



HERTINGFORDBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Hertingfordbury Parish Council held on Wednesday 23rd January 2013 at 7.30pm in Hertingfordbury Cowper JMI School, Birch Green

PRESENT: Cllrs C Edwards, G O'Leary, P Rochford, T Brennan, B Jones, S Edgell, H Blake, K Barden, E Bradbury, R Morris

District Councillor Linda Haysey. Mr N Hunt, the Clerk: Tom Brindley

95. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

96. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

96.1 The chairman reminded members that in accordance with the council's code of conduct, any declarations of interest should be made immediately prior to an item being discussed.

97. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

97.1 Mr N Hunt addressed the council on the matter of new crossings over the greens. Mr Hunt had been advised that new rights of way should not be granted. Mr Hunt also expressed his view that the council should not spend money on maintaining the right of way across East End Green as this could establish an on-going obligation.

97.2 The clerk advised Mr Hunt that:

- the council had taken legal advice on both matters.
- the repairs at East End Green were as a result of the safety inspection and the repairs were the minimum required to bring the green back to a safe recreational standard.
- the applications for new crossings had both been withdrawn but that the legal advice received was that a licence rather than a right of way could be granted if the circumstances warranted it.

98. PREVIOUS MINUTES

98.1 The minutes of the meeting of 12th December were accepted and the Chairman was authorised to sign as a true record.

99. MATTERS ARISING

99.1 All items completed except:

99.2 (78.3, Farthings Hall footpath diversion). Two options had been offered to Gascoyne Cecil/Hatfield Estate and the request had been acknowledged.

99.3 (78.2, 30 Letty Green) The request has been withdrawn as the applicant appears not be pursuing the purchase.

99.4 (78.7, Play area swing) The swing is now repaired.

99.5 (81) Village sign. A grant of £1000 has been approved from Cllr Bryan Hammond's locality budget.. The clerk had been unable to contact a suggested supplier in Essendon. Quotes received from national companies were higher than expected. A revised (and reduced) specification will be drawn up and fresh quotes sought.

100. FINANCE

100.1 The financial statement was received and noted.

100.2 It was **RESOLVED** that one payment be authorised:

- Clerk's expenses £64.94



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101. 2013/14 BUDGET

101.1 The clerk introduced his proposed budget.

101.2 The budget required an income of £14,989, an expenditure of £ 21,407, the balance being drawn from reserves.

101.3 The amount required from Council tax was an increase of 2.6% in line with inflation.

101.4 After a short discussion it was **RESOLVED** to accept the budget, which showed a 2.6% increase (from £11,400 to £11,700) in the required precept-related income (see minute 102.4).

102. PRECEPT

102.1 All members had declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the council tax as they lived in the parish.

102.2 It was noted that if all members who had declared a DPI were to leave, the meeting would not be quorate.

102.3 In accordance with paragraph 5 of the council's code of conduct, the clerk confirmed he had received a written request for dispensation from all members. The council **RESOLVED** to grant this dispensation.

102.4 The clerk explained that some of the council's income would be funded by a grant from the government in order to compensate for money that would be lost due to a reduction in the Council Tax base following the introduction of a discount scheme to replace the payment of council tax benefit. The precept levied would fall but the grant would make up most of the shortfall. As noted in minute 101, the 2013/14 budget showed a required increase of 2.6% in precept-related income.

102.5 It was **RESOLVED** to set the band D council tax at £37.47 per band D house per annum (a £1.51 or 4.2 % increase), which, combined with the government grant, would deliver a total of £11,700.

102.6 REASON: To achieve the council's requirements and taking into account the effect of the reduction in the tax base generated by the council tax discount scheme,

103. PLANNING

103.1 Members discussed planning application LPA 3/12/2078/FP 24 Birch Green and resolved not to object.

103.2 Members discussed the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2011-2031) which includes reference to land at Cole Green as PE – Potential Expansion into East Herts. Members also discussed the site marked as WGC5 which while being contaminated land (an old tip) was felt to be a valuable natural environment with springs and ponds.

103.3 Members **RESOLVED** to object to the inclusion of the site marked PE on the grounds that the site is in green belt and would cause coalescence between WGC and Cole Green.

Cllr Morris gave apologies as he had another engagement and left the meeting.

104. REPORTS

104.1 Crossings and Greens – nothing new to report

104.2 Highways/Byways: Cllr O'Leary and Brennan attended the Highways Locality budget briefing on Thurs 14th Dec. All request for enhancement work to be fed via the county member.

104.3 Play area: Cllr Jones gave the clerk his record of weekly inspections for 2012.

104.4 Waterhall: Nothing to report

104.5 Walter Wallinger's Charity: Nothing to report



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104.6 Panshanger Quarry: Liaison meeting set for 14:00 on 4th February 2013. Cllrs O’Leary and Morris to attend.

104.7 Car Parking In Birch Green: Scheme seems to be stalled following the new highways arrangements.

105. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- The East Herts Council 2013 business plan.
- Advice from EHC on the precept and Council Tax Benefit government grant.
- All other correspondence had been circulated by email.

106. MATTERS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

106.1 Cllr Rochford had commenced some tree work at East End Green. Cllr Rochford had not seen any evidence of ash die-back but continued to monitor the council’s trees.

106.2 Cllr Bradbury report on a successful litter pick organized by Hertingfordbury Conservation Society. It was proposed to repeat the litter pick twice per year.

106.3 Cllr Edgell commented on adverts being placed on council notice boards. The clerk agreed to put a notice up requiring anyone wishing to post a notice to contact him, otherwise commercial notices will be removed.

106.4 It was confirmed that the clerk will post agendas as part of his monthly inspection, but members are free to remove old agendas.

106.5 Cllrs Brennan, Jones and Barden were issued with hard copies of the electoral register (other members received by email).

The chairman closed the meeting at 9.24 pm

Signed

Dated

Next Meeting: Wednesday 13th February 2013