**A meeting of Margaretting Parish Council took place in the Meeting Room at the Village Hall, Wantz Road on Thursday 9th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** H. Blurton, L. Edwards, P. Savill (Chairman), C. Quilter, M. Scott, P. Slade, A. Smith.

**In Attendance:** Cllr I. Grundy and four members of the public.

**92. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received fromT. Boem and C. Kochan.

**93. Declaration of Interest**: There were no declarations of interest.

**94. Reduced speed limit for Wantz Road, Writtle Road and Margaretting Road.**

A paper giving the background to Writtle Parish Council’s proposal for a reduced speed limit along these three roads had been circulated with the agenda.

Peter Sullivan, Writtle Parish Councillor, who had been invited to speak to this item, explained Writtle PC had reviewed its priorities for traffic measures on the highway network within its boundaries and that it had submitted a priority traffic scheme to the Chelmsford City Local Highway Panel for the introduction of a reduced speed limit for the roads linking Margaretting and Writtle. In so doing Writtle PC had recognised its impact on both parishes and the previous support given by Margaretting PC in 2004 for such measures to be introduced. Writtle PC now felt, given the lapse in time, it was appropriate to request Margaretting PC to reaffirm its previous decision to press for a reduced speed limit for the length of the road between the Margaretting crossroads and the A414.

After noting Margaretting PC had also submitted a priority traffic scheme which included a reduction in the speed limit in Wantz Road to 30mph the parish council unanimously agreed to reaffirm its support for Writtle PC’s priority traffic scheme for a reduced speed limit.

**95. Democratic Time**: Issues raised and matters discussed included:

1. Chelmsford Flood Alleviation Scheme The Environment Agency has informed Brook Farm that the work associated with tree clearance would be begin soon and other site work would start in May. A meeting about the scheme had recently taken place in The White Hart. There was no further information as to whether or not an appeal had been registered against the decision reached at the Judicial Review. It was agreed there were still a number of concerns and unanswered questions concerning the scheme.

**ACTION**: H. Blurton to contact Chelmsford City Council Planning Department and the Environment Agency for an update on the scheme.

1. Writtle Road The speed of traffic using this road together with its poor state of repair is a cause for real concern to cyclists, motorists and pedestrians alike. Despite numerous letters sent to Highways about inadequate road markings and the number of deep pot holes at the edge and in the centre of this road no improvements had taken place. **ACTION:** Cllr I Grundy to contact Highways.
2. Footpath 21It was confirmed the closure order for this footpath is due to come into effect on 10th January 2014.

**96. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 12th December 2013 were agreed and signed as a true and correct record after the following amendment to Minute 86 (c) Grass verges, Footpaths and Bridleways. The second sentence to read:

“It was reported that the fence had been repaired and a new post put in on Footpath No 43”.

**97. Matters Arising**

**(i) Minute 81 – Matters Arising**

1. Maztec. £500 has been transferred to the parish council’s bank account.
2. War Memorial Posts**.** To date no response has been received from Aviva.
3. Parish Council Membership. Both the EALC and Chelmsford City Council’s Election Officer have confirmed parish councillors are automatically disqualified if they fail to attend a meeting for a period of six months. **ACTION:** P. Savill to contact and advise K. Young.
4. Lavender Bank**.** To date no response has been received from Highways Customer Services.
5. Railings Opposite the School. **ACTION**: A. Smith to contact B. Smith. (Agenda Item for February)
6. 351 Bus Service**.** L. Edwards is researching the date when the Margaretting zone was changed. Starting in February the 351 bus will depart from Chelmsford five minutes earlier. **ACTION:** L. Edwards to obtain copy of new timetable.

**(ii) Minute 84 – Village Hall Internet Connection**

The information received from Essex County Council’s Superfast Essex Programme had been included in the January’s newsletter and M. Scott had agreed to act as the parish council contact.

**98. Village Projects**

(i) Parish Council Office. P. Savill reported the PWLB form had been completed and returned. It was agreed T. Greens could be informed that our grant monies have been confirmed and a start date of 1 April is acceptable to the parish council**. ACTION**: H.Blurton

P. Slade reported that the village hall committee had voiced a number of concerns about the building of a parish council office. These included disruption to the regular hirers whilst the building works were taking place and how any increased costs would be apportioned between the hall and the parish council. It was acknowledged that many of the current committee members were new and as such were not aware of past discussions about the new build. **ACTION:**  H. Blurton to attend the next village hall meeting to answer the committee’s questions.

(ii) Whites Bridge and Whites Bridge Walk Boards. Nothing further to report

(iii) Village Gateways. Nothing further to report – still no response from Highways.

(iv) Village Sign. It was agreed to ask Margaretting Hall’s Farm Manager if he could advise as to the present location of the mould for the village sign**. ACTION**: A. Smith

**99. Village Sites**

(i) Village Hall Road Sign. H. Blurton confirmed that a drawing for the road sign required for the crossroads had been sent to Active Sign. *Since the meeting H. Blurton has received Active Sign’s estimate for £217(net) to supply and install two metal road sign.*

(ii) Repairs and Maintenance. It was agreed to purchase and install a litter bin (identical to those already in the village) for the new bus shelter outside The Red Lion. **ACTION:** Clerk.

It was agreed, as the ornamental cherry trees are still hidden, there is a need for further clearance work of the vegetation behind the bus shelter opposite The Black Bull. It was agreed also this additional clearance work could be carried out by the Ranger Team but they would need specific instructions and the house owner should be informed that his hedge is to be cut back. **ACTION:** Clerk and P Savill.

(iii) Grass Verges, Footpaths and Bridleways. No date has been given for when the diversion of Footpath 32 is to come into effect. The applicant for diverting this path is Network Rail who has proposed in order to avoid crossing the line at Parsonage Lane, the public use an alternative route using the track that runs underneath the line further to the north. Questions have been asked if a notice giving details of the diversion will be placed on the pedestrian gates for the railway crossing at the end of Parsonage Lane and if these gates will be permanently locked. It was agreed to contact the Footpaths Definitive Map Officer and Network Rail for further information. **ACTION:** P. Savill

(iv) Pond & Trees. The vegetation surrounding the pond has been cut back and cleared away. It was agreed T. Boem be authorised to purchase the shingle needed for the path in front of the pond. **ACTION**: T. Boem

**100. Maldon Road Recreation Field – Allotments and Play Area**

There have been no reported incidents since the last meeting.

**101. Accounts 2013/2014**

The following expenditure was authorised: £407.04 - contribution towards the insurance for the village hall.

The following direct debit was noted: £133.38 (£22.23 VAT) - BT Broadband costs.

**102. Action with Communities in Rural England ACRE**

The European Commission is reviewing existing VAT legislation on public bodies and tax exemption in the public interest. ACRE and RCCE’s briefing notes on the consultation document and taxation options put forward were circulated with the agenda. The parish council has been asked to comment on two of the taxation models – full taxation and a refund system. It was agreed to find out more information about the consultation before responding. **ACTION**: P. Savill

**103. Planning**

The following applications was received for comment:

13/01851/FUL: 2, Wantfield Cottages, Wantz Road

Part two storey, part single storey side and rear extension

Parish Council Comments: The PC feels that the first floor extension is an inappropriate development as it will change the character of a row of cottages which are unique to the village of Margaretting.

The following decisions were noted:

(i) Appeal dismissed. Wells Farm, Ivy Barn Lane

Detached garage and cart lodge.

Planning Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/X/12/2/218944

(ii) Grant Planning Permission Ruskin Cottage, Private Road

Construction of a conservatory to the rear of the property.

 Application No. 13/01535/FUL

**104. Emergency Planning.** It was agreed to defer this item to the February meeting.

**105. Any Other Business**

(i) Village Envelope. A local resident has asked how the existing boundary for the village envelope might be extended. **ACTION**: L. Edwards to advise the resident to contact Chelmsford City Council’s Planning Department for further information and advice.

(ii) Maldon Road. The curb for the pavement in front of Nos 1a and 1b is broken and is in urgent need of repair. **ACTION:**  P. Savill to report to Highways.

(iii) Main Road Roundabout: A shed and tent has been erected on the verge dividing the slip road from the A12 and Main Road. This has been reported to Highways who have made a site visit.

Before closing the meeting we expressed our sadness at the news of the death of Mr John Currie, a former long time serving member of the parish council. John’s support and presence at village events will be greatly missed. We agreed to send a sympathy card to Mrs Currie.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

**Date of the next meeting:** Thursday, 13th February, 2014 at 7.30pm