

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 25th JANUARY 2024, AT 7.30 PM AT ST FRANCIS CHURCH. THORNDON AVENUE, WEST HORNDON, BRENTWOOD.

In the chair: Councillor Foan

Present: Councillors Hannah, Houghton, Keefe, Lister, Moorcroft and Petty

Also attending: Cllr Marsh (BBC), Cllr Murphy (BBC) and five members of the public

Clerk: Mr K Harding

PUBLIC FORUM

It was noted a large pothole was developing outside 123, Station Road on the westbound carriageway. It was agreed that the Clerk would report this matter to Essex Highways.

{Action – Clerk}

Serious concern was expressed over the condition of the ditches, sluices and drains within West Horndon Park. There was a considerable amount of debris within the drainage ditches and there were fears that another period of prolonged rainfall could result in flooding of nearby land and properties. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Park maintenance company requesting urgent attention be given to the cleaning of the ditches, as well as providing the promised quotation for a deep scour to remove root growth.

{Action – Clerk}

It was requested that two trees planted on the eastern side of Thorndon Avenue during the past five years between Cadogan Avenue and Station Road be pruned to encourage height growth.

{Action – Clerk}

24/01

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION/NATURE OF INTERESTS

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Marchant and McKinlay (ECC). Both were attending other meetings. Cllr Houghton had advised that she would be attending the meeting but would arrive after the meeting had commenced.

No declaration of interests had been received.

24/02 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30th NOVEMBER 2023

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th November 2023 were authorised as a true record.

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

24/03 PROGRESS REPORT – Clerk

The broken manhole in Station Road had been replaced. The overflowing manhole at the junction of Station Road with the A128 had been reported at a senior level at Essex Highways and remedial work was expected to be completed shortly.

Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) had been advised that no further action regarding the proposed complaint in respect of the approval of Planning Application No. 22/01205/FUL would be taken.

Progress against other actions was shown in the distributed report. Many 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.

Cllr Houghton arrived at the meeting

24/04 FINANCE – Responsible Financial Officer

The renewal of the annual membership of Essex Field Club was approved.

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

The payments for January 2024 were approved.

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

The budget/spend analysis for 2023/24 to date was noted.

The bank reconciliation as at 29th December 2023 was noted.

24/05 BUDGET AND PRECEPT REPORT – Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk provided an explanation of what the implications would be on the Council Tax for a Band D Property for various levels of increase in the precept demand for West Horndon Parish Council in 2024/25. A revised forecast expenditure outturn figure for 2023/24 of £66,177.90 had previously been notified to West Horndon Parish Councillors. It was acknowledged that this would impact on the level of reserves held by the Parish Council. The forecast expenditure outturn coupled with (a) forecast expected income during the forthcoming financial year of £41,613.20; (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 £6,143.72; allowed an expenditure budget of £65,000 for 2024/25 to be recommended for acceptance. It was agreed that within this sum budget allocations would be revised from 2023/24 levels to best suit known areas of increased/desired expenditure e.g. CCTV, Administration and the Parish Newsletter.

[Proposed Cllr Foan, Seconded Cllr Houghton – 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 2024/25 should rise by £1,000 to £34,000. This sum would be notified to BBC by the required date of 31st January 2024.

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

{Action – Clerk}

24/06 INTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS 2023/24 – Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk undertook to make enquiries of the EALC regarding the availability of auditors to carry out the internal audit for West Horndon Parish Council for 2023/24. He would report his finding to the Parish Councillors.

{Action – Clerk}

24/07 PLANNING UPDATE – Cllr Foan

Phil Drane left his post with BBC on 31st December 2023. An interim Director of Place – Leigh Nicholson – has been appointed, with a permanent replacement – Emma Goodings – taking office on 18th March 2024. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to meet with the new Director of Place soon after she was in post to help her understand the Parish Council's position on Dunton Hills Garden Village.

A liaison meeting with Parish Councils to discuss planning issues had been arranged by BBC to take place on 6th February 2024 between 2.00 pm and 3.30 pm.

24/08 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – Cllr Moorcroft

From ongoing discussions it was unclear on the exact nature of the medical facilities that would be provided at Dunton Hills Garden Village and how this would affect the operation of the Doctors' Surgery in West Horndon Village. It was agreed that the situation needed to be closely monitored.

24/09 HIGHWAYS UPDATE – Clerk

It was noted that on street parking outside properties in Station Road was becoming more prevalent although this did have the advantage of reducing the number of speeding vehicles. Progress was being made in securing the required number of volunteers for the West Horndon speed watch scheme which Cllr Marsh (BBC) was co-ordinating. It was noted that all equipment and training was being made available free of charge.

A vehicle had been seen regularly parking on the grass verge in Station Road close to the white gates at the entrance to the Village. It was thought that the driver was a commuter using West Horndon Railway Station. It was agreed that a note would be prepared to place on the windscreen of the vehicle.

{Action – Clerk}

The possibility of a planter/bollards to be placed on the pavement in front of Morrisons store to deter parking at this location would be explored.

24/10 PARK UPDATE – Clerk

The Clerk had written to BBC seeking the removal of a communications cable to 18, Cadogan Avenue in order that maintenance vehicles could gain access to West Horndon Park.

24/11 ESSEX ELECTORAL BOUNDARY CHANGES – Cllr Foan

It was noted that for the enlarged Herongate, Ingrave and West Horndon Ward all three councillor posts would be contested in the May 2024 local elections.

In proposed changes to the Essex Councillor electoral boundaries it had been recommended that West Horndon be moved from Brentwood Hutton to Brentwood South Electoral District. West Horndon Parish Councillors were unhappy with this recommendation as it ignored the many areas of common interest that exist within the Herongate, Ingrave and West Horndon Ward i.e. Dunton Hills Garden Village, A127 and A128. This meant Herongate & Ingrave and West Horndon Parish Councils were inextricably linked and could share information with the same Essex Councillor. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the Local Government Boundary Commission requested that West Horndon remain within the Brentwood Hutton Electoral District.

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

{Action – Clerk}

24/12 CCTV CAMERAS – Cllr Foan and Clerk

Cllr Keefe and the Clerk had recently met with Daniel Cannon (BBC) and a representative from a telecommunications company approved by the Borough Council. It was reported that the two CCTV cameras on the roof of the Village Hall were no longer fit for purpose and the images relayed to the Borough Control Room were not suitable for evidential use. An estimate for replacement of the cameras and suggested placement of additional cameras is awaited from BBC.

24/13 COMMUNITY ISSUES – Cllr Houghton and Clerk

Cllr Houghton reported that the intruder alarm at Morrisons was extremely noisy and had recently sounded during power cuts caused by the recent storms. Surprise was

expressed that the alarm did not have a battery back-up. Cllr Houghton agreed to investigate the matter with the store management.

{Action – Cllr Houghton}

Only two requests for Community Engagement Grant had been received to date. It was agreed that an article would be placed on local social media to advise other community groups that wished to apply to submit applications before the deadline of close of play on 31st January 2024.

{Action – Cllrs Hannah and Houghton}

Cllr Moorcroft was in contact with Alan Marsh (BBC) regarding the planting of new trees in West Horndon Village.

24/14 CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING EVENT – Cllr Lister

The Christmas Tree Lighting Event had been very well attended and feedback from the local community was that it had been greatly enjoyed. Cllr Lister was thanked for the considerable effort she had made in organising the event. £544.10 had been received in respect of the raffle and donations for food and drink and, as agreed at the November 2023 Parish Council meeting, this money – rounded to £550 – had been paid to the Salvation Army in appreciation of its band playing for the local residents.

24/15 PARISH NEWSLETTER – Cllr Houghton

It was agreed that the next edition of the Parish Newsletter include articles on (a) the proposed Essex County Council electoral boundary changes; (b) the May 2024 Borough Ward elections; (c) The Christmas Tree Lighting Event on 3rd December 2023; and (d) local residents driving over grass verges to park vehicles in front gardens. Cllr Houghton asked that these articles be made ready by early March 2024 at the latest.

24/16 BRENTWOOD BOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL ASSOCIATION - Clerk

It was noted that West Horndon Parish Council had assumed responsibility during 2024 and 2025 for the hosting and chairing of the Brentwood Borough Parish Council Association (BBPCA) meetings. These were held on a quarterly basis. The Clerk would be liaising with St. Francis Church for suitable dates for these meetings to take place at the Christabella Wing. Matters were a little complicated due to the recent resignation of the BBPCA Secretary.

{Action – Clerk}

24/17 DELEGATED AUTHORITY – Clerk

The following action had been undertaken under delegated authority since the Parish Council meeting held on 30th November 2024

Approval of expenditure for December 2023 totalling £5,180.42

Planning Application No. 23/01340/HHA – 7, Burntwood Close, West Horndon.
Demolition of existing garage and construction of a new outbuilding.

The Parish Councillors noted that the proposed new outbuilding was larger than the existing garage. However, this was not thought to have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties or the present street scene and no objections to the planning application were provided. Comments were forwarded on 20th December 2024.

Planning Application No. 23/01393/EIASO – Land South of West Horndon Railway Station and Station Approach, West Horndon. EIA Scoping Opinion for proposed development on land within and south of West Horndon Railway Station.

The Parish Councillors provided numerous reasons why the scoping opinion should not be granted. Comments were forwarded on 20th December 2023.

Planning Application No. 23/01416/HHA – 7, Dunmow Gardens, West Horndon.
The construction of an outbuilding. This was a retrospective application.

The new outbuilding had been constructed in a fenced off part of the garden. Therefore, whilst the Parish Councillors had very strong negative views on the retrospective nature of the application, unless objections were raised by neighbouring properties, in particular 8, Burntwood Close, West Horndon, then no views were to be offered. If objections were received from any neighbouring properties then the Parish Council would be prepared to support these cases.

24/18 REPORTS

A report summarising planning applications dealt with by the Parish Council during 2023 and 2024 was presented.

24/19 CORRESPONDENCE LIST

The correspondence list for January 2024 was noted.

24/20 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

No items were put forward.

24/21 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of West Horndon Parish Council is planned to take place on Thursday 29th February 2024.

Kim Harding
Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

5th February 2024