

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 13th January 2014

Present:

Cllr. James Bunn (Chairman)
Cllr. Peter Warren (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. Mark Durham (Present until 9.05pm)
Cllr. Angus Neale
Cllr. Andrew Newland
Cllr. Joanna Symons

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)
Emma Foy (Head of Finance, Maldon District Council)

Public: 2

1093. Welcome Cllr. James Bunn welcomed those present to the meeting. It was agreed that Emma Foy, Head of Finance from Maldon District Council would be invited to speak to councillors after agenda item 6. It was also agreed that agenda items 11 (Village Design Statement) and 13.2 (Budget/Precept setting) would be discussed earlier in the meeting in order that Cllr. Durham could leave the meeting room early.

1094. Apologies For Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Gill Orford and PC Lea Keene.

1095. 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 were 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 declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda 8.1 the planning application at Whitegates Cottage as he knows the applicant and the site is adjacent to his employer. Cllr. Mark Durham declared a Pecuniary interest in agenda item 8.2 the planning application at The Warren as he is employed by the applicant. Cllr. Andrew Newland declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda 8.2 the planning application at The Warren as he is a member at The Warren Golf & Country Club.

There were no other interests declared and the register was duly signed.

1096. Public Forum To receive the views of members of the public on items of business on the agenda or other village matters to be considered by the council.

Mr David Beattie and Mr Ken Rennie were in attendance representing the Village Design Statement Working Group. They thanked the Parish Council for the marked up questionnaire and were pleased to report that they were generally in agreement with a few details that need to be sorted out. They were awaiting feedback from some members of the group and would then meet with councillors to finalise. Cllr. Bunn thanked them for attending the meeting and would liaise with them over the next couple of weeks. Mr Beattie and Mr Rennie then left the meeting room at 8.10pm

1097. To approve the Minutes Of Parish Council Meeting Held On Monday 9th December 2013

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

1098. Matters Arising from Minutes of 9th December 2013 There were no matters arising.

1099. Emma Foy, Head of Finance, Maldon District Council explained to councillors about the precept which should be calculated on budgets for 2014/15 expenditure +/- reserves. There are complications to the process since the introduction of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme which removes some properties from the tax base figure. Therefore the precept figure is divided between less properties and therefore each property in the tax base will be paying more council tax. There are about 20 properties removed from the tax base in Woodham Walter. The District Council will be passing on a government grant designed to reduce the burden on the remaining properties. Last year this amount was £625 and this year the grant received will be reduced. There is currently no capping in place for parishes so that they can request as much precept as they need but parish councils should be aware of the impact their request has on the District Council. Precept requests are being monitored and a government cap could apply in future years. It is acknowledged that with small parish councils such as Woodham Walter even small increases in monetary terms do result higher percentage figures and therefore for example, a 10-15% increase is likely to be considered acceptable. Councillors thanked Ms Foy for attending and providing useful information. Ms Foy then left the meeting room at 8.20pm

1100. Reviews & Adoptions

1100.1 Employee Annual Review. Cllr. Bunn to finalise written report.

1100.2 Tree management. Cllr. Newland submitted the first draft which would be amended with a view to adopting at the next meeting.

1101. Woodham Walter Village Design Statement Working Party

Cllr. Bunn reported that he had spoken to David Beattie and that he had understood the reasons for the changes and was generally happy. Cllr. Bunn had outlined the budget constraints to the committee and that the parish

council will have a contingency in its budget for VDS costs but councillors do not think that the questionnaire needs to be printed in colour or that the final document needs to be delivered to all properties as it will be available to view on the website. Councillors will meet with VDS Working Party and endeavour to have the questionnaire completed in order that it can be agreed for printing/distribution at the next parish council meeting. The VDS committee will also be asked to seek the views of the RCCE. Cllr. Bunn will explain to the committee the budget restraints and if they require more expenditure they will need to seek grant funding externally. The delivery and collection method will also need to be decided but is likely to be carried out by VDS committee members and parish councillors.

1102. Budget & Precept setting.

It was noted that the Tax Base Figure for 2014/15 is 269.5. The parish's tax base is calculated based on the number of Band D equivalent properties in the area; This is the figure which is used to calculate the impact of the local council tax on the proposed budget requirement. The tax base for 2014/15 will be reduced to take into consideration the move from Council Tax Benefits to the Local Council Tax Support scheme which came into effect from April 2013. Under the revised scheme those properties eligible for a reduction in their Council Tax liability will be removed from the tax base. This means that effectively the precept will be divided between less properties so that even if we keep our precept request the same, those properties will effectively be paying more. Maldon District Council will pass on a government grant (as they did last year) to the parishes to alleviate some of the pressures caused by the decrease to the tax base.

Councillors discussed in detail the proposed expenditure budget for 2014/15. Cllr. Peter Warren proposed a 15% increase and this was seconded by Cllr. Angus Neale. All councillors were in agreement and it was duly resolved to request £10,214.00 in precept from Maldon District Council. It was noted that the parish council had reduced its precept from £10,449 in 2011/12 to £8,882.00 in 2012/13 and 2013/14 but that increases in costs along with lower party tent income and depleted reserves has meant that the increase is necessary and entirely justifiable. The Band D figure rises from £33.60 to £37.89 per year, (less the grant which has yet to be confirmed) which equates to an increase of £4.29 per Band D property over the year.

1103. Report Of The District Councillor Cllr. Durham reported that Maldon District Council had been responding to comments received during the LDP consultation process including a letter from Woodham Walter resident and former parish councillor, Mrs Patricia Herrmann regarding MDC's plan for Provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. She had informed MDC of a legal agreement between Essex County Council and Woodham Walter Parish Council in 1994 that agreed no further intensification of the Wood Corner site could take place in perpetuity. Maldon District Council have stated that even though in legal terms the agreement is between ECC and WWPC and not MDC it is unlikely that Wood Corner would be increased and there are no plans to increase the site which at 20 pitches already exceeds the ECC policy for owned sites to be a maximum of 15 pitches. Cllr. Durham then left the meeting room at 9.05pm

1104. Planning – APPLICATIONS

1104.1 FUL/MAL/13/01091 Whitegates Cottage, Herbage Park Road

Demolition of existing house and garage, erection of replacement dwelling with part basement and detached garage with access from existing entrance from highway.

Councillors had no objections. Clerk to write.

1104.2 FUL/MAL/13/00976 Warren Golf Course

To re-align several of the current 18 holes of golf of the Warren course in order to eliminate the current fairway crossovers. This involves the creation of fairways through woodland areas, the decommissioning of certain existing fairways and playing surfaces, the creation of new trees, greens and bunkers, and the installation of drainage and irrigation. Small scale alterations to the 9 hole adjoining Bunsay Course and the creation of a 6 hole short par 3 course. Request to remove a group of trees to allow further ground investigation to be undertaken to determine the feasibility of installing a reservoir on the site to improve the water efficiency of the course (permission for the reservoir will be sought under separate application).

Councillors commented that there was a huge amount of information supplied with the application but that it was difficult to ascertain precise numbers and location of trees earmarked for removal. They concluded that they supported the application at the Warren but wished to make the following comments.

- i) They are mindful of numerous Sites of Scientific Interest and request due consideration of these areas.
- ii) They are keen to see the numbers of mature indigenous healthy trees being lost kept to a minimum and that replanting should be consistent with the amount of felling.
- iii) They recall that there were items of Roman archaeological interest found at The Warren circa 1980's and were surprised that there was no archaeological survey information. If any excavation takes place the carrying out of an archaeological survey and monitoring should be a condition.

Clerk to write a letter and liaise with Cllr. Bunn and Cllr. Warren.

1105. Planning – DECISIONS

1105.1 FUL/MAL/13/00967 Chapel Stores & PO, The Street

APPROVED (DEL)

Change of use from store/Post Office classified as A1 into a term time sessional childrens nursery, classified as D1 and associated alterations.

It was noted that amongst the conditions set were time restrictions on the external play space between 9am-3pm daily and a condition that provision shall be made for the parking of 3 motor cars with an area constructed and surfaced within the site.

1105.2 FUL/MAL/13/00984 & LBC/MAL/13/00985 The Bungalow, Warren Golf Club APPROVE (DEL)
Demolition of existing laundry building within The Warren Golf and Country Club complex. New single storey office building to replace existing single-storey laundry building.

1106. Other Planning Matters

1106.1 St Michael's Drainage Easement – Cllr. Bunn continues to look into this.

1106.2 ESS/59/13/CHL Construction and operation of new effluent underground pipeline from Cuton Lock, Chelmsford to Lanford Water Treatment Works, Maldon. Cllr. Warren had looked at the information on line and there is little impact on Woodham Walter.

1106.3 Tree Officer – for information re: unsafe Ash tree at Hoe Mill Lock to be felled and replaced. Clerk to respond that it was surprising that this tree has yet to be felled.

TPO 6/77 The Shrubbery, Curling Tye Lane. Remedial works agreed.

1107. Payments The following payments were authorised and cheques duly signed.

1107.1 e-on –Monthly DD

1107.2 A&J Lighting Solutions – Monthly DD

1107.3 Douglas Tonks Ltd - Monthly DD: re: Clerks Salary/Allowance/ HMRC/Payroll services.

1107.4 National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners Ltd (Membership Renewal) To be reclaimed from WW Allotments Association.

1108. Other Financial Matters

1108.1 Summary of Accounts to date

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
------	------------------------------	-----------	------------	---------

Business Reserve A/C

09-Dec-13	Balance			6192.70
13-Jan-14	Transfer to Community Account		600.00	5592.70

Community Account

09-Dec-13	December Debits		526.63	562.43
19-Dec-13	Douglas Tonks (Payment Error)	322.73		885.16
	Douglas Tonks (re: Credit re: Payment Error			
09-Jan-13	19/12/13)		322.73	562.43
13-Jan-14	Transferred from Business Reserve Account	600.00		1162.43
13-Jan-14	January Debits		553.32	609.11

1109. Other Council Matters

1109.1 Setting the date of council meetings. The dates were set as the 2nd Monday of the month at 8pm. The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was set at Monday 28th April 2014 and Monday 30th March 2015, depending on availability of the Village Hall. Clerk to arrange.

1109.2 Annual Report 2013/14 It was agreed that the clerk should begin work on the report and invite contributions from local organisations.

1110. Consultations/Questionnaires None to date

1111. Highways

1111.1 2286979 The Street – re-reported drainage problem adj to Lynton House.

1111.2 2286373 Give Way Sign – missing sign at Oak Farm Road/Old London Road junction reported.

1111.3 2207327 Little Baddow Road – drainage problems. Re-reported on several occasions and await update.

1111.4 Broken finger posts at The Warren entrance(ref:2235941)/Blue Mill Lane/Rectory Road junction (2275631). These have been inspected and assessed.

1111.5 Curling Tye Lane – it was noted that there has been an improvement but there is still a significant problem, clerk to report again.

1112. Local Issues

1112.1 **Bell Meadow/Playground.** There were no issues to report and the book was duly signed.

1112.2 **Footpaths Report** The branch on BR 10 has since been made safe. Other than mud and fallen trees there were no specific items to report. Cllr. Warren to report poor condition of stile at Water Pumping entrance.

1112.3 **One Place On Wheels** - Woodham Walter. Next visit including mobile police vehicle – Thursday 6th February from 3.15-4.15pm. Village Hall.

1112.4 **School Report** Cllr. Symons reported that she has attended a governors meeting and that the boiler room had recently flooded.

1112.5 **Allotments Report** It was noted that work to erect a new fence and create new plots has been carried out.

1112.6 **Community Speed Watch** No reports.

1112.7 **Litter Village pick date** set on Saturday 15th February.

1112.8 **Post Office** Clerk to write to the post office and inform them that councillors do not support providing any financial contribution to the community facility as they feel it is a commercial service. Clerk will advise the post office that they should deal directly with the Village Hall committee or suggest they try contacting the Women's Club.

1112.9 **Essex Wildlife Trust** Cllr. Warren will arrange a meeting with Adam Rochester which has been deferred to March.

1112.10 **Police Report** It was noted that a vehicle had been stolen from near the junction at The Bell on night of 7/8th January.

1113. **Correspondence** None

1114. **Points of Information** None

1115. **Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:** Monday 10th February 2014 Ordinary Parish Council Meeting at 8pm in Women's Club.

Signed

Meeting ended at 10.30pm

Dated