

MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.
Held at 8pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club, Top Road, Woodham Walter.

Monday 13th January 2020

Present:

Cllr. John Tompkins (Chairman)
Cllr. John Brown
Cllr. James Bunn
Cllr. Jenny Hughes
Cllr. James Rushton
Cllr. Joanna Symons
Cllr. Peter Warren

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)
District Councillor Mark Durham

Public: 2

2407. Welcome Cllr. John Tompkins welcomed those present to the meeting.

2408. Apologies For Absence Received and accepted from District Councillor Karl Jarvis and County Councillor Penny Channer.

2409. 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. John Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application at White Barn as he is friends with the applicant.

2410. Public Forum

There were 2 members of the public present representing Woodham Walter Village Hall. Councillors were informed that the Village Hall has been running at a loss for some time. Recently they have been made aware that the hall does not comply with current asbestos regulations. There is an issue with the roof. They have also discovered that the Charities Trust Deed is not correctly constructed and needs amending before any grants can be applied for from other organisations. The Village Hall is in a crisis situation and they urgently seek financial support from the Parish Council. The representatives outlined that bookings are at the highest rate ever but this still doesn't cover running costs and certainly not the large sums required for updating the Trust Deed, Asbestos survey and other building survey/maintenance works etc. Fundraising has tailed off and they do not have enough funds to cover the urgent items as well as general running costs. The Treasurer is due to retire. The Committee sought advice from the RCCE who have offered guidance to the committee and they can help to prepare documents for the Trust Deed.

Comments were then made by councillors

- What endeavours have been made to raise funds?
- The Parish Council will need to see accounts in order to get a clearer picture
- Village Hall website is out of date and not fit for purpose
- Booking/Caretaker – is there a conflict of interest as they are also the booking/caretaker for Woodham Mortimer Village Hall?
- Concern that the committee have allowed the situation to reach crisis point and have not taken action in previous years both in terms of keeping on top of legislation and on expenditure/maintenance.
- Query regarding Premises Licence

The representatives agreed the committee have allowed things to slip but have now woken up to the crisis. They have been seeking advice from RCCE and from other local Village halls. They agreed that advertising is important and updating the website is required. They need interim immediate help and long-term help as well and would be grateful if the Parish Council could provide funding from the precept for this Village amenity.

2411. To approve Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9th December

2019 The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

2412. Matters Arising from the minutes.

There were no matters arising.

2413. Village Grants

2413.1 To consider developing a system for awarding Grants.

Councillors discussed a scheme for awarding grants and agreed that a more formal process should be instigated. Clerk had found a suitable document on the Danbury Parish Council website and it was agreed that this approach would be suitable for Woodham Walter.

Cllr. Durham asked if there would be an independent person on the grant awarding committee.

Councillors agreed to consider this further but the Parish Council adheres to the Local Government Transparency Code. All Parish Council meetings are open to the public and the minutes from those meetings are available for the public to view on the website or on demand. Clerk will seek advice from Danbury Parish Council. Cllr. James Bunn proposed and Cllr. Peter Warren seconded that the proposed document be adopted. All Councillors in agreement.

2413.2 Woodham Walter Village Hall – request for funding.

Cllr. Tompkins read through information submitted by the Village Hall including quotes received. Councillors agreed that an emergency grant should be made to enable the committee to get the Trust Deed updated in order that they can then proceed with the urgent Asbestos survey and also apply for additional grant funding. It was considered that it is very likely that the building will have a significant amount of asbestos and that the financial implications of this could be substantial. Councillors to investigate registering the Village Hall as a community asset because the Village Hall/site should be protected.

Cllr. James Bunn proposed and Cllr. James Rushton Seconded that in the first instance the Parish Council would provide funding for the updating of the Trust documents up to £400.00 with advice that the Village Hall should come back to the Parish Council with further funding request using new application process. All Councillors agreed to the proposal. Councillors agreed that it would be important to carry out due diligence with public money, and that the Village Hall should be asked to submit their latest accounts.

2414. Planning – APPLICATIONS

2414.1 19/01319/LDP White Barn, Blue Mill Lane

Claim for lawful development certificate for a construction of a 2 bay cart lodge with side storage and new access.

Councillors had no comments.

2414.2 There were no other Planning Applications received.

2415. Planning – DECISIONS

2415.1 19/01213/WTPO 2 Redgates, Old London Road REFUSE

T1 Horse chestnut – reduce lateral limbs and vertical limbs by 2m and balance crown. Raise and stem clean. T4 Oak – Raise crown to 3m. T5 Sycamore – Reduce lateral & vertical limbs by 2m and raise crown to 5m. T6 & T7 Sycamore – Raise crown to 5m.

2415.2 19/00982/HOUSE Somerset, West Bowers Road APPROVE

Proposed single storey side extension with cellar.

2415.3 It was noted that the following two Planning Decisions had been received since the setting of the agenda.

2415.4 19/01066/FUL Guys Farm Lodge, Manor Road APPROVE

S73A application for a replacement dwelling.

2415.5 19/01199/WTPO St Michael's Church, Church Hill APPROVE

Avenue of lime trees – pollard. Suckers will also be removed from the main trunks up to the crown. Two maple trees and one yew – removal of a number of dead and decayed branches and lifting the crowns to 2m from ground level. One Chestnut – removal of a number of dead and decayed branches, lifting the crown to 2m from ground level and removal of the intruding holly bush.

2416. Other Planning Matters

2416.1 Enforcement Updates – Clerk has written to request that the Warren Lodges are inspected during the closure period.

2416.2 There were no other Planning Matters.

2417. Reports Of the District/County Councillor

Cllr. Jarvis had submitted a written report including details that the accounts were signed off in December although there is work to carry out on systems, process and resources. Budget considerations for 2020/21 are currently under discussion. Citizens Advice have had allowance reinstated. A number of concerned sources have drawn to his attention the environmental impact on

WW from further development of the Warren Estate and when any application is submitted it will need close scrutiny.

Cllr. Durham noted that things had been quiet due to the Christmas break.

It was reported that County Cllr. Channer had submitted a written report including details about flooded roads after heavy rainfall when surface drains had struggled to cope. ECC have announced plans to switch off duplicate street lights that perform no useful function and waste energy. The Army & Navy junction continues to receive attention and works to remove the flyover are due to commence. They are still considering various schemes to improve the Army & Navy junction. More information at www.essex.gov.uk/armyandnavy . Essex Energy Switch has again been launched and residents are encouraged to sign up to save money on gas and electricity bills. www.essex.gov.uk/energyswitch

2418. Payments

Cllr. James Rushton proposed and Cllr. Peter Warren seconded that the payments listed in the payment schedule to be authorised. All Councillors agreed. Cllr. Tompkins and Cllr. Hughes duly sign the appropriate paperwork and cheques.

Ref:	Payee	Gross	VAT	Net
2418.1	E-on	31.73	1.51	30.22
2418.2	A&J Lighting Solutions	25.20	4.20	21.00
2418.3	Mrs J Bannerman (Inc. Holiday pay)	547.40	0.00	547.40
2418.4	National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners Ltd	66.00	11.00	55.00

2418.5 It was noted that invoices had not so far been received for other items which had appeared on the agenda. A transfer of excess funds will therefore be made into the savings account.

2419. Other Financial Matters

2419.1 Summary of Accounts to date.

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
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Business Reserve A/C

13 Jan 20	Balance			22669.69
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Community Account

10-Dec-19	Christmas Tree Lighting Fundraising (Playground)	76.50		954.48
	Bell Meadow Village Association Grant			
16-Dec-19	(Playground)	1000.00		1954.48
16-Dec-19	Christmas Tree Recycling (Playground)	10.00		1964.48
09-Dec-19	December Debits		998.87	965.61
17-Dec-19	Donation (Playground) Jenny Moody Properties	400.00		1365.61
23-Dec-19	Tesco Collection (Playground) (£1.22 + £678.33)	679.55		2045.16
	Donation via Paypal (Playground - Christmas			
02-Jan-20	Tree)	48.25		2093.41
	Donation via Paypal (Playground - Christmas			
02-Jan-20	Tree)	9.41		2102.82
	Donation via Paypal (Playground - Christmas			
02-Jan-20	Tree)	9.41		2112.23
	Donation via Paypal (Playground - Christmas			
06-Jan-20	Tree)	4.55		2116.78
	Donation via Paypal (Playground - Christmas			
06-Jan-20	Tree)	9.41		2126.19
	Donation via Paypal (Playground - Christmas			
06-Jan-20	Tree)	14.26		2140.45
08-Jan-20	Christmas Tree Recycling (Playground)	5.00		2145.45
08-Jan-20	Donation (Playground) (Danbury Haulage)	50.00		2195.45
08-Jan-20	Christmas Tree Recycling (Playground)	25.00		2220.45
08-Jan-20	Christmas Tree Recycling (Playground)			2220.45
13-Jan-20	January Debits		670.33	1614.53

2419.2 2020-2021 Budget Consideration. Councillors discussed budget considerations and precept request. Considering expenditure (including regular payments plus sums for new noticeboard, Memorial Garden signage, PC, telephone, contingency for possible devolution or the Public Rights of Way maintenance) and taking into account discussions with the Village Hall, councillors agreed that the precept should be increased by 10% in order to meet all council spending commitments and to put a contingency in place to assist the Village Hall. This also takes into account a possible future cap on Parish Council precepts. Cllr. John Brown proposed and Cllr. James Bunn seconded that the precept for 2020/21 be increased by 10% to a figure of £22,309.00 (equivalent to an annual Band D amount of £82.35, an increase of £7.12). This proposal was agreed by all Councillors. Clerk to issue paperwork to Maldon District Council with precept demand.

2419.3 Bank Account Statements – Clerk has liaised with Barclays Bank and the new arrangements for Statements to be delivered to the Chairman has been set up.

2419.4 Cllr. John Brown confirmed that he had reviewed the Bank Statements and Accounts sheets for November and December and found them to be reconciled correctly.

2420. Other Council Matters

2420.1 Woodham Walter Common. Essex Wildlife Trust. Await further information re: agreement

2420.2 Bell Meadow Village Association. Cllr. Durham reported that the new date for the AGM has been set for Friday 7th February at 7pm in Queen Vic. Several volunteers have now come forward to sit on the committee.

2420.3 Community Protection Team. Await report. It is understood that a new member of staff is now in place and that the reports should therefore be submitted more efficiently.

2420.4 Bell Meadow Playground. Minutes of the Playground committee meetings were noted. The team attended Tesco for a collection and raised £679.55. The Woodham Walter Christmas Tree Recycling scheme raised £161.45. Total fundraising to date of: £3364.27 + £1000 PC grant. Other events are in the planning stages. Grant applications have been submitted to National Lottery and Pocket Parks (both for £10k). Date of next meeting Monday 20th January.

2420.5 Clerks Progress Report – to be updated.

2420.6 Council/Village Logo/Sign – survey results: There were 13 responses. Generally positive response with just 1 negative. There was concern that such a small response wasn't representative, although information had appeared in the December and January Parish Magazines and the survey had been sent out by email so people have had a chance to respond if required. There has been 1 proposal submitted. Plus 1 other note of interest received from a graphic designer in the village. Further consideration required.

2420.7 Grass Cutting Tender – documents have been sent out. The deadline for return of documents is 12pm on Wednesday 5th February 2020. Clerk and Cllr. Warren will then meet to open and review quotes before providing recommendation to the Parish Council at the February meeting where the contract will be decided.

2421. Consultations/Questionnaires

2421.1 Draft Supplementary Planning Document – Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Deadline 21st Feb) Noted.

2422. Highways & Infrastructure

2422.1 Sustrans Cycle Signposts – works to move the sign posts have now been completed.

2422.2 Closure of Hoe Mill Bridge – for erosion protection works. Updates shared via village email. Cllr. Channer update forwarded to councillors. No further information to report.

2422.3 Salt/Grit – Cllr. James Rushton proposed and Cllr. John Brown seconded that the policy document be adopted, this was agreed by all Councillors. Clerk to send to Skippers.

2423. Local Issues

2423.1 Bell Meadow

- i. Cllr. Brown reported that one of the goals had been moved. One of the straps was broken. He moved the goal back and returned with tools to repair the strap. Checked all the straps to make sure they were still secure. Fitted cable ties to hold the nets on.
- ii. There were no other issues/comments from inspections.

2423.2 Footpaths Report.

- i. Cllr. Warren reported that 48 people had attended the New Year's Day walk, he agreed to advertise it in the December as well as January parish magazine as some people had not found out in time. The new FP33 (Mill Race to Little London) had suffered in the recent flooding as bridges had been washed away. This has been reported to Highways.
- ii. Map – Cllr. Brown has now completed and Councillors are happy, this will now be posted on the website.

2423.3 School Report. Cllr. Symons did not have any information to report.

2423.4 Litter. One dead badger (Blue Mill Lane) reported and removed. The Village Litter pick date was set for Saturday 8th February with 29th February as reserve date in case of poor weather. Colin Warner has agreed to help with collection/storage of litter. Clerk to advertise date in parish magazine and via email nearer the time. Clerk to arrange to borrow litter pickers from MDC.

2423.5 Broadband Update. Cllr. Brown had no information to report.

2423.6 Crime Awareness & Prevention

- i. Neighbourhood Watch – The local group are working on development of the scheme. They recently met and reported that the responsibilities of co-ordinators had been agreed, principally as a communicator of information. Each co-ordinator will engage with their local residents to be part of their local Whatsapp group (groups assigned at the meeting). The Whatsapp group will have information flow both up and down i.e. both informing and receiving of information. Whatsapp is not to be used to report a crime to the police this will be done by the resident using the normal process e.g. telephoning 999 or 101. There are a few areas of the village not currently covered but solutions are being sought. Stickers will be distributed by co-ordinators to local residents. It was noted that Brian Cumming is stepping down from the main role of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator for the village and this will be taken on by Gary Orford. Clerk to write and thank Mr Cumming.
- ii. Crime reports – report of car break-in on Little Baddow Road and items stolen. This had been a keyless car theft where the signal from a key for a “keyless entry” car is captured by somebody standing outside the victims house and then gaining access to the car. A blocking pouch or box can prevent this crime occurring and is advised for owners of all keyless entry vehicles – including for spare keys.

2423.7 Dog Waste Bin – Await (MDC have this in hand but delayed due to staff sickness)

2424. Matters Raised by Local Residents

2424.1 Local resident had updated that the drainage issue at Bassetts Lane remains an on-going problem. Highways are due to carry out a survey during the current week.

2425. Correspondence

2425.1 Various items of correspondence have been emailed to Councillors or put in drop box.

2425.2 Any relevant information for the village has been posted to the Noticeboard pages on the website. Where space allows this is also posted on the noticeboard outside Tadpoles nursery.

2426. Points of Information and Items for the next Agenda

2427. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Monday 10th February 2020 at 8pm in Women’s Club.

Signed

Meeting ended at 9.40pm

Dated