

MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.

Held at 8.00pm at Woodham Walter Women's Club.

Monday 13th February 2023

Present:

Cllr. James Rushton (Chairman)

Cllr. James Bunn

Cllr. Jenny Hughes

Cllr. Joanna Symons

Cllr. John Tompkins

Cllr. Peter Warren

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)

District Cllr. Mark Durham (in attendance from 8.00-9.35pm)

District Cllr. Simon Morgan (in attendance from 8.00-9.35pm)

County Cllr. Jane Fleming (in attendance from 8.30-9.35pm)

Public: 2 (in attendance from 8.00-8.40pm)

2873. Welcome Cllr. Rushton welcomed those present to the meeting.

2874. To report, approve and record apologies for absence

RESOLVED to accept apologies from Cllr. John Brown.

2875. 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) As previously reported re: Warren Estate, Cllr. James Rushton declared a non-pecuniary interest as his wife is a member at Warren Active. There were no other interests declared and the register was completed.

2876. Public Forum

Two members of the public were in attendance to receive updates on the council's interactions regarding enforcement, specifically with regards to the cases at the Warren Lodges.

They were thanked for attending by the Chairman and invited to remain in the meeting room.

2877. To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meetings held on Monday 9th January 2023.

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2023.

2878. Matters Arising - Progress report (not for resolution)

The report compiled by the Clerk was noted. Matters for report are contained within the minutes.

2879. Planning – APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (for consideration or report)

2879.1 23/00005/WTPO 2 Redgates, Old London Road

T1 Sycamore - Fell to ground level

T2 Horse Chestnut - Prune/ crown lift branches which is in close proximity to the garage by 2.5 metres to the North Western elevation to create a crown clearance of 3 metres. Prune the southeastern elevation by 2.5 metres to create a 2.5m clearance from the main house but only the branches in close proximity to the dwelling.

It was noted that due to the deadline a response had been sent under delegated powers. No objections raised but commented that the council relies on the expertise of the tree officer.

2879.2 There were no further applications received.

2880. Planning – DECISIONS (for consideration or report)

2880.1 22/01198/PDE 7 Church Corner REFUSE (DEL)

Single storey rear extension which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 4.60m, maximum height of 3.15m and the maximum height to the eaves of 2.85m

2880.2 22/00720/FUL Plot 1, Land North of Oak Farm REFUSE (DEL)

Construction of new 4-bedroom dwelling.

2880.3 22/01127/HOUSE 19 Rectory Road APPROVE (DEL)

Re-submission of planning application (Approved 1/3/2015) HOUSE/MAL/15/01297 Two storey and single storey rear extension, addition of window to flank elevation at first floor level.

2881. Planning - Enforcement

2881.1 To receive any updates from Mr William Coleman from Maldon District Council (MDC).

It was noted that a brief update with regards to a site visit being made to the Warren Lodges during the recent closure period had taken place and that they are following up on some discrepancies.

2881.2 To consider response regarding Stage 2 complaint made to MDC about Enforcement procedures.

A response had been received from the MDC Director of Service Delivery & Head of Paid Service, Richard Holmes and was summarised by The Chairman:

- Technically a person can spend all year at Warren Lodge Park as long as they are not there during the closed period and they pay council tax elsewhere.
- Officers attended early morning during the closure period. They now have a mechanism to ensure officers will revisit every year irrespective of any complaints and check the register at that time.
- Currently the register contains the information as required by conditions.
- It would be disproportionate to investigate everyone and could be considered to be a breach of Local Planning Authorities enforcement powers.
- Cases may be closed where it is deemed not expedient to pursue the case because there is no material harm caused.
- All Planning Contravention Notices have been answered and after negotiation the breaches have been resolved.
- MDC is going to ask the owners to submit a planning application for the sheds on site.
- The Planning Enforcement department has struggled over a long period to recruit permanent, experienced and suitably skilled staff. The council is trying to remedy this situation and hopes that improvements in the service provided will be made.
- Apology that it is not possible to provide monthly summary updates. However, we will be informed where there are updates on open cases. Investigating if there is a help yourself way of accessing open cases, but this is some way off.

Councillors commented:

- Frustration that there does not appear to be much hope that those using lodges as their primary residences can ever be proved, evidence from village hearsay no matter how significant the Parish Council or local residents consider the evidence to be, does not appear to carry any weight with MDC.
- Conditions attached to the permission at the Warren Lodges do not appear to be fit for purpose and are inadequate.
- Frustration that other parks appear to be more strictly controlled but MDC seem unable to enforce this at the Warren Lodges.
- Suggest requesting a meeting with the main parties i.e. Enforcement officers, District and Parish Council representatives.
- The sheds should be simple to enforce. They are not allowed in the conditions.

The Chairman agreed to briefly open the meeting up to Members of the public present who commented:

- Caravan sites do not have permitted development rights.
- The sheds on site are on properly constructed bases which should not be allowed. There are some 94 structures.
- They have also instigated an enforcement investigation.

RESOLVED that because there are still some outstanding questions these should be addressed to Mr Holmes.

RESOLVED to request a meeting with the main parties.

RESOLVED The Parish Council reserve the right to raise the complaint against MDC to a Stage 3 complaint which from research carried out would be to write to the Monitoring Officer.

The members of the public then left the meeting room.

2881.3 To note any other enforcement matters.

Mr Holmes' letter outlined that a site visit to Lodge Farm had been undertaken and the owners of the property advised to submit a planning application to regularise a breach of planning control.

2882. Other Planning Matters (for consideration or report)

2882.1 Little Baddow NP Consultation – There were no comments.

2882.2 Danbury NP Consultation – There was concern that the infrastructure cannot keep pace with any further development. There were no further comments.

2882.3 Hatfield Peverel NP update – Noted.

2882.4 NPPF Consultation – Cllr. Tompkins reported on the document which contains some significant alterations, some of which will help and some do not appear to go far enough. Villages should be protected from creeping urbanity with for example a green belt.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Tompkins will respond on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr. Tompkins will also send a copy of his response to the District Councillors who are due to attend a meeting with Government representatives.

2882.5 It was noted that a response is awaited from MDC regarding the technical query raised about the COUPA approval at Oak Farm. This has been chased up.

2883. Climate Action – Councillor Rushton to report

Councillors received the notes from the Climate Action meeting held on Wednesday 25th January. There were no volunteers prepared to lead a group but enthusiasm for the subject and some action points suggested.

RESOLVED to look further into organising a Climate Action Information Evening. Cllr. Rushton and Clerk to liaise.

RESOLVED to defer other suggestions to future meeting.

2884. To receive reports of the County and District Councillor’s.

CC Fleming’s written report had been shared with councillors and posted on noticeboard page of the parish council website. It includes information on: Essex Waste Recycling Centre Booking System; £2 price cap; Essex saver Bus ticket; Borrowbox – eBooks and Eaudiobooks from library; Army & Navy update; Rail strikes and Postal Strikes advice; Recycling vapes; Freegle;

CC Fleming also commented:

- Due to the consultation on the NPPF some local councils have paused their LDP’s and await the results of the review. It is not known if Maldon are considering a pause.
- Civic Amenity Sites booking trial – a review will be carried out. Previous test areas after initial scepticism had been received well by the public and there was no evidence of increased fly tips. She is liaising with Farmers Union representatives to monitor.
- ECC Budget had set aside an extra £9m for Highways, some of which will go into the Member led budget for pot holes and footway repairs.
- Church Hill narrow footway will be reported to the Local Highways Panel for works.
- Discussed 20’s Plenty Campaign See Min ref: 2887.4

DC Morgan reported:

- 5-year housing land supply working group have increased the current figure for the district to 4.85.
- MDC Corporate Plan is due soon.
- Enforcement had been discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny committee and that improvements were intended. Cllr. Morgan had raised Woodham Walter concerns at the meeting.
- A12 widening – MDC have made submissions regarding Hatfield Peverel road layout

DC Durham reported:

- Due to meet for a tour of the canal bridges including Hoe Mill and will report back.

The District and County Councillors then left the meeting room.

2885. Financial Matters (for consideration or report)

2885.1 To receive the Summary of Accounts to date. This includes all transactions since the January meeting.

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
Business Reserve A/C				
09-Jan-23	Balance			26022.57
12-Feb-23	Transfer to Community Account		1800.00	24222.57
Community Account				
09-Jan-23	Balance			663.86
12-Jan-23	Weedon (Donation from Allotments Association)	50.00		713.86
12-Feb-23	Refund from TSO Host to Barclaycard	26.14		740.00
12-Feb-23	Transferred from Business Reserve	1800.00		2540.00
12-Feb-23	February Debits		1937.23	602.77

RESOLVED to accept the statement of accounts.

2885.2 To authorise the payments as listed in the payment schedule for February.

FEBRUARY PAYMENTS					
Ref:	Payee	Method	Gross	VAT	Net
2885.2.1	Searches UK Ltd	BACS	30.66	5.11	25.55
2885.2.2	National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners Ltd	BACS	66.00	11.00	55.00
2885.2.3	Npower	DD	35.27	1.68	33.59
2885.2.4	A&J Lighting Solutions	DD	25.20	4.20	21.00
2885.2.5	Mrs J Bannerman (Salary & Allowance)	BACS	886.00	0.00	886.00
2885.2.6	Nest Pension (Employer £58.49 Employee £93.58)	DD	152.07	0.00	152.07
2885.2.7	Barclaycard (Fasthosts, ALCC) (TSO Host Refund 26.14)*	DD	86.42	6.07	80.35
2885.2.8	Eslip Payroll	DD	20.36	3.39	16.97
2885.2.9	A&J Lighting Solutions (Brook Close Maintenance Part 2) ESTIMATE	DD	175.20	29.20	146.00
2885.2.10	Woodham Walter Women's Club (Hire of hall for meetings)	BACS	195.00	0.00	195.00
2885.2.11	A&J Lighting Solutions (Church Corner) (ESTIMATE) Likely to increase due to LED replacement. See minute ref: 2887.7 (b)	DD	175.20	29.20	146.00

* Barclaycard payments: (January Statement)

	Fasthosts	29.90
	Fasthosts (Mailbox Clerk)	6.52
	Assoc. Local Council Clerks Membership	50.00
TOTAL	(inc. VAT: £6.07)	86.42
	TSO Host Refund	26.14CR
TOTAL		60.28

To note the following Barclaycard payments are scheduled for February Statement.

	Fasthosts	29.90
	Fasthosts (Mailbox Clerk)	6.52

The BACS payments for February will be drawn up by the Parish Clerk and require authorisation by councillor signatory by Payment Date of 16th February 2023.

RESOLVED to approve the payments as listed.

2885.3 Review of Bank Statements, Credit Card Statements and Account sheets for January.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Brown will be asked to report the review at the next meeting.

2885.4 To consider if a volunteer Councillor can take on the role of seeking grant funding.

RESOLVED that as no single councillor was able to volunteer, that each case will be considered on merit and funding investigated and applied for where appropriate.

2885.5 To approve signing up to new financial accounts package with SCRIBE.

RESOLVED to proceed with Scribe, which will begin being used at the start of the new financial year.

2886. Other Council Matters (for consideration or report)

2886.1 Community Engagement Team (CET)

(a) Noted the December and January reports.

RESOLVED to ask the team to vary the timing of the TRUcam visits.

2886.2 Woodham Walter Common – Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT)/Living Landscapes. No information.

2886.3 Allotments Report – Receipt of donation noted.

2886.4 Local Council Awards Scheme – Following feedback received from panel. To adopt updated Grievance & Disciplinary Policy.

RESOLVED to adopt the updated Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

2886.5 HM King Charles III Coronation – Cllr. Symons to report.

The notes from the Coronation meeting held on Monday 30th January were received and accepted.

Cllr. Symons reported that the meeting had been well attended and a picnic will be organised on Bell Meadow to celebrate. Various ideas are being considered and developed; the next meeting is set for 27th March.

RESOLVED that Clerk and Cllr. Symons will meet to continue making arrangements and discuss grant funding which may be appropriate.

RESOLVED the tea towel has received support and artwork is beginning to be delivered from local residents. The Clerk will continue to pursue and organise.

2886.6 Grass Cutting Tender – documents have been sent out. Deadline 28th February. To be decided at the March meeting.

2886.7 Elections – May 2023

(a) Clerk reported that she had attended an Election briefing from EALC

(b) Publication of Notice of Election no later than 28th March. Deadline for nominations 4pm, 4th April 2023.

(c) Voter ID will now be required. Information available on website and via village email.

2886.8 Pensions Regulator

RESOLVED that clerk will respond to the Pension Regulator re-enrolment and re-declaration request.

2887. Highways, Transport & Infrastructure (for consideration or report)

2887.1 Various matters on-going as detailed in the Highways log

2887.2 Salt bin – await response from Skippers regarding salt stocks

2887.3 Await confirmation regarding Women’s Cycle Race which is likely to be a similar route to last year (coming through Woodham Walter) on Saturday 27th May.

2887.4 20’s Plenty Campaign – To consider joining campaign

RESOLVED to pursue as it was generally agreed:

- there would be upsides in terms of safety particularly around the school by a reduction in speed
- TRUcam would be used to enforce by the Community Engagement Team.

This was a majority decision (4:2) as some Councillors expressed concerns:

- that it wouldn’t make any difference to vehicles that speed through the village
- the police may not provide enforcement.
- no improvements to emissions which may even increase at lower speeds.

Clerk will write to Cllr. Fleming who will submit the area around the School as a 20mph zone. Cllr. Fleming noted that Essex County Council are currently reviewing their Road Hierarchy and Speed Management Policies which will inform any decisions regarding the role out of 20mph zones in the county.

2887.5 Rectory Road - Verge parking

It was noted that the verge has become significantly damaged and that a vehicle is also driving across the pavement (which is illegal).

RESOLVED to ask the Community Engagement Team to visit.

2887.6 Church Hill narrow path – not taken on by Highways Rangers. Cllr. Fleming will raise this as an issue with the Local Highways Panel.

2887.7 Street Lights

(a) Brook Close (Repaired again)

(b) Church Hill (Needs repair – consider for LED replacement)

RESOLVED to request the Church Hill light is replaced to LED. Clerk to arrange.

2887.8 Healthcare – following press report of meeting organised by MP John Whittingdale regarding Maldon Healthcare; to consider writing to our MP, Priti Patel regarding healthcare in Danbury.

<https://www.maldonandburnhamstandard.co.uk/news/23291468.john-whittingdale-discusses-new-healthcare-facility-plans/?ref=ebmpn>

RESOLVED to defer to March meeting.

2888. Local Issues (for consideration or report)

2888.1 Bell Meadow & Memorial Garden

- (a) Annual Safety Report recommendations - ongoing
- (b) Football Goals to be moved.
- (c) Playground Report – no issues to report.
- (d) Memorial Garden

Cllr. Tompkins has produced required plans. Await search results.

RESOLVED to pursue the no parking signage. Clerk will ask Cllr. Brown.

- (e) Woodland Trust Hedging pack due 6-17 March. Arrange working party.

RESOLVED Cllr. Hughes will ask Lee Hughes if he is able to remove the dead hedging prior to the bird nesting season. A working party will then be arranged for planting.

- (e) There were no other matters for report.

2888.2 Footpaths Report – Cllr. Warren reported that new finger posts have been erected around the parish. Unfortunately, since then another post has fallen and been reported (FP 5 opp. Glendale).

2888.3 School Report - Cllr. Symons (Parish Council representative on Governing Body).

It was reported that the new Classroom delivery may cause some disruption on 16th February.

2888.4 Crime Reports/Neighbourhood Watch Report.

- a) Various reports and newsletters shared (none specific to WW)
- b) Some incidents of hare coursing have occurred in the village. Please report any sightings to the Police.
- c) Abandoned car reported to police who attended. Thanks to vigilance of local resident.

2888.5 Litter

- (a) Litter Pick – Saturday 11th February

Despite a lower turn out than previous years, the volunteers had covered most of the parish with just a few out-laying areas missed. Thanks to those who had attended and to Colin Warner for collecting and storing the bags of rubbish prior to MDC collection.

- (b) Fly tip opp. Blue Mill reported to land owner (Lee Carter) and cleared

(c) Bin o/s Tadpoles – over filled and reported to MDC for more frequent emptying. It was noted that MDC had since installed a new bin at this location.

2888.6 Village News Magazine – to note current situation re: printing costs/request for donations etc.

It was noted that the Churches have accepted oversight of the magazine. More information awaited.

2889. Correspondence – Various items of correspondence have been received and shared with Councillors and where appropriate the public via the website and village emails. There were no matters for resolution.

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| a) Community Agent Info Sheet | b) Essex Police Marine Unit Newsletter |
| c) Rural Crime Open Day – 10 th March | d) Voter ID information |
| e) Letter from School re: classroom delivery | f) Essex Police Rural Eng Team Newslette |
| g) Cost of Living Support info | h) Warbler February |

2890. Points of Information/Items for future agenda

2891. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

Next scheduled Ordinary Parish Council meeting - Monday 13th March 2023 at 8pm at Woodham Walter Women's Club.

2892. The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.25pm

Signed

Dated