

## MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.  
Held at 8.00pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club, Top Road, Woodham Walter.

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

### **Present:**

Cllr. Peter Warren  
Cllr. Mark Durham  
Cllr. Angus Neale  
Cllr. James Rushton  
Cllr. Joanna Symons  
Cllr. John Tompkins

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)  
District Councillor Henry Bass  
County Councillor Penny Channer (in attendance from 9.20pm)

Public: 1

**1494. Welcome** Cllr Peter Warren welcomed those present to the meeting.

**1495. Apologies For Absence** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. James Bunn.

**1496. Disclosure of Interests/Consideration of Dispensations** To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraphs 6-10 inclusive of the Code of Conduct for Members. (Members are reminded they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting).

Cllr. Mark Durham disclosed a Pecuniary Interest in agenda items 8.1, 8.2 and 11.1 the planning applications FUL/MAL/15/00047 and LBC/MAL/15/00008 as the applicant is his employer. It was agreed that these agenda items would be moved to the end of the meeting when Cllr. Durham would leave the meeting room. There were no other interests declared. The register was duly signed.

**1497. Public Forum** There was 1 member of public present.

Mrs Jenny Plumb was in attendance to draw attention to dewatering from the Royal Oak quarry which has been taking place over recent evenings from 7pm for a couple of hours. There is less flow than on the previous occasion back in August/September but she is concerned to know if this breaches the permission. Cllr. Warren informed that he had checked the level of the stream in Woodham Walter which has not so far been adversely affected and as far as we are aware no properties in Woodham Walter have been affected. Mrs Plumb was advised to keep a diary and photographic evidence which she confirms she has been doing since the previous occasion. Mrs Plumb was informed that the situation in Woodham Walter would be monitored but also advised her to notify Woodham Mortimer Parish Council as her property is in that parish. Mrs Plumb then left the meeting room at 8.10pm

**1498. To approve the Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Held On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015** The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

**1499. Matters Arising from Minutes of 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015** There were no matters arising.

**1500. To approve the Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015** The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

**1501. Matters Arising from Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

Discussion on items 1501.1 and 1501.2 took place at the end of the meeting after Cllr. Durham had left the meeting room due to his declared interest.

1501.1 Review of Extraordinary meeting. It was agreed that the meeting had been well attended and managed. At future public meetings in the Village Hall the Parish Council will look into providing a PA.

1501.2 FUL/MAL/15/00047 It was noted that various updated documents are available to view on MDC website including a response from Smart Planning regarding the Parish Council submission. Councillors ask clerk to write to MDC and note that we had read the comments from Smart Planning and for the avoidance of doubt enclose a copy of the approved minutes from the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March.

Clerk informed that she had made some enquiries about the process and been informed that District Councillors are not duty bound to declare a reason to the officer why they have called an application committee and in fact this application would have been decided by the committee anyway due to its size. It is likely that this will be at the North West Area Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May. Clerk had also been informed that site visits are governed by rules and are at the discretion of

the committee who may choose to go if they cannot assess from the information provided by the officer report. They are also entitled to make informal visits individually. If a formal site visit is deemed necessary following a resolution the committee along with the planning officer will then attend. No discussions or decisions take place at the site meeting which is fully minuted. If the applicant/agent are in attendance they are informed that at no time will they be allowed to discuss the merits or otherwise of the application. It is not an opportunity for a pitch. No other parties are allowed to attend the site visit including members of the parish council or supporters or objectors.

### **1502. Matters Arising from Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

- 1502.1 Review of Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that the meeting had been very well attended. Next year a PA system will be used in order to help audience members hear proceedings.
- 1502.2 Linda Hamilton – following on from comments made at the meeting about the success of the village lunch clerk has written a letter of thanks.
- 1502.3 Conservation Area – Cllr. Durham to remind MDC officer.
- 1502.4 Community Speed Watch – Cllr. Durham confirmed that he had attended a meeting with the Police and mentioned the CSW and issues over training and requested police presence to carrying out speed enforcement.

### **1503. Official Council Business**

1503.1 Elections - it was noted that confirmation of persons nominated has been received and there will be a Parish Council election on May 7<sup>th</sup>. There are 8 nominations for 7 Parish Councillor positions. Details of persons nominated are posted on the noticeboard and clerk will also put this on the Woodham Walter Parish Council website.

Some councillors expressed concern that there would be a significant cost of an election which seems a waste of funds for a small Parish Council and the easiest thing to do would be for one nominee to withdraw. Clerk advised that the cost is likely to be in the region of £500-£1000 but that precise figures are not available from Maldon District Council. We will be expected to pay 1/3 of the cost of the hall and staffing along with costs for the polling papers, postage and count costs. It is not possible to withdraw from the election as this would have had to be done by the same deadline as was set for receiving nominations and as we were not made aware of the additional nominee this was not possible anyway. It is a parishioners democratic right to stand for election as a parish councillor. Clerk advised councillors that they can view the Electoral Commission website for information and rules on the procedure. Councillors will also need to submit a return on any expenditure they incur as a result of the election, even if this is a nil return.

1503.2 Legal Topic Note LTN 5 - updates to rules for Parish Councils – clerk to circulate to councillors. There is a change to the law regarding the distribution of the summons and agenda. It was advised that Councils must obtain a councillor's consent to email service and to the email address they will use in order to receive the summons and agenda. Clerk to arrange formal consent at the AGM. There is now legislation which determines that the agenda for the meeting should be published on the website as well as the noticeboard no later than three clear days before the meeting. There are updated rights for public and press regarding the filming, photography or making audio recordings of proceedings and also about using other means for enabling people not present at a meeting to see or hear proceedings; also regarding written reporting on the proceedings during or after meetings e.g. facebook/tweeting etc. The draft minutes of a meeting should be published on the website within one month after the meeting – this is a change to current practice, at present the minutes are published following approval at the next meeting. Clerk will now arrange to publish the draft minutes as soon as they can be made ready after a meeting. Clerk will also look at the updated rules on sub-committees/ working parties of the Parish Council as we have 3 such committees (Bell Meadow Village Association, Allotments Association and Village Design Statement Working Party).

### **1504. Planning – APPLICATIONS**

1504.1 LBC/MAL/15/00008 Warren Golf Club, Woodham Walter  
Internal and external alterations to existing clubhouse.

Discussion on items 1504.1 took place at the end of the meeting after Cllr. Durham had left the meeting room due to his Declared interest.

It was noted that Circulation of the documents had resulted in no objections from any councillors, with request for Conservation Officer's approval prior to implementation.

1504.2 AGR/MAL/15/00271 Prior approval notification for the erection of a wooden shed.  
Annexe, The Old Rectory, Rectory Road, Woodham Walter.

Noted this application for permitted agricultural development. No response required.

### **1505. Planning – DECISIONS**

1505.1 OUT/MAL/14/01160 Land adj. Spring Elms Farm, Spring Elms Lane APPROVED(NW)

Cllr. Durham informed that this application had been granted at the NW Area committee who decided that sufficient evidence had been produced to show that it was a brownfield site. Councillors were concerned to know if Permitted development rights had been removed and this point should certainly be made by the Parish Council for future applications.

**1506. Other Planning Matters**

1506.1 Cllr. Symons reported that she had attended a very interesting Planning Seminar organised by MDC Planning department. It had been a useful overview of the planning process.

**1507. Payments** The following payments were authorised and cheques duly signed.

1507.1 e-on –Monthly DD

1507.2 A&J Lighting Solutions – Monthly DD

1507.3 Mrs J Bannerman - Clerks Allowance/Salary 25 hrs + Additional hours for Annual Report 10 hrs / Extra hours for meetings and general 18 hrs) £580.61

1507.4 Mrs J Bannerman – Expenses (Postage/Refreshments for APM) £31.32

1507.5 DW Maintenance £140

1507.6 LJ Print (Annual Report Printing) £186.30

1507.7 Woodham Walter Village Hall (Hire of Hall for Extraordinary Meeting & VDS/APM) £103.25

1507.8 A&J Lighting Solutions – Annual Maintenance Visit 2015-16 £171.60

**1508. Other Financial Matters**

1508.1 Summary of Accounts to date

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
<b>Business Reserve A/C</b>				
01-Apr-15	Opening Balance	4861.64		4861.64
13-Apr-15	Transferred to Community A/C 60978876		1300.00	3561.64
<b>Community Account</b>				
01-Apr-15	Opening Balance			543.54
13-Apr-15	Transferred from Business Reserve A/C 40622818	1300.00		1843.54
13-Apr-15	April Debits		1250.23	593.31

1508.2 Party Tents – Cllr. Bunn continues to investigate bags and tie down kits/sourcing pegs& rope. As spring looms the tie down kits/pegs need purchasing before bookings start at beginning of May.

1508.3 E-on Deemed Contract Rates increase – from 1<sup>st</sup> May our unit price will be increasing from 9.20p per kWh to 12.40p per kWh. This is the first time the price has increased in 9 years which is the reason for the large increase. Clerk has been advised that it is still cheaper to stay on the deemed contract rate than move over on to a fixed-term contract as this would incur a standing charge which would increase the costs considerably. Quotes from alternative companies have not provided any cheaper options and it was agreed to stay with E-on. Clerk advised that the impact on annual costs is likely to be in the region of an additional £60.

1508.4 Audit Paperwork – clerk has received the audit paperwork from PKF Accountants. The reporting season states that the Annual Return and documents should be returned by 8<sup>th</sup> June. This means that the accounts need to be approved at our meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May. We are required to submit documents under basic level procedures. It was agreed that Mr Derek Turner be appointed the Internal Auditor, clerk to arrange.

1508.5 End of Year Final Submission for the Tax Year (FSY) has been submitted to HMRC and beginning the payroll for the new Tax Year has been completed.

1508.6 Zurich Insurance – Currently in a long term agreement so this policy will renew on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. Clerk to review insurance needs.

**1509. Report Of The District Councillor**

Cllr. Durham reported that the procurement process for a new waste contract had started. The current contract runs until March 2016. The new contract when awarded will mean some changes to the service collection. There will be the usual weekly food waste collection, then alternate fortnightly recycling collection of Plastic/Paper/Card & Bottles (these will be collected in clear plastic bags - bottles separate), on the alternative fortnight there will be a residual waste collection – the black bags are no longer going to be used and wheelie bins will be supplied to all properties; MDC await the inspectors report regarding the LDP on 8<sup>th</sup> May; Blackwater Swimming pool redevelopment is on schedule for a June re-opening.

**1510. Other Council Matters**

1510.1 Village Design Statement progress. Cllr. Tompkins reported that the group are due to meet to finalise the draft VDS before it is sent to Maldon District Council for comments. There will be some

items to raise with the Parish Council in the future including a discussion on the merits or otherwise of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. The draft VDS document has been generally well received and people are pleased that something tangible and understandable is being done.

1510.2 Woodham Walter Common - following up on comment raised by Patricia Herrmann in VDS response regarding the Essex Wildlife Trust management arrangement. Cllr. Tompkins reported that he has reviewed the files and found several documents to be out of date with the latest EWT Management plan dated 2003-2008. It is essential that we receive up to date information because the management agreement between EWT and the Parish Council dated in 1978 states that we should approve and instruct their plans. At present we receive an annual report that tells us what they have done plus additional ad-hoc information which is occasionally communicated to us. Cllr. Tompkins raised concerns that unless we receive formal up to date information (which it is expected will be available), then the Parish Council could be exposed as the management scheme specifically requires us to have a definite plan of action, the Parish Council are responsible for the Common not EWT. It was noted that there are other third parties who also carry out work within the common e.g. Highways who maintain the footpaths/bridge. It was agreed that this should be reviewed including the Parish Council insurance cover. Clerk to enquire with Danbury Parish Council what arrangements they have in place with EWT as the management plan is not specific to Woodham Walter Common but across the whole area.

1510.3 Bell Meadow Village Association – Cllr. Durham reported following the AGM that the event is going ahead on 30<sup>th</sup> August with a new committee and plans are coming together well. The new committee which is a working party of the Parish Council consists of Mark Durham (Chairman), Dave Still (Vice-Chairman), Ken Rennie (Treasurer), plus other members who will be notified to the clerk in due course.

1510.4 Allotments Association – The AGM is due to take place next week.

#### **1511. Consultations/Questionnaires**

1511.1 MDC – Consultation for advice services. Cllr. Symons continues to assess and will respond.

1511.2 Hatfield Peverel PC – information to be forwarded to Cllr. Tompkins.

1511.3 Langford & Ulting Neighbourhood Plan – Pre-submission draft is completed and ready for comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 17<sup>th</sup> April. [www.essexinfo.net/langford-ulting](http://www.essexinfo.net/langford-ulting). Councillors did not consider there was anything which would materially affect Woodham Walter and it was agreed that no response was required.

#### **1512. Highways**

1512.1 There are a number of on-going highways issues which clerk is pursuing.

1512.2 Potholes at Blue Mills Lane/Rectory Road pull-in area. Highways have taken responsibility but they are not deemed bad enough currently and will be monitored.

1512.3 2395543 Damaged footpath adjacent to Cartref and the bridge near the Bell. Await response.

1512.4 2395542 Church Hill footpath which is narrowing due to encroachment. Await response.

1512.5 Little Baddow Road - Pothole/Road dropping away seems to be getting worse which causes drainage problems at The Bell car park/outbuildings. Clerk to report again.

#### **1513. Local Issues**

1513.1 **Bell Meadow/Playground.** Cllr. Durham reported that a spring at the top of Bell Meadow needs to be monitored and possibly a land drain installed in the future. There were no other issues to report. The book was duly signed.

1513.2 **Footpaths Report** Cllr. Warren reported that some trees had fallen during high winds on footpath to Blue Mill and he had dealt with these.

1513.3 **School Report** Cllr. Symons reported that she had attended a governors meeting. There have been no movements in pupil numbers and except for 1 place the school is at capacity; They are over-subscribed for September 2015 places; Cllr. Symons to enquire how many children at the school are from the Parish; A recent Local Authority review had graded the school as good over all; The website is being updated; The stolen gates have been replaced; Work has been done on the play area and new line markings on the hard areas.

1513.4 **Crime/Police Report** No reports.

1513.5 **Litter** No reports

1513.6 **Broadband** Cllr. Tompkins reported that he had attended a Superfast Essex meeting which had not been entirely satisfactory. Phase 2 of Superfast Essex is currently emerging (due to be announced in May) and despite the information received from the Policy & Strategy Advisor, this information for Woodham Walter was not able to be confirmed as there is a disparity of information currently available. Cllr. Tompkins advises that the most useful thing that parishioners can do is raise the issue through any channels they can and particularly to Superfast Essex. The Parish Council will

continue to pursue. Cllr. Bass will ask for one of the County Officers to attend a joint meeting with Woodham Walter/Woodham Mortimer to explain the situation. He also suggested that they be invited to have a stall at Bell Meadow Day event.

1513.7 **Vehicle Activated Sign** Investigations continue. Clerk has received information about the Community Initiatives Fund.

1513.8 **Telephone Box** Correspondence received regarding BT's Adopt a Kiosk scheme. It would seem that another result of the demise of the shop is reduced usage of the phone box. The iconic red kiosk is therefore available to adopt. Clerk has spoken to BT who explained that because of the distance to the next box (in excess of 2500m) the box is not under threat of being removed and can remain in place as a telephone box for use of the community. However if the Parish Council decided they wanted to adopt it for an alternative purpose an application can be made, this would be part of a planning application process and objections could be raised if anyone/users/residents etc wanted to and the application to adopt the kiosk could be refused. As of 7<sup>th</sup> April the last call made was on 28<sup>th</sup> March. Councillors decided that the phone kiosk should remain in its current use as a phone box until such a time as BT threaten that they will remove it, in which case the Parish Council would be keen to preserve the iconic kiosk as part of the street scene.

1513.9 **Community Speed Watch** Clerk has been contacted regarding the speedwatch equipment as it has low usage and they are requesting that it be shared with another local team – probably Little Baddow. Clerk explained the problems faced with requiring 3 people to attend from a small team of volunteers and lack of police presence to back up the scheme. Information regarding trained volunteers needs updating, clerk to arrange. Clerk requested attendance by police but realistically with reduced resources they are unlikely to attend outlying villages, the best way to ensure a visit is to provide regular data from CSW activity, regular offenders can then be targeted at specific times making best use of police time. They now have a device called True Cam where the police attend but do not necessarily stop vehicles, the data is digitally recorded and tickets are posted out. Clerk received details of a speed strip which had monitored speeds at Church Hill in May 2014 which provided some interesting readings. Speed Strip monitoring devices can be requested through Highways – clerk to enquire in order to ascertain the best positions for a future VAS/SID sign. Clerk to arrange CSW session with volunteers.

#### **1514. Correspondence**

1514.1 Dengie Project Trust – Request for funding for Burnham One Place Tourist Information Centre. Councillors decided that Woodham Walter is too far removed to benefit.

1514.2 Colin Warner – request that the PC look into restrictions for mountain bikers in Woodham Walter Common as he knows of a few people who would walk in the common more often if it wasn't for the mountain bikers. Councillors noted that there are signs asking for all users to be respectful of others and it was not thought that anything else could be done as all users have a right to use the common.

#### **1515. Points of Information**

1515.1 Cllr. Neale informed that village resident and former District Councillor, Sheila Young would be celebrating her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday at a service in the Church on Sunday.

1515.2 Cllr. Tompkins informed that there had been some motorbike noise around the village on Sunday and wondered if any Councillors were aware. No-one else was aware.

Councillor Mark Durham then left the meeting room at 10pm. Agenda items 8.1, 8.2 and 11.1 were then discussed. (Minute References: 1501.1, 1501.2 and 1504.1)

#### **1516. Date of Next Parish Council Meetings:**

Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting including the Annual General Meeting Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 8pm in Women's Club.

Signed

**Meeting ended at 10.15pm**

Dated