

## MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.  
Held at 8pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club, Top Road, Woodham Walter.

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

### **Present:**

Cllr. James Rushton (Chairman)  
Cllr. John Tompkins  
Cllr. Peter Warren

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)  
District Councillor Mark Durham  
District Councillor Henry Bass

Public: 1

**2135. Welcome** Cllr. Rushton welcomed those present to the meeting.

**2136. Apologies for absence.** Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Joanna Symons, Councillor Jenny Hughes and County Councillor Penny Channer.

**2137. 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 were reminded they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting).

There were no interests declared and the register was duly signed.

**2138. Public Forum** There was 1 member of the public present. Mr John Brown was in attendance as he is interested in the Parish Councillor vacancy.

**2139. To approve Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2017.** The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

**2140. Matters Arising from Minutes**  
There were no matters arising.

### **2141. Community Playground**

Clerk is awaiting a response from the Solicitor at Maldon District Council regarding the legal procedure for terminating the agreement with the school. Cllr. Durham will chase this up.

Clerk updated councillors on initial research into grants which can be applied for in order to develop a playground facility at Bell Meadow. Planning permission will be needed and research will be carried out into the types of playground facilities that villagers want. It was agreed that clerk will arrange a meeting to form a Playground Working Party. This will be advertised in the Parish Magazine for any parishioners who would be interested in getting involved in this major project.

### **2142. Planning – APPLICATIONS**

2142.1 FUL/MAL/17/00823 The Calf Shed, West Bowers Farm  
Retrospective – Change of use from agricultural use to use Class D1 (non-residential institution) (office and music lessons).

There were no objections from the neighbours consulted. Councillors agreed that they would rather see the barn used than fall into disrepair. The proposal aligns with the VDS.

Councillors support the application.

2142.2 LDE/MAL/17/00824 The Old Granary Room, West Bowers Farm

Claim for lawful development certificate for the existing use of agricultural barn as a commercial unit. Councillors raised no objections and had no evidence to offer.

2142.3 HOUSE/MAL/17/00883 Albany Orchards, Old London Road

Erection of outbuilding for swimming pool and associated accommodation. (Amendments to 16/00094) This application had been received too late for the agenda. Cllr. Tompkins to review and advise if a separate planning meeting is required or if it can wait until the next scheduled Parish Council meeting.

**2143. Planning – DECISIONS** There were no decisions to report.

### **2144. Planning – APPEALS**

2144.1 No updates have been posted regarding the appeals at Lodge Farm or Falconers Lodge.

2144.2 APP/X1545/D/17/3181375 Spring Elms Farm, Spring Elms Lane HOUSE/MAL/17/00399  
Construction of Tennis Court. An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the council's decision to refuse to grant planning permission.

Councillors noted the appeal. The appeal is proceeding under the Householder Appeals Service so there is no opportunity to submit further comments.

**2145. Other Planning Matters**

2145.1 Woodham Walter Village Design Statement. Launch reception on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September. 7-9pm WW Village Hall. Cllr. Tompkins reported that plans for the displays at the event are progressing. Clerk reported that the printed VDS copies will be available at the meeting. Clerk and Chairman are organising the food and drink, glasses hire etc. The VDS committee are meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> to run through final arrangements. Clerk to attend.

2145.2 For information only: NMA/MAL17/00715 Holly Lodge, Hop Garden Lane Application for non-material amendment following grant of planning permission of HOUSE/MAL/16/01353 (Demolition of double garage outbuilding and replacement with cart lodge). Amendment sought: Removal of facing brick plinth feature and stained timber boarding extended down to ground level.

2145.3 For information only: Various Compliance with conditions notification of HOUSE/MAL/14/01080 Granville Hall, Hop Garden Lane. Councillors noted that some removal of trees had occurred and that this should be reported to MDC.

2145.4 LBC/MAL/17/00775 St Michael’s Church – this application has been withdrawn after MDC advised that Listed Building Consent was not required for this installation contrary to original advice received from MDC. FUL/MAL/17/00774 is being considered.

**2146. Payments** The following payments were authorised and cheques duly signed.

- 2146.1 E-on –Monthly DD – £22.62 (inc. £1.08 VAT) (Await invoice)
- 2146.2 A&J Lighting Solutions – Monthly DD £23.94 (inc. £3.99 VAT)
- 2146.3 Mrs J Bannerman - Clerks Salary 28 hours + allowance & holiday £453.23
- 2146.4 HMRC ¼ly payment £128.80
- 2146.5 Mrs J Bannerman – Expenses (Stationery/Tent Spare parts) £79.29 (inc. £3.94 VAT)
- 2146.6 D.W. Maintenance £320.00
- 2146.7 NALC (LCR subscription) £17.00
- 2146.8 DPL Production Lighting Ltd £516 (inc. £86.00 VAT) (NB: to be reimbursed by BMVA)

**2147. Other Financial Matters**

2147.1 Summary of Accounts to date.

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
<b>Business Reserve A/C</b>				
14 Aug 17	Balance			16010.71
11-Sep-17	Transferred to A/C 60978876		1200.00	14810.71
<b>Community Account</b>				
14-Aug-17	Balance			498.40
06-Sep-17	Bell Meadow Village Assoc. (Ref: DPL)	430.00		928.40
11-Sep-17	Transferred from A/C 40622818	1200.00		2128.40
11-Sep-17	September Debits		1560.88	567.52

2147.2 It was noted that clerk will produce a ¼ly expenditure review to 30<sup>th</sup> September and ask the Chairman to review the accounts books.

**2148. Reports Of the District Councillor**

Cllr. Durham reported that the Summer period had been quiet. There has been a review of the structure of the committees in order to find areas where costs can be saved. Some changes being looked at include the Planning committees and the removal of the Parish trigger is being considered and is likely to be implemented. This will be replaced by Member call in only, either by the Ward Member of the Parish or the adjacent Ward Member. This is to increase the delegated decision rate and will result in savings for the council.

Cllr. Tompkins asked if the group whip will affect this?

Cllr. Durham confirmed that it will.

Cllr. Tompkins is concerned for transparency and support for the community response. This new system will offer no check on this and is not democracy at work. Other councillors present were also concerned to note this change.

Cllr. Durham indicated that it was likely to be approved in October and is in line with the systems of many other local authorities.

Cllr. Durham continued with other matters for report: The Mobile library service is being rationalised

and a consultation is due to be launched, this is likely to affect the Wood Corner stop in Woodham Walter; Maldon Police Station is now operating from within the MDC offices and is working well with a good customer response. This forms very much a one-stop shop for residents integrating with council services and other outside agencies such as Citizens Advice and Job Centre. Concerns regarding sirens and travelling at speed along local roads have been raised with the Police.

Cllr. Durham also reported on local issues: He is actively chasing up the Parish Council's Speed Indicator Device application and would report back; He had raised concerns about the barrier repairs at Old London Road and these have now been completed; Cllr. Durham asked clerk to send him information on the zig zag line application.

Cllr. Durham and Cllr. Bass then left the meeting room at 9.10pm

#### **2149. Other Council Matters**

2149.1 Parish Councillor Vacancy – It was noted that three candidates have now expressed an interest and clerk had sent more information and invited them to attend this meeting. Mr John Brown was in attendance and the procedure for co-opting a councillor was explained. This will take place at the October meeting.

2149.2 Woodham Walter Common – Clerk has received a copy of the agreement which Little Baddow PC have with the Trust. Cllr. Warren and Cllr. Tompkins will investigate further.

2149.3 Bell Meadow Village Association – Mark. Durham (Chair of the BMVA) reported that the committee would like to continue next year with another largely similar event but with more music through the day. A 'wash up' meeting of the BMVA is due to take place in October. The committee accept that the PA needs looking at amongst other things. The income increased this year. More helpers are needed across the weekend.

Councillors agreed the relationship between the BMVA and the Parish Council needs to be strengthened. It was suggested that the BMVA should invite village organisations to be represented on the committee (or at least the last couple of meetings) to alleviate future problems such as the situation with the church this year. The Parish Council will also ask the BMVA committee which is a Working Party of the Parish Council to notify of meeting dates and send copies of minutes. Clerk to investigate the terms/constitution of the Working Party and insure that it is proceeding according to these.

Councillors were grateful to the committee for staging a great community day which appeals to all. It was agreed that certificates of appreciation be awarded by the Parish Council and the BMVA to Sam Boswell and Fergus Bannerman via the school to recognise the help that they put into setting up/taking down the tents over the weekend. Clerk to liaise with the school a suitable time for a representative to attend and make the presentation.

2149.4 Allotments Association. Cllr. Rushton reported that there are still some empty plots and it is a shame that some of the area is looking overgrown, not helped by the time of year. Cllr. Rushton will look into the criteria for plot allocation.

2149.5 Party Tent Storage – Clerk has written to the Warren and awaits response. It was agreed that spare parts need to be ordered including new leg poles and screws. Clerk to arrange/liase with John Brown.

**2150. Consultations/Questionnaires** See 2151.4

#### **2151. Highways**

2151.1 Barrier at Old London Road – Cllr. Durham having complained about the quality of the work which was done has received the following response: We have now replaced the missing section of the guard rail. I'm told the team were initially only instructed to paint the top of the posts but your comments "have been noted and will be considered and the appropriate action taken."

2151.2 Clerk was notified by local resident that Essex & Suffolk water had filled a ditch at the Hop Garden/Curling Tye junction during works. Within 2 hours of calling, ESW responded and took action to remedy. If only Highways were as proactive! It was also noted that the ditch opposite White House Cottages on Hop Garden Lane appears to be filled with garden debris such as grass cuttings. It was again noted that residents should dispose of garden rubbish in the appropriate way. Drainage at this location to be monitored.

2151.3 Little Baddow Road Footpath – clerk has asked Cllr. Channer to investigate.

2151.4 Highways Survey – Clerk to liaise with councillor to complete survey. Disappointing to note that the survey offers little opportunity to comment on the system of reporting, the difficulty following up enquires and the lack of a two-way communication with the highways department since the removal of the email facility.

#### **2152. Local Issues**

2152.1 Bell Meadow 1) Gate at Bell Meadow – await final quote – Cllr. Bunn to advise.

2) To consider grass cutting schedule – it was agreed that clerk will arrange cutting as required for the remainder of the season as fortnightly is felt to be too frequent. 3) There were no issues to report and the book was duly signed.

2152.2 Footpaths Report. Cllr. Warren reported that the paths on the ECC cutting schedule have now been cut. There are only 3 paths remaining that need cutting and he will liaise with land owners accordingly; Cllr. Warren has checked on the ECC Highways system, the outstanding problems and awaits a response before handing information over to Cllr. Channer to investigate further.

2152.3 Tree Report. Cllr. Warren reported that he had carried out a tree survey with the trees in full leaf and that there were no problems to report.

2152.4 School Report. It was noted that a diseased elm tree is due to be removed. Clerk to make sure the school are aware that as it is within the newly designated Conservation Area that MDC should be notified.

2152.5 Crime/Police Report. New local policing office now open at Maldon District Council offices. Counter service staffed 9am-5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am-4.30pm on Fridays. Update on burglaries in the district has shown that some arrests have been made and the rate of burglaries in the district has now reduced significantly. Vigilance is still the best policy especially as the nights draw in.

2152.6 Litter – there have been no reports.

2152.7 Broadband – there is still nothing to report. John Brown noted that he continues to monitor progress. There is some uncertainty about the cabling which has been installed along Little Baddow Road with some reporting that it is fibre and others reporting that they are replacing copper which was damaged when they installed the ducting.

2152.8 Vehicle Activated Sign – No further information to report. Cllr. Durham is chasing this up.

2152.9 Zig Zag Lines – A response has been received from SEPP regarding the application. *In summary, the report indicates that if parking restrictions are to be considered at the junction of Top Road and The Street either side of Top Road and opposite, it should apply at all times to deter parking at any time. This would be a double yellow line and there would be no need for signage. Buses can stop on the yellow line but they would not be permitted to stop on a zig zag line. As the purpose of School Keep Clear markings is to keep space free from parked vehicles so that children can see and be seen to cross the road, it is difficult to understand why parking is prohibited along the entire length of the school as this is not where crossing occurs. It recommends that the current zig zag lines are reduced to allow some additional space for parents to park outside of the school. Any considerations would require liaising with the Parish Council, the School, Nursery and Queen Victoria Pub. It is recommended that the Parish Council are asked if they are able to provide funding or can seek a contribution from the school and nursery. The cost would be in the region of £2,500.*

Councillors were confused as to how allowing parking in the current School Keep Clear zone would be safe. They support the idea of double yellow lines as a solution to the Top Road junction. They consider that it is highly unlikely that either the school or nursery would have funding available any more than the Parish Council has. Clerk to forward information to Cllr. Durham. Clerk will also notify the school, nursery and Queen Victoria Pub of the preliminary report and seek their views.

2152.10 Bus Services – It has recently been discovered that the No.5 Thursday and the 31A Saturday buses have been withdrawn. There was no consultation as the services were run as commercially operated and not by ECC – they have therefore washed their hands of any responsibility. Clerk has written to Regal Busways the company who was running them and been told they are not commercially viable. It is very frustrating that this has happened without any warning (1 week's notice given by the bus driver to the passengers). This service is relied on by passengers in Woodham Walter as independent access out of the village to essential services in Maldon. Clerk has been in touch with Arrow Taxis who operate the DART service and the newly renamed 99 service (previously 31A M-F) to see if there is anything they can do to help. Await a response. Clerk has also contacted East Hanningfield, Bicknacre, Danbury and Little Baddow Parish Councils where the bus used to operate. Await responses. Councillors were very concerned to hear this news and ask clerk to continue in efforts to establish a service. Clerk to write to District and County Councillors with information.

The 31A Monday-Friday service has now changed operators and will be renumbered 99 and operated by Essex & Suffolk Dart (Arrow Taxis) to a revised timetable. There are now 2 buses per day to/from Chelmsford. Departing Woodham Walter at 07:25 and 11:40 returning from Chelmsford at 16:00 and 17:30 The timetable is available on the noticeboard and on the parish council website.

2152.11 Telephone Kiosk – It was agreed that the contract from BT be signed by the Chairman. Clerk to arrange a consultation via the parish magazine to seek suggestions as to the future use of the box. One of the possibilities is that it could be used as the location for a defibrillator (it is understood that St Michael's church are currently looking into the possibility of raising funds) and if this was to be the case, BT need to be informed in order for them to agree to maintaining the unmetered electricity supply.

## **2153. Matters Raised by Local Residents**

2153.1 Angus Neale has suggested that the Parish Council might consider a Community Award for Ursula Lawton for her time maintaining village footpaths etc. Councillors ask clerk to send a letter of thanks to Mrs Lawton. They like the idea of a Community Award scheme and will consider this for the Annual Parish Meeting with a procedure for nominating candidates to be considered.

2153.2 Dave Weedon has been in touch regarding the slow running of the brook during mid-August. It was barely a trickle and he is concerned about the impact on the wildlife. He is concerned that if the water was being extracted that it shouldn't be allowed to be done to this extent. Councillors noted his comments. Cllr. Tompkins noted that other evidence points towards the water table generally being low during August. If it happens again the Environment Agency should be notified.

2153.3 Peter Gaywood is concerned that due to the lack of mobile phone signal in parts of the village, that residents are unable to have smart meters fitted. Councillors noted his concerns but do not consider they will have any power to persuade mobile companies to improve the service.

**2154. Correspondence**

2154.1 WW Village Hall – thanks for grant

2154.2 WW Women's Club – thanks for grant

2154.3 Essex Wildlife Trust – thanks for grant

**2155. Points of Information** None

**2156. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:**

Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 8pm in Women's Club.

Signed

**Meeting ended at 10.15pm**

Dated