

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Parish Council Meeting
29 January 2015, 19.30h**

Present	Councillors	D Johnston	Chairman
		I Begg	
		G Clark	
		L Halford	
		S Haynes	
		J Shardlow	
		P Woodhams	
		J Warren	Clerk
		J Brown	Dementia Friends
		L Gladwin	"
		P Millac	"
		I Poole	"
		T Day	Herts & Middx Wildlife
		P McNeill	Trust
		Public	1
		Press	0

3929-15 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors A Brewster (SADC meeting), N Clements, D Davies, T Reason and P Wilby (personal reasons) and I Begg (late – train delays).

3930-15 Consideration of Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust's proposal for enhancements to the Forge

A proposal from the HMWT to work with the Parish Council to develop the Forge as a resource for environmental education had been circulated. The HMWT hoped to secure a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to utilise approximately 27 m² for conversion to teaching space and associated storage. There were no plans to extend the building. Councillors supported the idea to make better use of the Meads area, and this fitted well with both Heritage Trail and objectives of the council rangers and open spaces management. A number of questions remained including anticipated design, responsibilities, consultation with current users and the public, expenses and charges and access. Further detail was sought.

Councillor Shardlow proposed, seconded by Councillor Halford, and it was agreed, that WPC welcomed the approach from HMWT and looked forward to receiving their more detailed proposal for consideration prior to submission of a grant application to HLF.

Resolved WPC welcomed the approach from HMWT and looked forward to receiving their more detailed proposal for consideration prior to submission of a grant application to HLF

3931-15 Consideration of proposal to become a Dementia Friendly Community

Further to Minute 3827-14 co-chairmen of the Wheathampstead Dementia Friendly Community Group, Dr Paul Millac and Jean Brown, assisted by Isobel Poole and Lydia Gladwin gave a presentation and took questions on the newly formed Wheathampstead DFC Group. The group was formally independently constituted under the banner of the national, West Herts CCG initiative 'Dementia Friendly Communities' together with the Alzheimer's Society to form a DFC in Wheathampstead. The group aimed to provide local people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand, support and care for those with or who later suffered with dementia. Training would be aimed at a wide range of groups within the village. The Parish Council was asked to support the initiative by participating in training, assist with publicising the events and funding for training, support services and publicity.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that Wheathampstead Parish Council support the Wheathampstead Dementia Friendly Community Group to promote a better understanding of dementia within the Parish.

The group was encouraged to apply in writing for financial support.

Councillor Begg arrived during discussion of this item.

Resolved That Wheathampstead Parish Council support the Wheathampstead Dementia Friendly Community Group to promote a better understanding of dementia within the Parish.

3932-15 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

None.

3933-15 Minutes of Council

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2014 be approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2014 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

3934-15 Report from County Councillor Maxine Crawley

Councillor Crawley had sent apologies that she was unable to attend. Her written report advised that :

1. The proposed site for the new free school would be

2. announced on 5 February 2015 (she would advise the Clerk as soon as information were available). This would be discussed at the Enterprise, Education and Skills Panel on 13 Feb.
 3. No planning application had been submitted for the Wheathampstead Pay and Play Golf course.
- Footpath work at the narrowest point on the Lower Luton Road had funded through the Highways Locality Budget

Resolved To note the report.

3935-15 Minutes of Committee Meetings

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the following draft committee minutes and working group notes were received and adopted:

Community Involvement Committee	10 November 2014
Maintenance committee	17 November 2014
Planning Committee	19 November 2013, 12 January 2015
Finance Committee	24 November 2014, 26 January 2015
Allotments Committee	8 December 2014
Personnel Committee	5 January 2015

Resolved To receipt and adopt the draft Minutes of

Community Involvement Committee	10 November 2014
Maintenance committee	17 November 2014
Planning Committee	19 November 2013, 12 January 2015
Finance Committee	24 November 2014, 26 January 2015
Allotments Committee	8 December 2014
Personnel Committee	5 January 2015

3936-15 Budget 2015-6 and precept recommendation

Councillors considered the budget for 2015-16 as resolved at Finance Committee on 26 January 2015 (Minute 3927-15). The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the budget and Parish Council precept recommendation as put forward by Finance Committee be approved and the Clerk notify St Albans District Council. A gross budget of £497,005 was agreed with precept requirement of £212,640 plus LCTS grant of £16,119.

Resolved

- 1 To agree a budget for 2015-16 of £497,005**
- 2 To agree a precept for 2015-16 of £212,640, and that the Parish Clerk notify**

- St Albans District Council of this precept.**
- 3 To note that the calculations had not been based upon receipt of a grant from SADC to offset the changes to the tax base created by the Council Tax Technical Reform Changes and the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme.**
 - 4 To receive a LCTS grant of £16,119 from SADC.**

3937-15 Insurance review of fidelity guarantee

As recommended by audit Councillors reviewed the insurance fidelity guarantee against balances. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that £1,000,000 cover was adequate.

Resolved To maintain the insurance level of £1million fidelity guarantee.

3938-15 Fire Risk assessment

The fire risk assessment for the Memorial Hall had been modified and circulated. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that this be approved and adopted as circulated.

Resolved To approve and adopt the Fire Risk assessment for the Memorial Hall as circulated.

3939-15 Approval of Risk Register

The 2014 risk register had been updated and circulated. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that this be approved and adopted as circulated.

Resolved To approve and adopt the Risk Register as circulated.

3940-15 Review and approval of standing orders

Annotated NALC model standing orders had been circulated. All variations compared to standing orders approved by Wheathampstead Parish Council in 2014 and from NALC model were discussed in depth. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Standing Orders be approved and adopted as circulated, discussed and amended.

Resolved To approve and adopt Standing Orders as discussed.

3941-15 Public Speaking

David Cairns gave an update regarding school placements and

decisions on the new 'Harpenden' secondary school. A report with recommendations to the Department for Education was to go to Hertfordshire County Council's Enterprise, Education and Skills Committee on 13 February. The expectation was that planning permission would be through St Albans District Council rather than HCC.

3942-15 Review and approval of Financial Regulations

The Council's Financial Regulations were reviewed in detail by the Finance Committee on 26 January (Minute 3928-15). Amendments had been made and recirculated to councillors. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Financial Regulations be approved and adopted as circulated.

Resolved **To approve and adopt the Financial Regulations as circulated and recommended by Finance Committee.**

3943-15 Policy Review and Approval

The following policies had been circulated with recommended amendments and updates:

- Internet and Email policy
- Media protocol
- Dignity at Work/ Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Complaints Policy
- Whistle blowing Policy
- Anti-Bribery statement
- Code of conduct
- Open spaces
- Gritting and Clearing Memorial Hall Access and Car Park
- Use of council facilities for organised events
- Banner policy
- Child protection
- Pensions Discretions Policy

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that they be approved and adopted as circulated.

Resolved **To approve and adopt the following policies:**

- **Internet and Email policy**
- **Media protocol**
- **Dignity at Work/ Bullying and Harassment Policy**
- **Disciplinary Procedure**
- **Grievance Procedure**
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Whistle blowing Policy**
- **Anti-Bribery statement**
- **Code of conduct**

- **Open spaces**
- **Gritting and Clearing Memorial Hall Access and Car Park**
- **Use of council facilities for organised events**
- **Banner policy**
- **Child protection**
- **Pensions Discretions Policy**

3944-15 Approved contractors list

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the 2014 approved list as amended be approved and adopted

Resolved: To approve and adopt the amended approved contractors list.

3945-15 Response to North Hertfordshire District Council's Local Plan Consultation

Aspects of the North Herts DC's Local Plan were discussed, referencing it against St Albans District and Welwyn Hatfield Local Plans, the latter to be brought to next February Council for consultation. Particular concerns were for the housing proposed to the south west and its effect on local road networks.

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Shardlow that a response be sent to North Herts District Council expressing the Parish Council's concerns about the impact of extra traffic in the Parish resulting from the development adjacent to Luton.

Resolved To submit a response to North Herts District Council expressing concern about the impact of extra traffic in Wheathampstead Parish resulting from the proposed development adjacent to Luton.

3946-15 Consideration to install puddingstone marker on Nomansland more prominently

It was reported that the Wheathampstead Cricket Club had requested that the protruding puddingstone marker between Sandridge and Wheathampstead boundaries be removed from the outfield. Under the supervision of the District's chief archaeologist this historically significant artefact had been moved. Excavation had revealed that the stone was smaller than anticipated thus partially burying it meant it remained a potential trip hazard. Its' future would be discussed by the Nomansland Joint Management Committee who may consider mounting and marking it. It was noted that this was unbudgeted expenditure.

Resolved To note the report.

3947-15 Pay & Play Golf Course redevelopment plans

Further to Minutes 3934-15, 3887-14 and 3841-14, it was noted that no formal development proposal had been submitted to HCC following the developer's presentation to WPC and subsequent enquiry relating to draft development plans.

Councillor Shardlow reported that, in her personal capacity, she had submitted a Freedom of Information request to HCC in relation to the Golf Course application which she offered to share. However, some items were omitted as being 'commercially sensitive'.

Councillor Begg proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that WPC submit an FOI request to HCC, referring to Mrs Shardlow's request and specifically asking for the omitted items. WPC would commit to discuss all commercially sensitive matters only in closed session. County Councillor Crawley to be informed of this request.

- Resolved**
- 1 To note the report.**
 - 2 To submit a Freedom of Information request to HCC for the items omitted from Mrs Shardlow's FOI request, specifically committing to keep all such information confidential and discussed in closed session.**
 - 3 To inform County Councillor Crawley of the request.**

3948-15 Youth Project

Councillor Halford reported on the productive meeting with Youth Connexions on 20 January. Councillors Brewster, Halford, Haynes, Johnston, Woodhams with the Clerk met Robert Brown and Nick Smith.

The importance of boundaries and regular meetings was agreed. Issues of unacceptable behaviour and damage to property had been discussed and would be rectified. A new programme of activities and leadership was planned with overall supervision of Tuesday evening sessions now rested with Mr Brown. HCC Funding was available to pay for a Tuesday evening session on the ATP, the trial evening having been extremely popular with the young people.

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Begg, and it was agreed that

- (i) the Clerk write to Youth Connexions requesting that Councillor Halford, as Chairman of the Community Involvement Committee, attend the occasional Youth Project meeting to meet both staff and young people, and then report to CI.
- (ii) Clerk to request a quarterly review with Youth Connexions.

- Resolved**
- 1 To note the report.**
 - 2 Clerk write to Youth Connexions requesting that Councillor Halford, as Chairman of the Community Involvement Committee, attend the occasional Youth Project meeting to meet both staff and young people, and then report to CI.**
 - 3 Clerk to request a quarterly review with Youth Connexions.**

3949-15 Circulation of summons

It was reported that The Local Government Act 1972 sch 12 para 10(2) (as now amended by The Local Government (Electronic Communications)(England) Order 2015/5) required the proper officer of the Council to send to each member of the Council or committee (and by good practice sub-committees) (as the case may be) a summons to attend meetings of the parish council or the committee at least three clear days before the meeting. The summons must be left at or sent by post to the member's usual place of residence or, with the consent of the member, in electronic form to the member's e-mail address. "Three clear days" excludes the day of service of the summons, the day of the meeting and Saturdays and Sundays. The new provisions come into force on 30 January 2015

Consent could be given by a short form to be signed by the member. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that members be invited to sign the appropriate form to receive electronic summons.

- Resolved** **That members be invited to sign the appropriate form to receive electronic summons.**

3950-15 Accounts for Payment and Finance Report

The above reports were reviewed and noted.

- Resolved** **To note the reports**

3851-15 Consultations, training and meetings

Parish Polls

The DCLG had published a consultation aiming to bring parish polls up to date and to ensure that they provided a legitimate method for local communities to have a voice on issues relating to the parish. Legislation governing parish polls is found in the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Section 150 ; and The Parish and Community Meeting (Polls) Rules 1987

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that Wheathampstead Parish Council respond in agreement to DCLG's proposals to modernise the parish poll process.

Deregulation Bill

Details of the Deregulation Bill had been circulated and its contents noted particularly in relation to rights of way and licensing.

Environment Agency Flood Risk Management Plans

Councillors were urged to independently respond to this consultation by 31 Jan. Details had been circulated.

Advanced Planning – trees and landscaping

Councillor Shardlow reported enthusiastically on the seminar attended by herself, Councillor Clark and the Clerk. It covered tree preservation orders, ash die back, tree wardens and Heartwood Forest. Councillor Shardlow proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston that a presentation on Heartwood Forest may fit well with the Annual Parish Meeting.

St Albans District Association of Local Councils

The Chairman reported on this meeting he attended with the Clerk. Highways issues were to be discussed at the next meeting.

Countryside Management Service

Councillor Reason and the Clerk had met with Alex Laurie to discuss the failed HLF application for Bower Heath. It was agreed to resubmit an application to include greater community involvement and linking the three commons to the north of the Parish – Bower Heath, Marshalls Heath and Gustard Wood.

Architect

The Chairman reported on the meeting with Helen Ball to discuss refurbishment plans for the Memorial Hall. Concerns were raised in relation to speculation that the library wished to move out. If this were to occur then reconfiguring the Memorial Hall took on a different perspective.

- Resolved**
- 1 To note the reports.**
 - 2 To respond in agreement with DCLG to the Parish Poll consultation.**
 - 3 To include a presentation on Heartwood Forest at the Annual Parish Meeting on 18 March.**
 - 4 To submit a revised bid for commons work.**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22.30h.

Dated this day of 2015

Chairman