

MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.
Held at 8.00pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club, Top Road, Woodham Walter.

Tuesday 18th October 2016

Present:

Cllr. Joanna Symons (Chairman)

Cllr. Jenny Hughes

Cllr. John Tompkins

Cllr. Peter Warren

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)

Public: 3

1898. Welcome Cllr. Joanna Symons welcomed those present to the meeting.

1899. Apologies For Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. James Rushton, Cllr. Mark Durham, Cllr. James Bunn and District Councillor Henry Bass.

1900. 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).

It was noted that Cllr. Mark Durham had updated his Register of Members Interests. Cllr. John Tompkins recorded a Non-Pecuniary interest in the Planning application at Barnfield as he had offered advice to the owner. There were no other interests declared and the register was duly signed.

1901. Public Forum There were 3 members of the public present.

1901.1 Mr Graham Loveday was in attendance to raise the issue of a rat problem affecting properties adjacent to the river along The Street. Residents have been putting down bait but the problem has been getting worse. The river is being used as a highway and Mr Loveday asked if there was any way the Parish Council could help to control them. Clerk reported that she had researched the issue and although the Parish Council do not have any specific power to solve the problem she had made enquiries with the Environment Agency which will be passed on when a response is received; some general advice from the Maldon District Council website was given to Mr Loveday such as not feeding birds as the food attracts rats etc. and contact details for the Pest Control Officer; District Cllr. Durham has also asked for some advice from MDC Environmental Health Officer which will be forwarded on when available. It was agreed that some general advice raising awareness of the issues would be put in the Parish Magazine.

1901.2 Mrs Patricia Herrmann was in attendance to raise the issue of Policy H6 Gypsy & Travellers in the current Consultation document of the Maldon LDP. She outlined the history of her objection to the original plan that the policy is not sound which she had raised at the enquiry with Mr Vickery and this had been one of the main reasons why the LDP had been found to be unsound. Yet still in this document MDC have not dealt with that inspector's points and she is personally dissatisfied that nothing has been done to protect the Wood Corner site from enlargement or more intensified use. All this new report has done is put the points into a different sequential order. They still state that they will look first at existing sites to see if they can be enlarged/intensified and only after this will they look at outside sites. Wood Corner remains at the top of the list in the document for no explained reason. The Council has been preparing a Site Allocations plan which will identify pitches – but this has been promised for many years and has still not been produced. Mrs Herrmann hopes that the Parish Council will feel moved to comment on this as it could be disastrous and detrimental for Wood Corner and the village if this site was ever allowed to be increased. It is already 20 pitches which exceeds the recommended maximum. When the site was created it was the responsibility of Essex County Council to create sites but this is now the Districts responsibility. An agreement was reached at the time of creation (circa 1991) between ECC and the Parish Council that the site could not be further increased but MDC refuse to be bound by an agreement made by another authority. Mrs Herrmann thinks that the LDP Policy H6 should be improved and Wood Corner should be noted as being of maximum size and protected.

Councillor's reported to Mrs Herrmann that the Parish Council understand that the Policy H6 is going to be changing and that MDC are close to finalising this but the information is not yet in the public domain. We are informally assured that they are not expecting Wood Corner to be increased,

however until we have this information on the record we cannot take it as official and can only respond to the LDP consultation document as per the one which is available. Councillors agreed that a paragraph in our response to the document will be about objecting to the current proposed policy H6.

1901.3 Mrs Sally Bull was in attendance to answer any questions that councillors may have with regards to the planning application at her property, Barnfield.

1902. To approve Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12th September 2016. The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

1903. Matters Arising from Minutes

1903.1 Air Cmdre. Sismore memorial bench on Bell Meadow. Wording for plaque received from family and approved by councillors.

1903.2 Local Bus Review – it was noted that the bus review for the Woodham Walter routes will take place at a later date – clerk to monitor for information.

1904. Planning – APPLICATIONS

HOUSE/MAL/16/01075 Barnfield, Spring Elms Lane
Proposed 2 no. single storey rear extensions.

Councillors support the application.

Mrs Sally Bull then left the meeting room at 8.35pm.

1905. Planning – DECISIONS

There were no decisions to report.

1906. Planning – APPEALS

1906.1 FUL/MAL/15/00047 Land adjacent to Whitegates, Herbage Park Road **DISMISSED**
Residential development comprising 11 dwellings. Appeal ref: APP/X1545/W/15/3130915

Inspector Richard McCoy for the Planning Inspectorate in his Conclusion states:

I have identified aggregated less than substantial harm to designated historic assets. In addition, I have identified significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to saved LP Policy BE1.

Although the

proposal would not be harmful in terms of those other matters identified in paragraph 21 above and would bring benefits of significant weight, I consider that these matters would not be sufficient to outweigh the totality of the harm, giving considerable weight to paying special regard to the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings, as reflected in paragraph 132 of the NPPF. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, I consider that the appeal should be dismissed.

Cllr. Symons thanked Cllr. Warren for the hard work he had put into providing evidence to the inspector of the case during the appeal process.

1907. Other Planning Matters

1907.1 Woodham Walter Conservation Area Consultation. It was noted that the closing date was 6th October. Await results.

1907.2 Woodham Walter Village Design Statement. Cllr. Tompkins reported that the VDS group await the results of the Conservation Area consultation before they can proceed any further.

1907.3 Enforcement update. Enforcement Officer notified that no evidence of misuse was found at Meadows Barns and the property register has been requested.

1907.4 Danbury/Runsell Green Development proposal from Gladman. Clerk enquired and received confirmation that this is not an application at this stage. No response required. Danbury Parish Council will keep clerk informed of any future application.

1907.5 Maldon District Local Development Plan Consultation – deadline 27th October.

Councillors outlined their concerns with the plan.

- Object to Policy H6 Provision for Gypsy and Travellers. Concern that little has changed with the policy considering this was the reason the document was found to be unsound by the original inspector. Woodham Walter Parish Council seeks reassurance that the Wood Corner site will not be intensified or expanded. The policy states that it will look first at existing sites but Wood Corner at 20 pitches is already in excess of the recommended maximum size and by far larger than any other site in the District; this should be acknowledged in the LDP. Wood Corner and Woodham Walter should be offered protection from future expansion or intensification which would be detrimental to both the very successful and well-integrated site and the village as a whole.
- Policy S2. The focus of the document change appears to be on central Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham areas. Whilst acknowledging infrastructure constraints there is no reference to the impact as it affects the outlying villages and what measures are proposed in mitigation. The increase in the level of vehicle movements on the A414 and through Hatfield Peverel will significantly impact on villages such as Woodham Walter as vehicles seek alternative routes

and shortcuts - there is no provision for dealing with this. In addition, the likely significant increase in vehicle movements on the A414 and B1019 will drastically impact on the access for villagers to/from Woodham Walter. The document offers insufficient emphasis and thought to highways issues.

- Policy I2. There is a major concern at the inadequacy of sustainable transport connections to shopping centres and mainline stations that will be exasperated by the apparent lack of provision of infrastructure improvements.
- Concern is expressed at the provision for expansion at the Plume School to avoid overcapacity. Pupils from outlying villages such as Woodham Walter by reason of their distance to the school will be disadvantaged and may find it difficult to secure a place in their catchment school.
- Concern is expressed with the current over-capacity of Doctors' surgeries and the apparent inconclusiveness of the document changes to ensure that healthcare provision will be adequate not only for the town areas BUT also the outlying villages. This includes hospital services. No timetable is provided for upgrade.
- Criminality is increasing and no consideration has been afforded to mitigate this.

Clerk to prepare a draft response and liaise with Cllr. Symons and Cllr. Tompkins.

Mr Graham Loveday and Mrs Patricia Herrmann then left the meeting room at 8.55pm.

1908. Payments The following payments were authorised and cheques duly signed.

1908.1 E-on –Monthly DD £20.01 (inc. 0.95 VAT)

1908.2 A&J Lighting Solutions – Monthly DD £23.94 (inc. £3.99 VAT)

1908.3 Mrs J Bannerman - Clerks Salary 35 hours & Allowance £414.40

1908.4 Universal Services £54.00 (inc. £9.00 VAT) (annual safety inspection of goal posts)

1908.5 PKF Littlejohn LLP £120 (inc. £20.00 VAT) (Audit)

1909. Other Financial Matters

1909.1 Summary of Accounts to date.

DATE	ACCOUNT / TRANSACTION DETAIL	AMOUNT IN	AMOUNT OUT	BALANCE
Business Reserve A/C				
18-Oct-16	Balance			10776.36
Community Account				
13-Sep-16	Balance			558.52
03-Oct-16	HMRC VAT refund 2015/2016	301.65		860.17
13-Oct-16	Bell Meadow Village Association Payment re: PA	410.00		1270.17
18-Oct-16	October Debits		632.35	637.82

1909.2 Quarterly Accounts Review to end September – Chairman confirmed that she has reviewed the accounts and bank statements as part of the internal control measures. Clerk had prepared a spreadsheet which was distributed to all councillors and shows that the accounts are broadly corresponding with the budget predictions.

1909.3 Audit of Accounts for Woodham Walter Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2016 has been concluded and the accounts have been published on the noticeboard and website. The Annual Return is available for inspection by any local government elector for the area of Woodham Walter Parish Council on application to the Parish Clerk.

1909.4 Budget 2017/18 Councillors were asked to begin budget considerations.

1910. Reports Of The District Councillor Cllr Durham's report was read to councillors: *Members will shortly be presented the results of the consultation for the rural allocations for housing and gypsy & traveller sites. This will of course form part of the submission to the inspector of the LDP which is due to recommence public examination in early January. The council is currently in the early stages of its budget setting for the next year. We have a current predicted deficit of £445,000 for the year 2017/18 although this can be reduced by savings and growth items to about £200k. The government amended the rules for council tax increases to allow either 2% or £5 whichever is higher. The council will have to debate the various options for balancing its budget, but almost certainly it will have to draw down on reserves. The situation becomes more acute in 2018/19 with a gap of nearly £900k increasing to £1.3m in 2019/20. It is therefore imperative that careful thought is given to how MDC can weather this storm. We are still awaiting details from the government regarding the business rate retention scheme and new homes bonus. The government has already announced that by 2020 councils will no longer receive any revenue support grant from central government, but as yet, we are not advised where the councils income will come from! It is worth remembering that MDC is only the collection agent for council tax and it only retains 12 pence from every pound collected. Staffing at the council continues to be a problem*

with several high level vacancies currently being advertised. The Director of Resources is due to leave the authority and there are still a few gaps in the planning department. This isn't peculiar to Maldon, there being an acute shortage of officers throughout the country.

1911. Other Council Matters

1911.1 Woodham Walter Common – There was no information to report.

1911.2 Bell Meadow Village Association – it was noted that the invoice for the PA had been settled.

1911.3 Allotments Association - There was no information to report.

1911.4 Emergency Plan – the document has been updated and clerk will circulate to councillors.

1912. Consultations/Questionnaires

1912.1 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation – regarding council tax referendum principles for local parish and town councils. Deadline 28 October 2016. Councillors agreed that a response should be made to oppose the proposal that parishes be required to hold a local referendum if the proposed council tax increase exceeds 2%, as currently applied to principal authorities. Councillors agree that this will severely hamper parish councils developing services and being able to deliver the wants, needs and aspirations of their communities. Clerk to write using the guidance offered by the EALC and NALC.

1912.2 Superfast Essex Public Consultation – it was noted that the deadline was the 12th October.

1913. Highways

1913.1 There are a number of on-going highways issues which clerk is pursuing.

1913.2 Query why the white lines down the middle and edges of the roads have not so far been repainted following the surface dressing works. Re-reported on line ref: 2490113. Response received: *In regards to the lining work, in some cases only the safety critical lines have been replaced on local roads, this is to ensure that limited resources are not being exhausted carrying out lining works following surface dressing, in order that Highways can focus its efforts on line marking the main routes more effectively. The centre lines (not in areas where hazard warning centre lines are marked – these would be replaced) along with carriageway edge markings may not have been replaced following the work.* Councillors ask clerk to write to Highways to place on record the Parish Council's concern that this is a safety issue. The absence of white lines is a motoring hazard and any accidents that occur could leave the Highways authority at fault and open to legal proceedings.

1913.3 Little Baddow Road – pavement adjacent to Valley House – this is on the schedule but no date set.

1913.4 The Street – broken manhole cover – this has been repaired.

1913.5 Highways Practice Note – councillors considered locations in the village that this could be applicable to but concluded that there were not any locations where problems were significant enough to warrant it.

1914. Local Issues

1914.1 Bell Meadow/Playground. 1) Oak tree on West side of Bell Meadow fallen from Bell Grove. Cllr. Warren will make contact with the General Manager at The Warren. 2) New gate – clerk has found plan showing water pipe running along top of Bell Meadow and will contact Andrew Upson with information. 3) Mrs Ursula Lawton had reported that some small ash trees had died on the Memorial Garden – clerk to ask Colin Warner if he would be able to remove. 4) There was no other information to report and the book was duly signed.

1914.2 Footpaths Report. 1) FP22 at Blue Mill, a tree that blocked the path was promptly dealt with by the land owner Lee Carter. Subsequently Shelley Rand & John Brown had done a great job of clearing the rest of the path, thanks to all; 2) Ash trees on BR31 bridleway into WW Common which are rotted and dangerous – the adjacent land owner has kindly arranged for their removal – thanks to Mr & Mrs Bull. 3) FP35 in WW Common – erroneous signage has now been removed 4) FP5 West Bowers Road – rotten planks on bridge have been reported 5) Gate by allotment path – ECC have responded that the gate is the responsibility of the land owner. 6) FP12 Dangerous trees – no progress 7) FP36 Fallen trees between water pumping station and Warren – Cllr. Warren will report to General Manager at Warren.

1914.3 School Report. Cllr. Symons reported that there are currently 101 pupils. She had recently attended Governor Ofsted training. The Head Teacher would like to look at the Community Playground facility. There have been a number of security issues at the school and the Head Teacher is concerned that the school remains open because access is required to the joint playground facility. There is also concern that the school site is used more generally and it was noted that it is just the playground equipment which forms the agreement and nowhere else within the grounds of the school. Councillors suggest that they could consider erecting a picket fence to deter use of the field etc. Councillors agreed that whilst they understand the concerns of the school, the facility is listed as a community asset and is of benefit to the parish and they would be keen to maintain it for parish

children and family/visitors to the parish which does include the use by pupils after school hours. Councillors did not think that the playground was highly used during the school holidays and consider that it would be desirable for there to be proper opening and closing times listed so that the school gate can be locked outside of these times to help improve security – it may be possible to consider a rota to do this. However, it was also acknowledged that break-ins at such premises often occurred where perpetrators climb over fences so this would not stop this but may offer a deterrent. Cllr. Symons/Clerk to arrange a meeting with Head Teacher and Governor/Parish Council representatives to discuss further.

1914.4 Crime/Police Report – There was no information to report.

1914.5 Litter – There was no information to report. See Min Ref: 1915.3

1914.6 Broadband. Report on Superfast Essex meeting held on 10th October. The Parish Council and village were well represented at the meeting and raised concerns about the scheme and when it will come to Woodham Walter including the outlying areas of the village. The Superfast team reported that they are waiting for BT to update the operational dates for Phase 2 so they are unable to tell us when Phase 2 will be rolled out to the central area of the village – the dates posted on line state between June 2016-July 2017.

They are currently consulting on Phase 3 which is the remaining 5% of properties in Essex which will be scheduled up to 2020. This 5% are in the more outlying areas and the tender process will be non technology specific. This 5% across Essex actually represents more like 25% of Woodham Walter properties. When asked if a private scheme would jeopardise funding for the 75% of houses under Phase 2 from Superfast Essex there was still not a clear answer. Evidence from an audience member indicated that from his experience this is precisely what had happened but if the market review has now been completed and the schedule done then the Superfast team felt that there would be no harm in talking to outside companies such as County Broadband.

Cllr. Symons asked for the Superfast team to provide further written information on this.

They have now supplied this clarification: *Superfast Essex has completed its Open Market Review of broadband coverage provided by network operators to help identify the areas which will be eligible for Phase 3 to help inform our planning process. If Superfast Essex is to be made aware of any new commercial activity by an operator, strictly speaking the programme could decide to de-scope part of a village if there is a value for money argument that the services the Superfast Essex programme would be making available would not be taken up because there is commercial operator coverage being put in place before we get there. However, any new wireless coverage claimed by a commercial operator which has not been captured in the OMR, will not impact on any of our planned Phase 2 or Phase 3 work because a more detailed external analysis has to be carried out to ensure any claimed wireless technology meets the necessary Next Generation Access requirements and this is only possible to do during the formal OMR period.*

For this reason, there would be no risk in the parish having conversations with commercial operator to explore what options are available to the remaining areas which are not currently in any Superfast Essex plans. In reality to have those conversations with a wireless operator and for them to put a plan together can take some time, by which point we are more likely to know what Phase 3 will look like and if the rest of Woodham Walter is due to be covered by Superfast Essex. In our experience, it is unlikely a wireless operator will invest in an area Superfast Essex is planning to go, so would likely withdraw any plans at that stage if that was the case.

The consultation closed on 12th October, clerk included information in the October Parish Magazine and sent out an email to villagers asking for them to complete in order to demonstrate the clear interest in the village. Superfast Essex clearly state that one of the criteria for producing a scheme is the level of interest so it is essential that everyone registers their interest.

Following on from the meeting clerk received various correspondence from villagers including information about the cabinet which serves the village which raised questions about exactly which area of the village is due for upgrade and whether the maps on the website are accurate this has been raised via the questionnaire procedure.

It has also been noted that there are many interested parishioners who are keen to try and move things forward and that there are a whole host of interesting private options and new technologies coming to market. Councillors agreed that in light of the information from Superfast Essex that forming a Broadband Working Party to consider and research the situation and options and report back to the Parish Council would be a good way forward. Clerk to arrange a preliminary meeting to discuss the current situation and ideas for solutions for the future with councillors and John Brown and Graham Bannerman who have already expressed an interest in assisting. There will then be a meeting in December which will be advertised for any other interested persons to attend.

1914.7 Vehicle Activated Sign – Cllr. Durham to investigate further.

1914.8 Garden waste disposal – there are a few locations where it has been noticed that garden waste is being dumped on verges and field boundaries. Councillors agree that this is unsightly and there is a fine line between what some residents might consider composting and others unsightly flytipping/fire hazard. In essence please dispose of your garden waste on your own land or using proper means.

Maldon District Council have a green garden waste wheeled bin kerbside service for a small annual fee. Residents can also purchase special green waste sacks which can be booked onto the garden waste collection rounds. These cost £1 per sack and can be bought from Maldon Tourist Information Centre, Wenlock Way, High Street, Maldon.

Without precise evidence it is difficult to accuse householders but Maldon District Council do make prosecutions for fly tipping when they receive evidence and state on their website: 'Fly tipping' or 'dumping' are the common terms used to describe the illegal deposit of any waste onto land and is both illegal and dangerous. It is an offence to fly-tip any material, and offenders can be fined up to £50,000 and /or 5 years imprisonment. Fines are unlimited if the case goes to the County Court.

It was agreed that information should be put in the Parish magazine to inform residents.

1914.9 Overgrown hedges – clerk has received complaints that hedges can sometimes impede footpaths and roadways. Owners are asked to ensure hedges are maintained in order that access to footpaths is available and that roadside hedges do not overgrow into carriageway.

1915. Matters Raised by Local Residents

1915.1 Mr Stan Keep at Ferndale regarding flooding. Councillors are sympathetic to Mr Keep's recent flooding of his property and thank him for keeping them informed of his progress. They understand that the farmer has recently carried out some work to maintain the trees along the river edge. Councillors hope that the Environment Agency are able to assist with his situation and clerk has forwarded information from Essex County Council about grants which are available to householders affected by flooding.

1915.2 Mr Geoff Hicks re: Flytipping/Recycling Centre changes. Councillors agreed that they and parishioners are concerned that the new restrictions will lead to more fly tipping in the village. Clerk to write to Essex County Council (copied to Cllr.Channer) with concerns.

1915.3 Mr Lee Carter re: Complaint regarding Litter following Maldon ½ marathon. Councillors endorse the comments of Mr Carter and ask Clerk to write to the organisers.

1916. Correspondence

1916.1 Various items of correspondence emailed to councillors/in the drop box – noted.



Making the Links
October 2016.pdf



Letter Priti Patel
Aviva Community Fu



FW Very High
Importance.msg



FW Legal Update -
September Issue.ms



Essex County



EALC E bulletin
Friday 30th Septem



EALC E bulletin
Friday 7th October.r



County Update.pdf



Autumn 1.pdf



Saved search
results and Tracked

1916.2 Priti Patel MP – Letter detailing information on the Aviva Community Fund which offers community organisations the chance to get funding to support the work they are doing in the community. Info forwarded to St Michael's, Women's Club, Village Hall, Lunch Club and PTA. Unfortunately with only 2 weeks notice the deadline has already passed! Clerk to request more notice next year.

1916.3 St Michael's Church – letter regarding plans to purchase a defibrillator for the village. Councillors agreed that this is a worthwhile project and support it subject to details.

1916.4 St Michael's Church – invitation to attend licensing of Priest on Saturday 26 November.

1917. Points of Information

1918. Date of Next Parish Council Meetings:

Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting Monday 14th November 2016 at 8pm in Women's Club.

Signed

Meeting ended at 11.00pm

Dated