

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Parish Council Meeting
29 May 2014, 19.30h**

| | | | |
|---------|-------------|---|----------------------|
| Present | Councillors | D Johnston I Begg A Brewster G Clark N Clements D Davies L Halford T Reason J Shardlow P Wilby P Woodhams | Chairman |
| | | J Warren | Clerk to the Council |
| | | Press | 0 |
| | | Public | 1 |

3607 -14 Election of Chairman

Councillor Clark, seconded by Councillor Begg, nominated Councillor Johnston as Chairman. He was duly elected and signed the acceptance of office.

Resolved To elect Councillor Johnston as Chairman of Wheathampstead Parish Council for 2014-15

3608-14 Election of Vice Chairman

Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Halford, nominated Councillor Brewster as Vice Chairman. She was duly elected

Resolved To elect Councillor Brewster as Vice Chairman of Wheathampstead Parish Council for 2014-15

3609-14 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor S Haynes (personal reasons).

3610-14 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

Councillor Reason declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 3619-14. Councillor Begg proposed, seconded by Councillor Brewster, and it was unanimously agreed that she be granted a dispensation to speak on a potential cycle path extension through Croft Farm in order to explain in a personal capacity matters the Council may wish to consider when deliberating.

All councillors, through association with Councillor Reason, declared a personal interest in Minute 3619-14 in relation to any changes affecting Croft Farm.

Councillor Halford declared a personal interest in Minute 3616-14 being a committee member of the Wheathampstead and District Preservation Society.

3611-14 Minutes of Council

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2014 be approved.

Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2014 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

3612-14 Minutes of Committee Meetings

Councillor Clark proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that the following draft committee minutes were received and adopted:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Maintenance Committee | 14 April 2014 |
| Planning Committee | 17 April, 20 May 2014 |
| Allotments Committee | 9 May 2014 |
| Village Day WG | 13 May 2014 |

Resolved: To receipt and adopt the draft Minutes of

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Maintenance Committee | 14 April 2014 |
| Planning Committee | 17 April, 20 May 2014 |
| Allotments Committee | 9 May 2014 |
| Village Day WG | 13 May 2014 |

3613-14 Review of Delegated Powers

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that delegated powers as currently set out in standing orders and committee terms of reference be approved.

Resolved To approve delegated powers as currently set out in standing orders and committee terms of reference.

3614-14 Review of Committees, Working Groups and their Terms of Reference

The list of current committees and working groups, and their terms of reference, had been circulated and was discussed.

It was agreed (proposed by Councillor Woodhams, seconded by Councillor Reason) that the Rectory Copse working group had completed its life, as had the Christmas lights working group (proposed by Councillor Shardlow, seconded by Councillor Woodhams) and that these be wound up.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that a new Working group, to include volunteers be formed to oversee the development of the Bury Green Triangle and District in Bloom, and another for the Crinkle Crankle Garden

Councillor Davies proposed, seconded by Councillor Begg, and it was agreed that all committees and working groups review their terms of reference and these be then referred back to Council or parent committee for approval.

Resolved To approve committees and working groups. Their terms of reference to be reviewed by committee/working group and referred back to Council or parent committee for approval

3615-13 Appointment to Committees and Working Groups & Election of Committee Chairmen/Vice Chairmen

Members considered membership of Parish Council committees and working groups and agreed the following appointments.

Resolved 1 The following Committee and sub committee appointments were approved

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Allotments | Cllrs Clark, Haynes, Shardlow, Woodhams Chairman Cllr Haynes (proposed Cllr Shardlow, seconded Cllr Begg) Vice Chairman Cllr Shardlow (proposed Cllr Reason, seconded Cllr Woodhams) |
| Community Involvement | All councillors. Chairman: Councillor Halford (proposed Cllr Brewster, seconded Cllr Davies) Vice Chairman: Cllr Brewster (proposed Cllr Halford, seconded Cllr Wilby) |
| Finance | All Councillors Chairman Cllr Begg (proposed Cllr Shardlow, seconded Cllr Woodhams) Vice Chairman: Cllr Johnston (proposed Cllr Brewster, seconded Cllr HHalford) |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Maintenance | Cllrs Brewster, Clark, Clements, Halford, Haynes, Johnston, Reason, Shardlow, Woodhams Chairman: Cllr Reason (proposed Cllr Brewster, seconded Cllr Halford) Vice Chairman: Cllr Woodhams (proposed Cllr Reason, seconded Cllr Brewster) |
| Personnel | Cllrs, Davies, Halford, Johnston & Reason Chairman Cllr Johnston (proposed Cllr Halford, seconded Cllr Brewster) |
| Plans | Cllrs Clark, Clements, Davies, Halford, Shardlow, Wilby Chairman Cllr Clark (proposed Cllr Davies, seconded Cllr Halford) Vice Chairman Cllr Shardlow (proposed Cllr Brewster, seconded Cllr Wilby) |

2 The following Working Group appointments were approved

| | |
|---|---|
| Bury Green Triangle /District in Bloom | Cllrs Clark, Halford, Reason, Shardlow |
| Crinkle Crankle Garden | Cllrs Halford, Johnston, Reason & Woodhams |
| East Lane Car Park | Cllrs Clements, Davies, Haynes & Johnston |
| Facilities and Sports Area Management | Cllrs, Clark, Halford, Haynes, Johnston, Reason, Shardlow & Woodhams |
| Memorial Hall Management | Cllrs Clark, Haynes & Johnston |
| Memorial Hall Refurbishment | Cllrs Clark, Clements, Johnston & Reason |
| Pump | Cllrs Clark, Halford, Johnston & Woodhams |
| Station Platform | Cllr Johnston |
| Village weekend | Cllrs Halford, Haynes, Reason, & Woodhams |

Village Plan

**Cllrs Clements,
Halford, Johnston,
Shardlow,
Woodhams and
Wilby**

Cllr Brewster left the meeting.

3616-14 Appointment to Outside Organisations

The following appointments and nominations to outside organisations were made/confirmed.

Resolved **The following appointments /nominations were approved**

| | |
|--|--|
| James Marshall Foundation & Wheathampstead United Charities | Cllrs Clements & Reason <i>(appointed 2013 to 2017)</i> Mrs Turner & Mrs Atton <i>(appointed 2011 to 2015)</i> |
| Nomansland Joint Committee | Cllrs Johnston & Reason <i>(Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded Cllr Begg)</i> |
| Scouts | Cllr Halford <i>(Proposed from the chair)</i> |
| St Albans & District Association of Local Councils | Cllr Johnston and Cllr Clements to attend, voting to be by mutual agreement. <i>(Proposed by the Cllr Begg, seconded Cllr Reason)</i> |
| WEB | Cllrs Clark & Halford, substitutes Cllrs Begg and Shardlow <i>(Proposed by the Cllr Begg, seconded Cllr Wilby)</i> |

3617-14 Review of membership of bodies

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that membership of the following bodies be re approved:

Campaign for the Preservation of Rural Britain
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
Community Development Agency for Herts
Community & Voluntary Services
Hertfordshire Association of Parish & Town Councils
Institute of Local Council Managers
Local Councils Advisory Service
National Association of Local Councils
National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardens
Open Spaces Society
St Albans & District Association of Local Councils
Society of Local Council Clerks
Zurich – Local Council Advisory Service

Resolved To approve membership of the following bodies:

**Campaign for the Preservation of Rural Britain
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
Community Development Agency for Herts
Community & Voluntary Services
Hertfordshire Association of Parish & Town Councils
Institute of Local Council Managers
Local Councils Advisory Service
National Association of Local Councils
National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardens
Open Spaces Society
St Albans & District Association of Local Councils
Society of Local Council Clerks
Zurich – Local Council Advisory Service**

3618-14 Public Speaking

Alice Reason spoke in respect of Minute 3597-14 whereby a Member of the Public had asked the Parish Council to consider supporting a cycle path connecting Wheathampstead and Harpenden. Miss Reason advised that she was the third generation to live and work at Croft Farm and her childhood dream was a café and farm shop. She enjoyed being part of the Wheathampstead community and having completed her degree had returned home to join and expand the family business. The planning process for change of use was underway. Her aim was for a sustainable farm shop sourcing local products and provision of a small café with 'home-made' cream teas to boost the local economy and complement the Heritage Trail. Mr Holden's

proposed route through the centre of the farm would render this venture unviable. Council was asked to consider supporting an alternative route, perhaps close to the footpath which ran further south nearer their boundary.

Councillor Shardlow, supported by all councillors, thanked her as a young person for her enthusiasm and support for the Village

3619-14 'Wheathampstead Gap'

Parishioner, Mr Holden, had asked the Parish Council to support a cycle link between Harpenden and Wheathampstead. He favoured a new link close to the former railway line through Croft Farm (this part not having been developed for housing) rather than the more undulating Footpath 16.

Having been granted a dispensation (Minute 3587-14) Cllr Reason stated that her family had purchased the farm and former railway line in 1964. The business included a stables with private grazing and kennels cattery. To comply with planning conditions, specifically noise, opening was restricted as dogs barked when people passed by. These were located in the parts of the farm without public access. The land was managed environmentally sustainably and had provided a safe location for numerous foster children, some with troubled backgrounds.

She advised that she supported the need for cycle access to and from the Village and some years previously had suggested upgrading FP16 to the County Council to facilitate this. In contrast Mr Holden's preferred route would destroy her livelihood as the business could no longer operate with 24 hour public access through its centre and her back garden.

Cllr Reason left the meeting.

Councillors considered Mr Holden's request, the details he had emailed and the comments made regarding impact on Croft Farm residents. It was agreed that information was required from Hertfordshire County Council, responsible authority for public rights of way.

Councillor Begg proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams and it was agreed:

1. To minute the Parish Council's desire for safe cycle routes in **all directions** from Wheathampstead, (reference to Wheathampstead Parish Plan 2009 and updated:
Cycle tracks wanted along:
 - a. Lemsford Rd towards Hatfield, T26;
 - b. Harpenden Road (T27);
 - c. towards Sandridge (T28))

2. To write to HCC with reference to the resident's request
3. To ask HCC whether they had any proposals or preferences for a cycle route between Wheathampstead and Harpenden?
4. To note that Wheathampstead Parish Council (WPC) welcomed transparency and open discussion on matters such as this and therefore requested an open debate with HCC, WPC, the public and **all** affected landowners on **all** alternative routes and variants
5. To note with concern any suggestion (currently hearsay) that the cycle route should not be up a hill - Wheathampstead is in a valley so by definition any route out runs uphill. The Parish Council wished to see safe cycle routes in all directions towards neighbouring settlements
6. WPC considers this matter to be relevant to, and therefore should be considered alongside, the discussions relating to the new school site
7. To note the common aim of the Parish Charter (June 2012) between HCC, St Albans DC and its town and parish councils. This included support for working together and complements WPC Parish Plan (2009 as updated)
(The aim of the Parish Charter was to improve joint working between the three government tiers: county; district and parish, so that services were more efficient and responsive to the needs of local communities by providing best value and quality

The key principles of the Charter offer clear benefits for local communities and all tiers of local government

- a. **Trust and mutual respect** – to build relationships that work
- b. **Communication** – to foster good relationships
- c. **Consultation** – meaningful and timely consultation with the aim of delivering improved services
- d. **Advice and support** – sharing expertise, including support for those wishing to obtain Quality Status
- e. **Collaboration on service shaping and delivery** – to create continuously improving, customer centred services
- f. **Better value** – the development of a clear process and criteria to review whether services can be devolved and delivered within local communities, while retaining or improving their quality and cost effectiveness while retaining or improving their quality and cost effectiveness)

- Resolved**
- 1 To minute the Parish Council's desire for safe cycle routes in all directions from Wheathampstead, (reference to Wheathampstead Parish Plan 2009 and updated:
Cycle tracks wanted along:
a. Lemsford Rd towards Hatfield, T26;
b. Harpenden Road (T27);
c. towards Sandridge (T28))**
 - 2 To write to HCC with reference to the resident's request**
 - 3 To ask HCC whether they had any proposals or preferences for a cycle route between Wheathampstead and Harpenden?**
 - 4 To note that Wheathampstead Parish Council (WPC) welcomed transparency and open discussion on matters such as this and therefore requested an open debate with HCC, WPC, the public and *all* affected landowners on *all* alternative routes and variants**
 - 5 To note with concern any suggestion (currently hearsay) that the cycle route should not be up a hill - Wheathampstead is in a valley so by definition any route out runs uphill. The Parish Council wished to see safe cycle routes in all directions towards neighbouring settlements**
 - 6 WPC considers this matter to be relevant to, and therefore should be considered alongside, the discussions relating to the new school site**
 - 7 To note the common aim of the Parish Charter (June 2012) between HCC, St Albans DC and its town and parish councils. This included support for working together and complements WPC Parish Plan (2009 as updated)**

3620-14 Village Weekend

Village weekend had traditionally been the Parish Council's support for village community groups and charities. Entertainment was provided and groups could advertise and promote themselves without charge. Latterly businesses had been included, and WEB was managing those members located in the hall. The odd small business has attended for a number of years – not a WEB member- charged £25

Councillors were asked to consider whether pressure groups be permitted to have stalls and advertise, if so under what conditions and at what charge. A stall request had been received from Right School Right Place. Similarly political groups- The Clerk advised that the Parish Council should not support any individual political party (LGA 1986 s2(3)).

It was noted that demand for stalls was increasing and a system of allocation should be implemented. One pitch per organisation had been allocated to date, capacity was almost reached.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Wilby and it was agreed that for 2014 applicants received to date including Right School Right Place been allocated a stall, bookings to be accepted until capacity reached.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Village Weekend Working Group consider a charging and allocation policy which would be taken to Finance Committee prior to 2015.

- Resolved**
- 1 Applicants received to date including Right School Right Place been allocated a stall, bookings to be accepted until capacity reached.**
 - 2 Village Weekend Working Group consider a charging and allocation policy which would be taken to Finance Committee prior to 2015.**

3621-14 Banners and A Boards

A letter from the HCC licencing and enforcement officer had been circulated - a complaint about unauthorised advertising throughout Wheathampstead parish under the Highways Act 1980. Previously resources were not available to enforce, however the Highway Authority now advised it would prosecute for unauthorised structures. This included boards temporarily tied to lamp posts for the WDS production and banners by the Station Road roundabout (between the trees – longstanding position to promote Village weekend, Amwell Day, St Helen's Fete, drama productions etc).

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk had subsequently met the enforcement officer and been sent guidance on acceptable signage sizes (0.6sq m). He did not object to signage suitably secured and not restricting visibility, on non highway owned land.

A boards for businesses were acceptable – one per business, not obscuring. 1.2m access must be allowed if on footways.

An approach had been made to have a licence agreement (similar to Harpenden TC) with HCC. This would give definitive signage points. Details of 'adverts' would be agreed.

Councillors acknowledged the aim to 'declutter' the Village of signage, noted the report and welcomed a productive working relationship with HCC.

Resolved **To note the report.**

3622-14 Insurance Review

Quotations had been requested and received from 3 companies/brokers: Aon, Came & Company and Zurich. Councillor Begg proposed, seconded by Councillor Shardlow, and it was agreed, that the 3 year contract (with option to extend for a further 2 years) with the current provider, Zurich, be accepted.

Resolved **To accept the 3 year insurance contract with Zurich**

3623-14 Damage Request

A request had been received for compensation against paint damage to clothing from the damp RSJ at the corner of East Lane-High Street. This and the bell bollard had been repainted following vehicle collisions.

It was noted that the Parish Council had a rigorous risk assessment process which in the case of painting included signage. Unfortunately, as identified by the appellant, the 'wet paint' sign was moved. WPC had an arrangement with Herts County Council (who own the bell bollard) for painting their street furniture however the RSJ was on private land and was not its responsibility.

After due consideration the Chairman proposed and it was agreed to make an ex gratia payment from its public funds.

Resolved **1 To note the report.**
2 To make an ex gratia payment of £40

3627-14 Complaint

Further to Minute 3563-14, the chairman reported that investigations were ongoing.

Resolved

To note the report

3628-14 Accounts for Payment and Finance Reports

The list of accounts paid to May had been circulated and noted.

Resolved

To note the reports

3629-14 Consultations, training and meetings

Councillor Woodhams reported that he with the Clerk had attended the Safety Advisory Group Meeting. Some advice was given but members were generally pleased with documents submitted relating to the Village Weekend events.

Resolved

To note the report

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22.25h.

Dated this day of 2014

Chairman