constructed for the county council by Balfour Beatty, who undertook extensive earthworks on the old landfill site to remove and replace material that could not be reused due to contamination, and install drainage infrastructure. This has seen in excess of 14,000 tonnes of contaminated material removed and sent for recycling. More than 1,500 new trees have been planted at a nearby site, and a new wildflower meadow created, to offset the environmental impact of the construction work.

The power for the new Ware Recycling Centre is being generated from gas from the neighbouring landfill site. The council is working in partnership with Biffa Waste Services who extract methane gas from the landfill site, which is used to power their electrical generators. This renewable source of electricity means a significantly reduced reliance on the use of fossil fuels and ensures that this recycling centre is powered by waste produced by Hertfordshire's residents and businesses.

Full information on openings times, directions to the site and the materials accepted at the site are on our website at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/wasteaware