



North Weald Bassett Parish Council

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Clerk to the Council
Susan De Luca

15th January 2024

TO: MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

PLEASE NOTE THE DATE AND VENUE OF THIS MEETING

This meeting is open to any other North Weald Bassett Parish Councillor who wishes to attend

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENTAL AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** which will be held on **Wednesday, 24th January** at **10am** to transact the business shown in the agenda below.

This meeting will be held in the Parish Office in Queens Hall, School Green Lane, North Weald

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AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence.

2. OTHER ABSENCES

To **NOTE** any absences for which no apology has been received.

3.  CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 

To **APPROVE** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2023, as attached at **APPENDIX 1**.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 

To **RECEIVE** any Declarations of Interest by Members

A Member with a personal interest in a matter must consider whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary,

Non-Pecuniary or Other Pecuniary Interest, and declare it accordingly. A Member who is unsure as to how to declare their interest should seek independent advice.

6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public.

In accordance with an agreed procedure, the time allocated for public questions shall be limited to 15 minutes or such other period determined by the Chairman of the Meeting.

7. ALLOTMENTS

a) REVIEW OF ALLOTMENT FEES

Members may recall from the previous meeting; they postponed a decision on whether or not to increase Allotment fees for 2025/26. The Chairman of this Committee asked that if there were any requests for improvements from the allotment sites, a list should be provided, together with costs, for Members to take into consideration when making their decision. Members are advised that, as at the time of preparing this agenda, there have been no requests for improvements or equipment.

Members of this Committee are now asked to **CONSIDER** if there is a need to increase allotment fees for 2025/26. Councillors are reminded that the Parish Council is required to give 12 months' notice of any increase in fees:

ALLOTMENT RENT FOR YEAR 2023/2024 and 2024/2025

Under 50 sqm = Extra small £26.00

Between 51sqm & 100sqm = Small £28.00

Between 101sqm & 150sqm = Average £29.00

Between 151sqm & 200sqm = Large £33.00

Over 201sqm = Extra Large £35.00

b) BEE KEEPING

A verbal report will be given at the meeting.

c) BONFIRES ON ALLOTMENTS

Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** the Rules and Regulations of the Allotments. These form part of the tenancy agreement, and tenants are required to sign them. Councillors are asked to note that a request has been received to reconsider allowing bonfires on allotments through 1st April through to 31st October, with the suggestion that there could be one day allocated per month to burn, the suggestion being this should be on the day Cllrs Hawkins and Spearman visit the sites. Attached to the agenda at **APPENDIX 2** is a copy of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners guidance on bonfires on allotments.

d) ANNUAL ALLOTMENT MEETING

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** the date of the Annual Allotment Meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, 24th March at 9.30am in the Parish Hall, Thornwood Common. All Members are welcome to attend.

e) ALLOTMENT SUB COMMITTEE REPORT

A verbal report will be given at the meeting.

8. CEMETERY

a) REVIEW OF CEMETERY FEES

The Clerk has received notification from the Grave Digging contractor advising that fees for interments are to be increased. Members may recall that fees were last increased with effect from 1st September 2023. It should be noted that, at the time of preparing this agenda, although the Clerk has not received notification of increases from either the supplier of boulders, plaques and spikes or the grounds maintenance contractor, she fully expects to receive these prior to 1st April. A comparison of cemetery fees charged by other local authorities have found that their fees have not been reviewed since the last comparison in June 2023. Bearing in mind the cost-of-living crisis, it is the Clerk's recommendation that Members may wish to review the fees again in 12 months' time. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** this matter.

b) Drainage Complaint

Councillors are **ADVISED** that on the evening of Friday, 5th January, the Clerk received an anonymous complaint, via email, regarding lack of drainage at the Cemetery. The complainant expressed concern that there were several graves underwater, pathways flooded and a general lack of run-offs to disperse surface water. Several photos had been supplied. In reaction to this complaint, the Clerk visited the Cemetery on Saturday, 6th January. The Clerk observed that any excess water had dispersed, took photographic evidence and responded accordingly to the complainant, giving a brief outline of the history of the Cemetery and the surrounding area with regard to flooding. Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that as at the time of preparing this Agenda, no acknowledgement or further correspondence has been received from the complainant.

9. GARDEN AT THE PARADE OF SHOPS

Councillors are **ADVISED** that the Chairman is still looking for someone to carry out the maintenance of the garden at the parade of shops. An advert has been put on the noticeboards in North Weald, however, no response has been received. If any Councillor knows of anyone who may be interested, please contact the Chairman or Clerk for further details.

10. WEALD COMMON SENSORY GARDEN

Councillors are **ADVISED** that plans are moving ahead with the Sensory Garden, with work expected to be completed by 31st March. Further details will be given at the meeting.

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