

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 9th December 2013

Present:

Cllr. James Bunn (Chairman)
Cllr. Peter Warren (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. Mark Durham
Cllr. Andrew Newland
Cllr. Gill Orford
Cllr. Joanna Symons

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)
Cllr. Henry Bass

Public: 3

1072. Welcome Cllr. James Bunn welcomed those present to the meeting.

1073. Apologies For Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Angus Neale.

1074. 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 non-pecuniary interests anywhere Maldon District Council should be mentioned as he is a Member of Maldon District Council and further to this he reserved the right to keep an open mind when discussing planning applications.

Cllr. Mark Durham also 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 item 8.1 the planning application at Holly Lodge as the applicant is a family member. Cllr. Andrew Newland also declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 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.

1075. 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. Cllr. Bunn explained the procedure of the meeting to those present.

Mr David Beattie was in attendance as the Chairman WW VDS Group read out the following statement: As the Parish Council do not value the views of the Village Design Statement Group, (as witnessed by the continuing need to amend the Community Questionnaire), can I ask the Parish Council to either draft their own Questionnaire for us to manage, or clearly annotate a copy of our Questionnaire with the required amendments, so that we can obtain approval by the full Parish Council at the January Meeting.

Cllr. Bunn indicated that the VDS would be discussed under agenda item 11 later in the meeting. Mr Beattie then left the meeting room at 8.05pm

Mr Ken Rennie was in attendance to enquire about the progress of the VDS and also to enquire if the parish council had sufficient costing information from the village hall regarding the proposed post office outreach service.

Mr Colin Warner was in attendance to ask if councillors were aware of the current delay of about 3 months to get pre-planning advice from Maldon District Council. He is concerned that the delay is putting people off applying and holding up the local economy. Discussion with further information took place between Cllr. Mark Durham and Cllr. Henry Bass who agreed to raise the concern with Maldon District Council.

Mr Warner also asked if the Parish Council should consider paying for the mowing of Bell Meadow in order that it can be done more frequently without impacting on the goodwill of Cllr. Durham who currently cuts it voluntarily. Mr Warner and Mr Rennie then left the meeting room at 8.10pm.

1076. To approve the Minutes Of Parish Council Meeting Held On Monday 11th November 2013 The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

1077. Matters Arising from Minutes of 11th November 2013

1077.1 (1044.2) Controlled Airspace consultation. Cllr. Bunn reported that further investigation revealed that height restrictions would apply but there would not be any significant impact expected to Woodham Walter.

1078. Reviews & Adoptions

1078.1 Employee Annual Review. Cllr. Bunn to finalise written report.

1078.2 Tree management. Cllr. Newland to report at next meeting.

1079. Planning – APPLICATIONS

1079.1 **HOUSE/MAL/13/01008 Holly Lodge, Hop Garden Lane**

Two storey extension and internal alterations.

It was noted that this application is a renewal of HOUSE/MAL/10/00954 which was approved in January 2011. Councillors had no objections, clerk to write accordingly.

1079.2 FUL/MAL/13/00984 & LBC/MAL/13/00985 The Bungalow, Warren Golf Club

Demolition of existing laundry building within the Warren Golf & Country Club complex. New single-storey office building to replace existing single-storey laundry building

Having declared an interest Cllr. Durham left the meeting room. Councillors concluded that they support the application. Clerk to write accordingly. Cllr. Durham re-joined the meeting.

1080. Planning – DECISIONS There were no decisions to report.

1081. Other Planning Matters

1081.1 St Michael's Drainage Easement – Cllr. Bunn continues to look into this.

1081.2 MDC – Local Development Plan – it was noted that responses to the consultation are now available to view on-line.

1081.3 Rural Housing Needs – clerk to ask Paul Gayler, Strategic Housing Manager at MDC if it is worth having a meeting bearing in mind that there is no land available in the ownership of the Parish Council.

1082. Woodham Walter Village Design Statement Working Party

Councillors noted that the latest version of the questionnaire is much improved although they are still not happy for it to be distributed. The Parish Council has not set any time restraints on the production of the document and do not consider the document to be urgent. Cllr. Newland who sits on the committee was not aware that a statement had been written and he has previously made observations on issues with the questionnaire to the group. It was acknowledged that detailed feedback had not so far been given to the VDS Working Party and councillors could understand the frustration that this has caused. Developing a design statement for Woodham Walter is very difficult as there is no village style, rather mix of different styles. Much of the content of the proposed questionnaire was very good and it is clear that a lot of work has gone into producing the document. However, councillors feel that some of the questions were more related to a Parish Plan than to a Village Design Statement and that this may be where the VDS committee has misinterpreted the brief. The stance that the group have currently taken is unfortunate but councillors feel that to send the questionnaire out in its current form would be wrong and that the response rate is likely to be negligible and it cannot therefore be sent out on the behalf of the parish council. Councillors agreed that they should provide a marked up version of the questionnaire that they would be able to support and present this to the committee. The Parish Council having been challenged by the VDS Working Party will also suggest that the questionnaire be sent to the RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) for their advice. Cllr's Newland, Bunn and Durham to meet and progress questionnaire.

1083. Payments The following payments were authorised and cheques duly signed.

1083.1 e-on –Monthly DD

1083.2 A&J Lighting Solutions – Monthly DD

1083.3 Douglas Tonks Ltd - Monthly DD: re: Clerks Salary/Allowance/ HMRC/Payroll services.

1083.4 SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) Annual Membership

1084. Other Financial Matters

1084.1 Summary of Accounts to date

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
Business Reserve A/C				
11-Nov-13	Balance			6591.80
02-Dec-13	Interest received	0.90		6592.70
09-Dec-13	Transfer to Community Account		400.00	6192.70
Community Account				
11-Nov-13	Balance			614.06
27-Nov-13	Party Tent Hire (Full - Lake)	75.00		689.06
09-Dec-13	Transferred from Business Reserve Account	400.00		1089.06
09-Dec-13	December Debits		526.63	562.43

1084.2 Budget. Draft budget figures were discussed. Draft figures suggest that an increase in the precept requirement would be needed. Clerk has received our Tax Base Figure for 2014/15. 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 is expecting to receive a government grant (as they did last year) which will be passed over to the parishes to alleviate some of the pressures caused by the decrease to the tax base. The level of this grant is yet to be confirmed. Clerk to invite Emma Foy from MDC to attend the January meeting. Clerk to email draft excel document to all councillors for consideration

1085. Other Council Matters None to date

1086. Consultations/Questionnaires

1086.1 Clerk to email information re; tractor

1087. Report Of The District Councillor

Cllr Durham reported that MDC are due to vote on supporting the Local Development Plan which can then move to the next stage. Maldon District Council responded well to an Emergency Evacuation of properties in the district, setting up rest centres to receive members of the public who were evacuated from their homes by the emergency services. The Council had 2 hours notice to set up emergency rest centres which could technically have needed to provide space for several thousand people, in the event 453 people attended the centre at The Plume School.

1088. Highways

1088.1 Various ongoing issues including Little Baddow Road drainage - Clerk to chase up again.

1089. Local Issues

1089.1 **Bell Meadow/Playground.** There were no reported problems and the book was duly signed. Clerk will ask Colin Warner to attend to the tree which came down in the storms on Bell Meadow. Councillors discussed the grass cutting at Bell Meadow, Cllr. Durham is happy to continue to cut the meadow voluntarily and will try to do it more frequently, this is also thanks to The Warren who provide the equipment. Councillors were very appreciative of this goodwill gesture as it was noted that if the parish council had to pay this would have a significant impact on the amount each household pays in council tax for the parish council.

1089.2 **Footpaths Report** Cllr Warren reported: 1) Following a Land Registry search by ECC, their Rights-of-Way Officer has written to the owners of the Jacob's Well area of The Wilderness in order to get the dangerous tree overhanging FP36 cut down. 2) ECC contractors have removed the concrete debris and fallen branches from the stream by the bridge on FP36 3) A large oak blocking bridleway BR10 has been removed by workers from Brocks Farm. Cllr. Warren will investigate reports of a further tree in the same area.

1089.3 **One Place On Wheels** - Woodham Walter. Next visit including mobile police vehicle – Thursday 6th February from 3.15-4.15pm. Village Hall.

1089.4 **School Report** None

1089.5 **Allotments Report** Cllr. Orford reported that 2 plots have now been adopted.

1089.6 **Community Speed Watch** Our speed gun has recently been re-calibrated.

1089.7 **Litter** Clerk to organise a date for the village pick in February.

1089.8 **Village Shop** Councillors agreed that any costs which are incurred should be covered by the post office and that the Village Hall/Parish Council should not be expected to subsidise a commercial service. Clerk to enquire with Tolleshunt D'arcy Parish Clerk to see what they do and how/if they support the service.

1089.9 **Essex Wildlife Trust** Clerk to liaise with Adam Rochester regarding meeting with councillor representatives at WW Common.

1089.10 **Environment Agency** re: branches partially blocking stream between The Street & Wilderness. Reported and received information that they are currently reviewing the maintenance they undertake to reduce flood risk. The officer did not think that the obstruction was causing an imminent flood risk, he forwarded details of riparian ownership responsibilities. Since this report it is noted that the concrete obstruction was removed by ECC.

1090. Correspondence

1091. Points of Information

1091.1 It was noted that Beryl Wareham has now completed 70 years as a Royal British Legion volunteer in the village. Councillors asked clerk to write to her to thank her for her work over the years and that this is very much appreciated. A Parish Council representative would be happy to attend if the RBL organise an award presentation.

1092. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting: Monday 13th January 2014 Ordinary Parish Council Meeting at 8pm in Women's Club.

Signed

Meeting ended at 9.55pm

Dated