

Wheathampstead Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting 1 November 2018 19:30

Present:	Councillors	T Reason	Chairman
		G Clark	
		D Davies	
		L Halford	
		S Haynes	
		O McKenzie	
		T Ryan	
		P Woodhams	
		J Warren	Clerk to the Council
		Press	0
		Public	2

5860-18 Apologies

Apologies were received from councillors J Booth, E Habib, D Johnston, R O'Brien, (personal reasons).

5861-18 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

Councillor Halford declared a personal interest in Minute 5871-18 being membership secretary to the WDPS who partnered the Parish Council for the River project.

5862-18 Public Speaking

None.

5863-18 Exclusion of Press and Public

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature and commercial sensitivity of the business to be transacted.

Resolved:

To exclude press and public.

5864-18 Memorial Hall plans

Peter Goodwin of Chambers Goodwin and Partners presented some ideas on the refurbishment of the Memorial Hall and means to increase its income generation. He recommended that work should be in a phased manner, and that demolish and rebuild would be very costly and should not be further considered. He impressed upon councillors the value of the current building, albeit somewhat tired and of an age. It was never the less a terrific asset. He advocated widespread further consultation to future proof improvements and maximise functionality, and that a variety of building surveys be undertaken prior to refurbishment to minimise issues such as may be caused by unidentified drains or asbestos

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found once work was in progress. A number of modern building techniques, processes and designs were mentioned.

The Chairman thanked Mr Goodwin for his time and ideas.

Resolved:

To note the report.

5865-18 Building works

Mr Begg put forward an outline idea to regenerate the area adjacent to the Scout Hut on the Meads. This area was part of the land held in Trust by the Fields in Trust so any changes would need their support. Discussion followed.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed NOT to progress any development work on the Meads.

Resolved:

NOT to progress any development work on the Meads.

5866-18 Readmission of Press and Public

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, to readmit press and public.

Resolved:

To readmit press and public.

5867-18 Minutes of Council

Councillor McKenzie proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed, that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2018 be approved.

Resolved:

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2018 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

5868-18 Minutes of Committee Meetings

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the following draft Committee minutes and Working Group notes were received:

Planning Committee	8 Oct 2018
Nomansland Joint Management Committee	18 Oct 2018
Community Involvement Committee	22 Oct 2018

Resolved:

To receipt and adopt the Committee minutes of:

Planning Committee	8 Oct 2018
Nomansland Joint Management Committee	18 Oct 2018
Community Involvement Committee	22 Oct 2018

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5869-18 Plans referred from Planning Committee

None.

5870-18 Members' allowances

Members were advised that it was a requirement of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 that any Town or Parish Council which proposes to pay a parish basic allowance and/or a travelling and subsistence allowance to any of its members must refer its proposals to a (St Albans District Council) parish remuneration panel for consideration, and to have regard to any recommendations which the panel may make.

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Davies, and it was agreed that no Councillor allowances be paid for 2019-20 save for mileage travelled on Council business outside of the Parish.

Resolved:

That no Councillor allowances be paid for 2019-20 save for mileage travelled on Council business outside of the Parish.

5871-18 River project

Further to Minute 5837-18 three quotations had been received for estate railings for the East Lane car park river enhancement project.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed to accept the quotation from Cotswold Decorative Ironworkers to the sum of £5,078.

Resolved:

To accept the quotation from Cotswold Decorative Ironworkers to the sum of £5,078.

5872-18 Library

No discussion – no communication received.

5873-18 Meetings Timetable.

Defer to late meeting.

5874-18 Office telephones

It was reported that the BT contract for telephones expired in January 2019. Consideration was given to changing to a VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) system as described in the previously circulated report. This would be cost efficient and was anticipated to be a better service. Some concerns were raised regarding the loss of a standard land line. The additional costs were to be brought to the net meeting to determine whether a VOIP only or VOIP plus system be installed.

Post meeting note, the costings included both systems and following discussion between chairman and clerk would be installed.

Resolved:

To install a VOIP telephone system, with fall back of landline if costs permitted.

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5875-18 Primary School situation

It was reported that St Helen's primary School from September 2019 would reduce its pupil intake to single form entry because of falling roll numbers within the village and catchment.

Mr Brown, the Headteacher was leaving at the end of the Autumn 2018 term

Resolved:

To note the report.

5876-18 Land registration

It was reported that some but not all Council owned land was registered with the Land Registry.

Councillor McKenzie proposed, seconded by Councillor Halford, and it was agreed that all Parish Council land be registered as soon as practicable. Clerk to approach the Council's solicitor for assistance.

Resolved:

To register all Council owned land.

5877-18 Project and Task Review

The list of projects and tasks was discussed, and updates noted. Clarification on cherry tree variety for verge planting to be obtained from St Albans tree officer, Councillor Clark to facilitate presentation of gold award to Mrs Nonwe Maw. Following an office meeting with councillors the changes for the Council's website report to be brought to 29 November Council for approval.

With sadness the death of Norman Whitwood was reported. He had been instrumental in the making of the Christmas Lights Up event and in forging links between the Parish Council and business community. His contribution to be marked at 2018 Lights Up on 29 November.

Resolved:

To note the report and amended priorities.

5878-18 Audited Accounts 2017-18

It was reported that under Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Account and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) parish councils were required to publish and make available for public inspection their audited accounts by 30th September. These had yet to be returned by the external auditor (PKF Littlejohn) so were unavailable for acceptance and approval by Council.

The unaudited accounts were published per Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) and the Notice of audit and right to inspect the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2018 also published on the website and noticeboard.

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A large number of local councils, as Wheathampstead, had not received their accounts back audited by the 30th September deadline.

Resolved:

To note the report and non-receipt of 2017-18 audited accounts from PKF Litteljohn by 30th September, and to date.

5879-18 Accounts and Finance Reports

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, to note the reports.

Resolved:

To note the reports.

5880-18 Consultations

None.

5881-18 Reports on meetings and training

Councillor Ryan reported on the Highways Liaison meeting he attended at the District Council offices. He raised the issues of speed humps along the High Street, speeding particularly along Brewhouse Hill and the Hill and the failure to correctly re – apply double yellow lines along East Lane following utility works, creating access issues adjacent to the Mead Hall.

He reported that the Herts Direct website had been upgraded making fault reporting simpler, street lights were being trialled to be turned off at 01:00 rather than midnight, and potholes were being filled on a priority basis.

Councillor Haynes reported that he, with Councillor Clark had attended a bus meeting with local MP Bim Afolami, and district and county councillors. They were hopeful for a short term solution.

Councillor Haynes reported that he, with the Clerk, had attended a 'safeguarding adults at risk' level 1 course organised by the Wheathampstead Community Group. Councillor Johnston had attended a previous session.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22:00

Dated this day of 2018

Chairman