

WEST HORNDON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: - Kim Harding – 27 Cadogan Avenue, West Horndon, Brentwood CM13 3TU

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEST HORNDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 26th JANUARY 2023, AT 7.30 PM AT ST FRANCIS CHURCH. THORNDON AVENUE, WEST HORNDON, BRENTWOOD.

In the chair: Councillor Foan

Present: Councillors Hannah, Lister, Marchant, Moorcroft, and Petty

Also attending: Two members of Brentwood Borough Council and six members of the public

Clerk: Mr K Harding

Daniel Cannon, Chief Community Officer from Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) gave a short presentation regarding the forthcoming Safe, Well and Secure Event to be held in West Horndon. The event would be led by the Fire Service. However, other emergency and community services would be involved. Cllr Moorcroft had ensured that St. Francis Church would be used as a base for the display of key information and for people to inspect emergency service vehicles. Also, she was instrumental in setting the date for the event as 15th to 17th May inclusive due to the availability of the Church and the Christabella Wing. During the first two days it was anticipated that all properties within the village would be visited to provide advice on safety and security issues. The last day would be a community day with local residents able to raise points of concern with relevant agencies. A detailed plan of the event would be available closer to the date. Daniel Cannon noted that publicity about the event would be most welcome. It was agreed that an article would be placed in the next edition of the Parish Newsletter. Also, posters, when available, would be placed on the Parish Noticeboards and other strategic points around the village.

PUBLIC FORUM

It was noted that some of photographs used in the Parish Newsletter relating to social groups operating within the village were not of actual members of the groups themselves. It was explained that this was because the Parish Council paid for a design and printing service for the Newsletter. Therefore, if no photographs were supplied with an article for the Newsletter a picture from a 'clip-art' library would be inserted. If actual photographs were supplied with articles for the Newsletter then these would be used.

It was confirmed that the four new trees planted at the eastern end of West Horndon Park a couple of year ago had all died. They had been removed by the grounds maintenance company.

It was reported that the drainage ditches in West Horndon Park had a considerable amount of debris in them and needed to be cleared. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the grounds maintenance company.

{Action – Clerk}

The bushes bordering St, Mary's Lane from the entrance to West Horndon Village over the railway bridge, to the junction with Dunnings Lane/Childerditch Lane South were noted as becoming very overgrown. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Thurrock Council requested that these be trimmed.

{Action – Clerk}

A number of local residents were driving over grass verges in front of their properties in order to park vehicles off road. During the recent wet weather this had resulted in mud being deposited over the footpath. This created a slip hazard. It was agreed the Clerk would write to those residents where this health and safety issue had been observed. It was also agreed that an article on this matter would be prepared for the next Parish Newsletter.

{Action – Clerk}

23/01

POSITION OF CHAIR OF WEST HORNDON PARISH COUNCIL - Clerk

Cllr Foan reported that Cllrs McNicol and Whale had recently resigned as Parish Councillors. Both were thanked for all the work they had undertaken for the Parish Council. Cllr McNicol at the time of his resignation was the Chair. This meant that two options now presented themselves in terms of the position of Chair of the Parish Council until the next Annual Parish Council meeting was held. New elections for the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Parish Council could be undertaken at this meeting or the Deputy Chair – Cllr Foan - could act as the Chair until the next Annual Parish Council meeting. Following discussion, and with the agreement of Cllr Foan, it was agreed that the Deputy Chair would act as the Chair of West Horndon Parish Council until the next Annual Parish Council meeting.

[Proposed Cllr Moorcroft, Seconded Cllr Lister – All in favour]

23/02

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION/NATURE OF INTERESTS

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Houghton, McKinlay (ECC), Murphy (BBC) and Pearson (BBC). Cllrs Houghton and Murphy (BBC) were unable to attend for personal reasons. Cllr McKinlay was attending a dinner and Cllr Pearson was not present due to work commitments.

No declarations of interest had been received.

23/03 CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR

Cllr Foan reported that a resident of West Horndon Parish had indicated his willingness to serve on the Parish Council. He proposed that Gary Marchant be co-opted as a Parish Councillor. This was agreed.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Hannah – All in favour]

Gary Marchant signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the other councillors.

23/04 MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24th NOVEMBER 2022

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 24th November 2022 were authorised as a true record.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Hannah – All in favour]

23/05 CLERK'S REPORT/PROGRESS REPORT – Clerk

The Clerk was continuing with efforts to secure a meeting with Thurrock Council about the proposed housing development on the airfield at King's Farm, close to Orsett Village. Also, meetings with (a) the BBC regarding waste bins in Station Road and West Horndon Park; and (b) Cllr Murphy (BBC) and appropriate BBC officers regarding the opportunities for placing signage along Station Road for deterring littering were being arranged.

Progress against other actions was shown in the distributed report. Most actions had a bearing on items being dealt with later on the agenda. Where appropriate any information discovered would be disclosed under the relevant agenda headings.

23/06 FINANCE – Responsible Financial Officer

The payments for January 2023 were approved.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Hannah – All in favour]

The budget/spend analysis for 2022/23 to date was noted.

The bank reconciliation as at 30th December 2022 was noted.

23/07 BUDGET AND PRECEPT REPORT – Responsible Financial Officer

A revised forecast expenditure outturn figure for 2022/23 of £44,517.18 had previously been notified to West Horndon Parish Councillors. This coupled with (a) forecast expected income during the forthcoming financial year of £38,434.49; (b) the retention of a £30,000 general reserve by the Parish Council for Park improvements and Local Development Plan/Neighbourhood Plan (LDP/NP) expenditure; and (c) the creation of a

contingency fund of £5,549.03; allowed an expenditure budget of £86,000 for 2023/24 to be recommended for acceptance. It was agreed that within this sum budget allocations would be revised from 2022/23 levels and £1,000 moved from village upkeep requirements to Parish Newsletter expenditure. This was in recognition of the increased printing and design costs for the Parish Newsletter.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Hannah – All in favour]

To finance the approved budget, and in recognition of rising prices, it was agreed that the precept requirement for West Horndon Parish for 2023/24 should rise by £500 to £33,000. This sum would be notified to BBC by the required date of 31st January 2023.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Hannah – All in favour]

{Action – Clerk}

23/08 INTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS 2022/23 – Responsible Financial Officer

It was agreed that as the work undertaken by the appointed internal auditor for 2021/22 met with approval, she would be asked if she was prepared to be engaged again.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Hannah – All in favour]

{Action – Clerk}

23/09 PLANNING UPDATE – Cllr Foan

Since the Parish Council meeting held on 24th November 2022 a number of planning applications had been received. These were dealt with under delegated authority. It was disappointing to note that yet again works on one property had commenced before relevant planning permission had been granted.

23/10 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – Cllr Moorcroft

A meeting with CEG, the company leading on the Dunton Hills Garden Village development, was taking place on 2nd February 2023. Following this meeting discussions would be held with Justin Booij of BBC to determine how the latest information on the Dunton Hills Garden Village could be shared with the local community.

23/11 HIGHWAYS UPDATE – Clerk

It was noted that the street lights at the junction of Station Road with the A128 still awaited repair. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Cllr McKinlay (ECC) on this matter.

{Action – Clerk}

23/12 PARK UPDATE – Clerk

A metal slide and six new hand grips had been ordered to replace those items damaged through vandalism within the Children’s Play Area in West Horndon Park.

The report on the recent RoSPA inspection of the equipment within West Horndon Park was awaited. When received decisions could be taken on what action was required.

23/13 COMMUNITY MATTERS – Clerk

Complaints had been received regarding the large banner erected by Station Kebab in Station Road at the junction with Thorndon Avenue. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the owner/manager of the premises requesting the sign was removed.

{Action – Clerk}

23/14 CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING EVENT ON 4th DECEMBER 2022 – Cllr Lister

Cllr Lister reported that the event had been very well attended and a number of favourable comments about the evening had been made. £429.73 had been raised from donations for food & drink and the raffle and, as agreed, this would be given to St. Francis Church.

Cllr Lister advised that the Salvation Army would be playing at the Christmas Tree Lighting Event to be held on Sunday 3rd December 2023.

23/15 REMEMBRANCE SERVICE FOR AMERICAN AIRMEN – Cllr Lister

Cllr Lister gave details of the banner being prepared by the Quilting Group for display in St. Francis Church in respect of the 80th Anniversary of the air crash close to West Horndon when American airmen had lost their lives. In recognition of the quality of the work being undertaken, and the time and effort being given by those involved, Cllr Lister requested that a donation of £200 be made to the Quilting Group. This was agreed.

[Proposed Cllr Lister, Seconded Cllr Moorcroft – All in favour]

{Action – Clerk}

23/16 PARISH NEWSLETTER – Clerk

It was thought appropriate that the next edition of the Parish Newsletter should be arranged to be printed and circulated by the end of March 2023. Parish Councillors were requested to submit articles for inclusion in the Newsletter to Cllr Houghton in advance of this time.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY – Clerk

The following actions were noted as being undertaken under delegated authority since the Parish Council meeting held on 24th November 2023

Approval of expenditure for December 2022 totalling £3,118.21.

Planning Application No. 22/01579/HHA – 106, Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon - Hip to gable loft conversion. Insertion of pitched roof dormer and rooflight to front elevation and dormer with Juliette balcony to rear elevation.

The Parish Councillors had no objections to the proposed works with one exception. This related to the inclusion within the rear dormer of a Juliette balcony. Such balconies had long been regarded by the Parish Council as causing privacy issues in that they enabled neighbouring properties to be overlooked in a more intrusive manner.

Planning Application No. 22/01612/ADV – Unit 1, East Horndon Business Park, Old Tilbury Road, West Horndon – Two internally illuminated fascia signs. Relocation of north east sign to south east elevation.

West Horndon Parish Councillors held no objections providing the trees and bushes which were removed during construction of the Park, where the site borders the A128, were restored.

Planning Application No. 22/01612/HHA – 14, Cadogan Avenue, West Horndon – Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension. New front dormer to existing loft conversion.

West Horndon Parish Councillors agreed that no objections should be raised in respect of the proposed works. However, they did wish it to be noted that part of the application should be regarded as retrospective as the front dormer to the loft conversion was all but completed.

Planning Application No. 22/01726/HHA – 14, Cadogan Avenue, West Horndon – Retention of front dormer to existing loft conversion.

West Horndon Parish Councillors offered no objections in respect of the front dormer. However, yet again, building work had commenced at a residential property within West Horndon Parish without all of the necessary building permissions having been secured. This appeared to be part of a growing trend. West Horndon Parish Councillors took a dim view of the number of retrospective planning applications being received and welcomed discussions with borough officers on how this practice could be reduced/eliminated.

Planning Application No. 22/01751/FUL – Unit 3A, East Horndon Business Park, Old Tilbury Road, West Horndon – Full planning application for the development of a Class B2/B8 building (industrial, storage and distribution including ancillary office provision), with associated access, vehicle and cycle parking, servicing, landscaping and infrastructure.

West Horndon Parish Council put forward a number of objections to the granting of outline planning permission for the building of East Horndon Business Park. In the

opinion of the West Horndon Parish Councillors a number of these concerns still remained valid.

While Units 1 & 4 of the East Horndon Business Park had been constructed, it was clear from the advertising hoardings erected around the site that suitable applicants to fill the vacant premises were proving difficult to find. This was predicted by the Parish Council when it was stated that there were a large number of industrial parks within the Parish and surrounding area. There was presently a surplus of vacant industrial space within West Horndon Parish and a three mile radius from East Horndon Business Park. This situation was exacerbated by (a) the decision by the owners of West Horndon Industrial Estate to continue using the site for commercial purposes rather than allow the land to be developed for housing purposes as proposed in the recently adopted Brentwood Local Development Plan; (b) the recently announced decision by Brentwood Borough Council to expand Childerditch Industrial Park; and (c) the building of speculative industrial parks in Basildon and Thurrock, which were also struggling to find suitable companies to occupy vacant units.

Study of the present East Horndon Business Park site showed that areas where Units 2 and 3 of the Park were due to be constructed were subject to heavy surface water flooding with two substantial 'lakes of water' having formed. West Horndon Parish Council previously advised that this area was fen land and provided a much needed 'buffer' to prevent surface water flooding in West Horndon Village. Nothing viewed by the Parish Council to date had occurred to lessen this concern. Local drainage ditches were extremely full of water following recent heavy rainfall and the displacement of further water from the East Horndon Industrial Park site would increase water levels further. Brentwood Borough Council was under an obligation to ensure that by allowing a planning application to proceed it must not increase the risk of an adjacent area becoming subject to flooding.

Serious transport problems were expected to arise from allowing the construction of the East Horndon Business Park to proceed. These were now being realised and this without the majority of the units presently available at the site being occupied. Construction and the fitting out of Units 1 & 4 had seen a significant increase in local traffic. Traffic on the A128 at the junction with Old Tilbury Road was often seen to be at a standstill due to problems with vehicles trying to gain access to and from the Industrial Park. Improvements to this road junction were proposed by Essex Highways. Unfortunately, these improvements did not appear to be forthcoming. Until such time that some alleviation measures were introduced local traffic movement would be severely hampered.

West Horndon Parish Councillors were sensible enough to realise that with outline planning permission already granted in respect of the whole East Horndon Industrial Park there was little likelihood that the full planning application for Unit 3 of the Park would be rejected. However, it seemed most sensible that a thorough re-evaluation of this building project was undertaken, especially in the construction of Unit 3, to (a) determine if it was really needed given the large amount of vacant industrial space in the surrounding area; (b) reassess the surface water flooding issue and the potential that West Horndon Village could be at increased risk of flooding; (c) engage Essex Highways

regarding improvements that should be made in the short term to improve traffic movement for all surrounding roads; and (d) to recognise the present economic climate.

Planning Application No. 22/01787/S191 – West Horndon Industrial Estate, Station Road, West Horndon – Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for an existing use, operation or activity including those in breach of a planning application for the existing use of the land.

It was not customary for the Parish Council to be consulted regarding Section 191 applications. However, the West Horndon Parish Councillors became aware of this application due to its inclusion on the BBC Application Validation List and thought it important to express views on its merits due to its impact regarding major developments within the Parish.

West Horndon Parish Councillors held no objections to the granting of the Lawful Development Certificate. It was understood that it was being sought to regularise the activities and condition of existing units on the West Horndon Industrial Park in order that the site could continue to be used for industrial purposes. It should be noted that the site had been proposed for housing development and was included within the recently endorsed BBC Local Development Plan.

Planning Application No. CC/BRW/115/22 – West Horndon Primary School, Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon – Creation of two swales to provide surface water flood risk management within the school site. The formation of an additional backstop to capture surface water. The installation of a pipe to connect the proposed swales, together with new landscaping.

Parish Councillors noted that the works would provide much needed protection to the school with regard to surface water flooding. However, it was regarded as a missed opportunity in that these proposals could have been coordinated with other surface water flood alleviation measures proposed for West Horndon - bunds in East and West Horndon - to provide a sensible defence project for the whole local community. Given that the works at the school did not appear to increase flood risk elsewhere in West Horndon Village no objections were held.

23/18

REPORTS

A report summarising planning applications dealt with by the Parish Council during 2022 and 2023 was presented.

23/19

CORRESPONDENCE LIST

The correspondence list for January 2023 was noted.

23/20

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

No items were put forward.

23/21

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of West Horndon Parish Council is planned to take place on Thursday 23rd February 2023.

Kim Harding
Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

7th February 2022