

## MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.  
Held at 7pm using Virtual technology hosted by Zoom.

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 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 Karl Jarvis  
District Councillor Mark Durham

Public: None

**2321. Welcome** Cllr. John Tompkins welcomed those present to the meeting. Parish Clerk notified that the meeting would be recorded for the purposes of minute taking.

**2322. Apologies For Absence** Received and accepted from County Councillor Penny Channer

**2323. 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. Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest in the discussion regarding the Parish Magazine has his spouse advertises in the publication. There were no other interests declared and the register was duly updated.

### **2324. Public Forum**

There were no members of the public present.

**2325. To approve the minutes of Virtual Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020.** The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

**2326. Matters Arising** - There were no matters arising.

### **2327. Planning – APPLICATIONS**

2327.1 20/00531/FUL Grove Manor, Herbage Park Road  
3 bay cart lodge building.

Councillors did not raise any objections but wished to comment that if Officers/Members are minded to approve the application, that a condition is attached to restrict the building to domestic purposes ancillary to the dwelling house and not for habitation.

2327.2 20/00660/HOUSE Warren Grove, Common Lane  
3 bay cart lodge

It was noted that the application had arrived too late for the agenda. It was therefore agreed that the Clerk would respond using delegated powers.

Councillors concluded that they have no objections to the principal of the building but commented that the design is out of character with the main building due to the steep pitch. It is considered that it would also be out of character in the street scene which will be visible from Woodham Walter Common.

### **2328. Planning – DECISIONS**

2328.1 No decisions had been received.

### **2329. Other Planning Matters to note**

2329.1 Enforcement – Oak Farm. Following contact from residents that building works have started at land adjacent to Oak Farm, investigations by Clerk have revealed a permission for two agricultural dwellings in 1965. The first was built (Oak Farm) and the second plot is now being built. It would therefore appear that the approval remains live. Councillors are somewhat surprised that after 55 years a building can begin without any notification to the Parish Council or neighbours. The case has been raised with Enforcement who have been asked to investigate and ensure that no other permissions superseded this application and that all conditions are adhered to including the condition

that occupiers of the dwellings should be employed or last employed locally in agriculture. Cllr. Durham was thanked for his help in raising this with MDC and he will continue to push for a full investigation.

2329.2 CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Engagement Meeting. Await information.

### **2330. Reports Of the District/County Councillor**

Cllr. Jarvis reported that he has been keeping in touch with Planning regarding any applications from The Warren Estate with regards to a proposed development at Bunsay Downs. There is currently a technicality which needs to be dealt before the application is validated.

There have recently been two major applications refused by the Planning committee which had been recommended for approval by officers. These are the applications for ground investigations at Land East of Bradwell and the housing development at Land North & West of Knowles Farm, Maldon. Yet to see the ramifications of these refusals as they were large developments.

Currently looking at budgets and what effects COVID expenditures has had on council reserves.

Green Bins – The 4<sup>th</sup> lorry has now come on stream which means that the capacity of the green bin collections can be increased. Those who have applied for green bins have been written to and it is hoped that the new collections will begin from 4<sup>th</sup> August.

Leisure centre – currently looking at guidelines with a view to re-opening

Cllr. Durham reported that the two large applications which had been refused had been part of the Local Development Plan which may put that at risk of being found unsound, along with the 5 year housing land supply. It is hoped that a negotiation can be done with the site owner to progress the development at Knowles Farm. Bradwell B was also in the LDP and it is expected that this will be the subject of an appeal.

Planning - Waiting for White Paper from Government which it is expected will include further relaxation of permitted development rights. This is a concern for change of use of commercial and agricultural buildings to residential. ECC will be discussing the response.

Devolution – Future structure is expected in a White Paper from Government. Looking likely that by the 2023 District Elections/Boundary Review the District Structure will change to a Unitary structure which could result in 4/5 Unitary councils across Essex each with Elected Mayors. ECC are working with District, City and Borough colleagues.

### **2331. Payments**

Cllr. James Bunn proposed and Cllr. Jenny Hughes seconded that the payments listed in the Payment Schedule be approved. All councillors in agreement. To note that annual grants to be paid to local organisations are as per the budget agreed for 2020/21. All future grants will be awarded following a formal application process, details of which will be sent to beneficiaries with this year's grant cheque and application documents will be available on the website.

Ref:	Payee	Gross	VAT	Net
2331.1	Nancy Powell Davis (Internal Auditor) (From June)	150.00	0.00	150.00
2331.2	E-on	30.71	1.46	29.25
2331.3	A&J Lighting Solutions	25.20	4.20	21.00
2331.4	Mrs J Bannerman (Salary & Allowance)	626.05	0.00	626.05
2331.5	Mrs J Bannerman (Expenses - Zoom)	14.39	0.00	14.39
2331.6	Mrs J Bannerman (Expenses - Microsoft 365)	11.28	1.88	9.40
2331.7	Skippers Ground Maintenance (May & June)	852.00	142.00	710.00
2331.8	Mr G Orford (Neighbourhood Watch Signs)	42.00	0.00	42.00
2331.9	Royal Mail Group Ltd (PO Box Renewal)	352.50	58.75	293.75
2331.10	EALC (Chairman Training - Cllr. Rushton)	48.00	8.00	40.00
2331.11	RCCE (Membership Renewal)	52.80	8.80	44.00
2331.12	Grant: Woodham Walter Women's Club	198.00	0.00	198.00
2331.13	Grant: Woodham Walter Village Hall	269.00	0.00	269.00
2331.14	Grant: Essex Wildlife Trust	262.00	0.00	262.00

## 2332. Other Financial Matters

### 2332.1 Summary of Accounts to date.

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
<b>Business Reserve A/C</b>				
08-Jun-20	Balance			48778.46
13-Jul-20	Transferred to Community Account		2600.00	46178.46
<b>Community Account</b>				
08-Jun-20	Balance			699.89
13-Jul-20	Transfer from Business Reserve	2600.00		3299.89
13-Jul-20	July Debits		2783.93	515.96

2332.2 Review of Bank Statements and Account sheets. Councillor Brown confirmed that he has reviewed the Bank Statements and Account sheets for June and found them to be reconciled correctly.

2332.3 Chairman's Inspection of 2019/20 Accounts: The chairman confirmed that he has carried out the annual review of the accounts.

2332.4 Internal Auditor Report. Councillors accepted the report and considered the recommendations. 1) The Internal Auditor report should appear on the website. 2) The council should seek alternative payments methods so that clerk is not making out of pocket expenses. Clerk confirmed that the summary Internal Auditor report has been uploaded to the website. Councillors discussed the report submitted by the Clerk who has investigated a Council method of card payments. Cllr. Joanna Symons proposed and Cllr. James Rushton seconded that a Credit Card would be the best and securest method. All councillors in agreement and clerk will proceed with the application process. The expenditure limits as per the Financial regulations will suffice. Councillors also ask clerk to investigate on-line banking – clerk will check the guidelines.

2332.5 End of Year Accounts – Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2020. Clerk confirmed that the accounts have been submitted for Audit. Information has been placed on the noticeboard outside Tadpoles and on the website as per transparency rules.

2332.6 Annual Investment Report – Councillor James Bunn proposed and Cllr. Peter Warren seconded that the council should accept the Clerks recommendation that due to low levels of interest rates generally, the Council should remain with Barclays for both the current and savings account. All councillors in agreement.

2332.7 August Payments: It was agreed that payments be made outside of an August Meeting with the approval of the Chairman/Vice Chairman and cheques signed by two signatories. Expected expenditure: E-on DD; A&J Lighting Solutions DD; Mrs J Bannerman (Clerks Salary/Holiday Pay/Allowance and Expenses; Skippers Ground Maintenance; MDC (Community Engagement Team);

2332.8 Quarterly Expenditure Review to end of June 2020. A new design of report has been shared with councillors following advice from the Internal Auditor that the report is simplified. Councillors to review.

## 2333. Other Council Matters to note

### 2333.1 COVID-19 Clerks Update.

- i. Regular village emails are sent by the Clerk with relevant updates for residents. Information is also put on the website on a regular basis. The Chairman noted that the emails are being met with a lot of acclaim and thanked the Clerk.
- ii. Grow Your Own project – it was noted that 3 families from the village have received the Grow Your Own packs. Councillors agreed that the project is worthwhile and support the groups applications for additional funding which will enable the project to continue. The group would also be interested in working with the Allotment Association should plots become available.
- iii. 1<sup>st</sup> August - Food parcels/shielding to be lifted. CVS Covid Response will be wound down. All those receiving support are being written to, to establish what support they may need going forward and encouraging them to reach out to their network of family, friends and neighbours for their needs.
- iv. Winter contingency plans for possible future spike/lock down. Storage of emergency food boxes has been arranged with Village Hall. The CVS Response service will be restarted should it be required.

- v. Clerk noted that Parish Clerks have been receiving regular virtual briefings from Ben Page Strategic Theme Lead - Community | Strategy, Policy & Communications Directorate at MDC which has been very well received. It has been an excellent way of cascading information to Parishes as well as reaching out to Parish Council's and how working relationships can be improved as they realise what an asset we are being so close to the local community.

2333.2 Community Engagement Team (CET) – It was noted from the June report that Tru-Cam monitoring is still resulting in captures. Discussion regarding asking the team to attend at our expense to enforce parking on the Double Yellow Lines (DYL). Councillors agreed that residents want to see tickets being issued and that if they are not attending under South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP) that we should request them to attend on behalf of the Parish Council. Councillors supported the proposal for an additional hour (per month) at the weekends specifically for parking would be a good idea.

Cllr. Durham noted that the responsibility for enforcement should lie with SEPP and the CET are subcontracted to cover SEPP duties. He understands the views of the Parish Council that they wish to engage the CET team directly. He suggests stipulating times of attendance on sunny weekends. The worst times seem to be late morning and about 3pm.

Councillors agree that the timing at weekends needs to be stipulated. Clerk will speak to Nicola Syder from CET and Adrian Rayner from SEPP.

2333.3 Councillors confirmed the decision of the Parish Council under minute reference 2272 remains extant during the current period. That Parish Council has delegated power to the Clerk to make decisions using the LGA 1972 section 101.

#### **2334. Highways & Infrastructure**

2334.1 Hoe Mill Bridge.

- i. Parking on DYL – No statistics of enforcement visits or tickets issued has been made available. Clerk has seen no evidence of tickets but plenty of cars parked on DYL's. Cllr. Durham reported that he will write again to SEPP and ask them to attend and carry out enforcement.
- ii. The existing width restriction blocks are to be replaced with a more resilient measure. Await timescale.

2334.2 Roadworks sign with diversion which remained in place (at Warren entrance) despite the road re-opening has been reported.

#### **2335. Local Issues**

2335.1 Bell Meadow i) Rotten Fence/Tree Works – Clerk has sent notification to MDC (due to Conservation Area) of planned works and await response. Cllr. Jarvis will chase this up. ii) Goal nets maintenance – Cllr. Brown to cable tie nets. iv) Water Trees, Councillors are reminded to water the trees, v) Gate at top which was left open by ESW has now been locked by Clerk. vi) Goal posts not currently attached to anchors, Clerk has requested Skippers attend this week. It was noted that the area is being well used as the grass is showing signs of wear. vii) Bell Meadow Hedge – it was agreed that the hedge should be cut as usual. Clerk to arrange. viii) Councillors are reminded to update excel document in the dropbox and report any issues to the Parish Clerk.

2335.2 Footpaths Report – Cllr Warren reported that the ECC annual cut has been completed, he has written to thank them for a good job; Footpath between Mead Pastures and Blue Mill Lane – gate was stolen recently and this has been reported; Ash tree blocking FP16 in Wilderness was cleared by landowner Lee Carter and son.

2335.3 School Report – Cllr. Symons reported that 42 children have now been attending regularly which has been working well. More families have gradually taken up the return. The school are working on plans for a full opening in September.

2335.4 Litter – litter (mainly beer cans) noted along Little Baddow Road since the re-opening of the golf club. Local resident has done a litter pick and drawn to the attention of the Bunsay Downs management.

2335.5 New Playground – Cllr. Symons reported that she has been in touch with Cllr. Channer about the Locality Fund. Looking into the possibility of buying a piece of equipment to be stored in advance of the playground works as the fund needs to be spent in this financial year. Cllr. Symons, Graham Bannerman and Clerk are due to complete the full application for the Community Initiatives Fund. Cllr. Durham indicated that he would talk to Cllr. Channer regarding the rules for the Locality Fund allocation. He will also send a copy of the rules which indicate that funds can be used towards larger projects.

2335.6 Recycling Collections – it was noted that the contract says that they must collect cardboard boxes, but only if they are folded flat. However, it is much easier if they can be put into a sack

wherever possible which will help alleviate the problems seen last week. (Where excess quantities of rubbish across the district has resulted in delayed collections). It was noted that generally MDC have done a good job of collecting rubbish and recycling during the lockdown period.

2335.7 Traveller Sites Meeting – Cllr. Tompkins and Clerk reported on meeting with Cllr Sue Barker and Adrian Coggins, Head of Wellbeing and Public Health to discuss Traveller Sites. Essex County Council are exploring if anyone can manage the sites better than ECC. Councillor's agreed that they would view any changes to the management at Wood Corner with great trepidation. Wood Corner being on the outskirts of the parish has integrated well with the community, generally the site appears to be well run (some issues regarding rubbish and blockage of footpath) but by and large the site works well within the community.

Cllr. Durham reported that this is part of the asset review of the County Council. An original thought was that the sites should be sold off, but when put to members it was met with many questions and concerns. Wood Corner is Essex's largest site but it is also the one that causes least problems. Proposal was to put 25 year covenant but this is not felt to be long enough. Grave concerns as outlined by Cllr. Tompkins are shared. It is an asset to the Parish. Negotiations have taken place with social landlords. There would be a formal consultation. He has received representations from residents of Wood Corner regarding security of tenure, potential rent increases and long-term future of site.

Clerk will write with the views of the Parish Council.

2335.8 Memorial Garden Signage – Councillors considered the purchase and installation of Memorial Garden / No Parking Signs/barriers/fencing. Councillors supported the idea of signage and discussed a proposed design from Cllr. Tompkins. They do not support the idea of bollards or chain-link fencing. It was noted that Planning/Conservation Area approval will be required. Cllr. Tompkins to make some alterations to design and Clerk to request quotes.

2335.9 Neighbourhood Watch – signs have now been installed around the village. It was noted that the Whatsapp groups have been working well.

2335.10 Party Tents – it was noted that an enquiry for renting the tents had been received. Discussion concluded that a risk assessment on the handling of the tents raised too many complicated issues. It was agreed that the tents would not be rented out at the current time and this can be reviewed as guidelines are relaxed.

2335.11 Parish News Magazine – the editor has been in touch to ask if the Parish Council would support the distribution of a Community edition until the Church of England guidelines regarding distribution of publications has been lifted. Councillors agreed that the magazine is a good way of updating the community and that they support the proposal for community editions. This will benefit many local residents in particular those who do not have access to computers and emails.

2335.12 Broadband – Cllr brown updated that a delay to Superfast roll out does not affect the village.

**2336. Correspondence – Various items in the dropbox.**

**2337. Points of Information**

**2338. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:**

Next scheduled date of Ordinary Parish Council meeting is Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and this will be held virtually by Zoom. Please note: We do not usually meeting during August We will only meet if there is urgent business or planning applications to consider, the date will be advertised on the website and on the noticeboard. Parish Clerk to monitor developments and guidelines as they are issued.

Signed *John Tompkins*

**Meeting ended at 8.50pm**

Dated 14 September 2020