



North Weald Bassett

PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk to the Council
Susan De Luca

8th July 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

TO: MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

PLEASE NOTE THE TIME 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 COMMITTEE** which will be held on **Monday, 19th July 2021** at **6.30pm** to transact the business shown in the agenda below.

This meeting will be held in the Thornwood Common Parish Hall, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood, with the necessary social distancing measures in place. Public attendance may be limited based on the numbers of people who may wish to attend and to ensure compliance with COVID secure measures. Face Masks may be worn if appropriate.

Susan De Luca
Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 🖐️

To **PROPOSE** and **SECOND** nominations for the Office of Chairman and, if there is more than one nominee, to vote thereon.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN 🖐️

To **PROPOSE** and **SECOND** nominations for the Office of Vice Chairman and, if there is more than one nominee, to vote thereon.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 🖐️

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence.

4. OTHER ABSENCES

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

5.  CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 

To **APPROVE** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2021, as attached at **APPENDIX 1**.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8.  PLAY AREAS UPDATE

a) Visual Play Area Inspection

The PFO undertook a visual Play Area Inspection of all three play areas on Wednesday, 16 June 2021. A copy of the report is attached at **APPENDIX 2**. Members are asked to **NOTE** that all actions highlighted are either in hand or have been completed.

b) Various matters relating to Play Areas

Members are asked to **NOTE** the following:

- Thornwood Play Area – worn discs on cradle swing replaced 27.5.2021.
- School Green Lane Play Area – new bench installed June 2021.
- New Information Notices have been placed on entrances to all three play areas – June 2021.
- Bins in all three play areas are now scheduled to be emptied twice a week during the Summer months.

c) RoSPA Operational Playground Inspection Course

Members are asked to **NOTE** that the Parish Council's contractor will be attending renewal training in September 2021. The training course was initially scheduled to be held in November 2020, however it was postponed by RoSPA due to COVID restrictions.

d) Annual Play Area Inspection

Members are advised that the Annual Play Area Inspections have been scheduled to be carried out in September.

9. ALLOTMENTS 

a) General Update

- There is currently only one vacant plot, which is on Queens Road site.
- The Clerk and Senior Admin Officer visited Wheelers Farm Gardens and Queens Road sites on 10th June, following a complaint that a small number of plots are not being tended. The Clerk and Cllr Ms Coop-Rodia, allotment warden for Wheelers Farm Gardens, had a follow-up visit on Saturday, 26th June. The Clerk

and PFO visited the site on Saturday, 4th July to undertake a further inspection. An update will be given at the meeting.

- The Chairman and Cllr Mrs Hawkins have resumed the Allotment Sub Committee visits to Hastingwood site on the first Wednesday of each month, reporting back any concerns to the Parish Office.
- Damaged gate, Thornwood Allotment site: the Clerk has arranged for the entrance gate to be replaced with a new wooden gate due to Health & Safety and security implications.
- Community Garden, Thornwood: the Clerk has arranged for the fencing to be extended between the boundary of the allotment site and the Community Garden.
- Thornwood Allotment site – access to Parish Hall Car Park: as reported at the Parish Council Meeting on 5th July, following a number of complaints from allotment users unable to access the car park when the barriers are locked, a meeting was arranged on site to address the issue. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Ward Councillors, the Clerk and the PFO were in attendance and it was agreed that allotment users could access the car park provided they signed an agreement to confirm that they would comply with the specific conditions set out in that agreement which would ensure that the security of the car park would not be compromised.
- Hastingwood Allotment Site – Marestail / Horsetail: all tenants on this site have received a copy of the spraying schedule in respect of the four unused plots. Immediately following the spot spraying, a notice is placed on the notice board to alert tenants. The Parish Council's contractor has advised that a second spraying is now due, dependant on the weather being dry. He has reported that signs of the first spray working are now visible.

b) Upkeep of Allotment Sites

As Members will be aware, the upkeep of the allotment sites is ever increasing. The rental received from tenants does not cover the yearly running costs. Following a visit to the Wheelers Farm Gardens site on Saturday, 26th June, the Clerk received a number of requests for works to be considered, which included:

- Running new pipework to rectify the low water pressure
- Regular cutting of the grass in the communal areas

Bearing in mind that open spaces are important for mental health and wellbeing, Members are asked to **CONSIDER** if the Parish Council should increase its investment in the allotment sites and if so, would they like the Clerk to investigate whether there is any grant funding available to support this.

c) Allotment Warden – Queens Road Site

Members are reminded that the allotment warden for this site resigned in April. It had previously been agreed that the wardens would not be charged a rental fee for 2021/22 in recognition of this invaluable role. Members are asked to **CONSIDER** if they would like to rescind this decision considering the resignation.

10. COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT GARDEN, WHEELERS FARM GARDENS SITE

Work on the garden continues and a small number of volunteers are now attending weekly sessions with the EFDC team, guided by Victoria Robertson who is the Community Development Officer for this project. Councillors have been invited to attend a small 'soft launch' event for the community plot volunteers on Thursday, 29th July at 2.30pm to 4pm. The event will be hosted by Victoria, to showcase the work that has been undertaken so far

and to demonstrate how and where the locality grant funding has been spent. Volunteers who assisted Victoria in getting the garden ‘up and running’ during Lockdown have also been invited to attend. Victoria has suggested that although the event would not be fully advertised it will be open to other allotment tenants who may wish to come along. The Parish Council has been asked to contribute £25.00 towards the cost of refreshments.

11. CEMETERY

A verbal report will be given at the meeting regarding maintenance works undertaken and unauthorised memorials in Meadow Brook Section.

12. TREE WORKS

Members may recall that the Annual Tree Risk Assessment was undertaken by a chartered arboriculturist and environmentalist in September 2020. The assessment identified a number of trees which exhibited defects which were likely to cause a hazard. The recommended timescale for works to be completed was indicated to be within 12 months. In June 2021 the PFO undertook a visual assessment of the works required and attended the locations with a tree surgeon. A quote for the works was agreed and at the time of preparing this agenda the tree works have either been carried out or are in the process of being completed.

13. QUEENS HALL CHARITY – REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

The following request for assistance has been received from the Queens Hall Charity:

The Queens Hall charity would like to ask if the environmental committee would be able to offer any support by way of funds for the pollarding of the goat willow tree that is in the far corner of the old car park, which previously the PC paid to attend to (approx 5 years ago). The reason for this application is that the tree is now touching the house that is close by and the owner has requested we look at this, I have received 2 quotations - one for £600 and one for £760, to pollard this tree and as the charity has like many had a year with a considerably reduced income this would impact quite heavily on our finances., we would therefore like to ask if there is any way we can ask for funds to attend to this. Works are also necessary around one of the sides of the Queen Hall, along the pathway between School Green Lane and Blackhorse Lane, where overgrown trees are seriously damaging the fencing. An additional £1,000 is needed to rectify the trees in this area.

Cllr Ms Wood will be in attendance to give a verbal report. Members will be asked to **CONSIDER** this request.

14. NORWAY HOUSE, SUNFLOWER COMPETITION

Members are advised that the Sunflower Competition for the children at Norway House is now underway. A total of 30 plants were provided by Cllr Tyler. Judging is expected to take place towards the end of August / early September. The Chairman of the Parish Council has been instrumental in the organisation of this event, liaising with the Manager at Norway House on a regular basis throughout lockdown.

15. GARDEN BY THE PARADE OF SHOPS, NORTH WEALD

The Chairman of the Parish Council will give an update regarding the garden and sponsorship.

16. REPAIRS TO BRIDGE – HIGHAM VIEW, NORTH WEALD

Members are asked to **NOTE** that Countrycare undertook, free of charge, some repairs to the bridge at Higham View at very short notice. A thank you was sent by the Clerk and Cllr

Bedford, who had originally reported the issue to the Parish staff.

17. DOG BIN – HIGHAM VIEW, NORTH WEALD 

A local resident has contacted the Clerk to report that the dog bin situated in Higham View (by the steps leading to Weald Common) is regularly found to be overflowing. The contractor responsible for emptying the dog bins has suggested that this bin could benefit from having another located nearby as it is nearly always full. The nearest bins to this location are in Weald Common (opposite the Play Area) and in the Village Hall Car Park. Members are asked to **CONSIDER** this suggestion.

18. TREE PLANTING 2021/22 

Following on from the tree planting project undertaken at Weald Common earlier this year, Members are asked to **CONSIDER** if there are any locations within the parish (preferably situated on PC owned land) which they believe would benefit from extra tree planting.

For reference, the locations identified last year are listed below:

Weald Common	Old Wooden Play Park	PC Owned – trees planted 2021 – Eldridge Wood
Weald Common	Close to Small Football Pitch	PC Owned – trees planted 2021 – Eldridge Coppice
Weald Common	Triangle Nature Reserve	EFDC Own
Weald Common	Far field near to Higham View Bridge and adjacent to Access Road	PC Owned
High Road NW	At the Front of Brick Building Building Hurricane Way	EFDC Owned – Suggestion By Cllr Alan Buckley
High Road NW	In Front of Norway House	EFDC Owned – Suggestion By Cllr Alan Buckley
Hastingwood	Hastingwood B Allotment (Currently Being De Allotmentised)-	PC Owned
Thornwood	Allotments – Community Orchard and Community Garden	PC Owned
North Weald Airfield	Trees to be placed in shape of Aeroplane	EFDC Owned - Suggestion by Cllr Nigel Bedford

19. LITTER PICK

Members may recall that Cllr Tyler raised a question at the Annual Parish Council Meeting regarding the possibility of a litter pick being organised for North Weald, to cover local footpaths and bridleways which are suffering from an increase in litter such as plastic bottles and disposable face masks. The Clerk suggested that Cllr Tyler liaise with Cllr Ms Coop-Rodia who had been allocated £500.00 from the Community Fund for this purpose. An update will be given at the meeting.

20. REPORT – MILLENNIUM WALK, HASTINGWOOD 

The Clerk has received a report from a local resident who has requested a meeting to discuss the contents in further detail. Members are reminded that as the Parish Council is a facilitator, we can only pass the problems and concerns raised on to District and County Council, who will ultimately decide if any action is required. A copy of the report is attached at **APPENDIX 3** and Members are asked to **CONSIDER** how they wish to proceed with this matter.

21. CHRISTMAS TREES / LIGHTS 2021 

Members are asked to **CONSIDER** the following:

- a) Christmas Tree to be purchased and placed on the Village Green in North Weald next to the flagpole.
- b) New lights and battery packs to be purchased for the Christmas Tree in North Weald. The current lights were purchased a number of years ago and the Clerk received comments that last year's lights were not very bright.
- c) Members may recall a request made to the Parish Council in December 2020 for a Christmas Tree to be placed in the garden at the parade of shops in North Weald. Councillors agreed that the matter would be reconsidered for December 2021.
- d) As in previous years, a contribution of £40.00 to be made to Hastingwood Village Hall, to be used towards the purchase of a Christmas Tree.

22. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – BEST FESTIVE DISPLAY 

Members may recall that last December a competition for the Best Festive Display was trialled for North Weald Village. Residents were encouraged to contact David Jackman at Everything Epping Forest to register their property in the competition. David then uploaded photographs of the entries onto social media for people to vote for their favourite. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** if they would like to have a similar competition this year and to extend entries to include the whole of the Parish.

23. ENQUIRY – LAND AVAILABILITY – ENCLOSED AREA FOR SAFE TRAINING AND EXERCISE OF DOGS

The Clerk has received an enquiry from a resident who is looking to rent an enclosed area of land for the safe training and exercise of dogs. Members are asked if they are aware of the availability of any suitable areas within the parish.

24. PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

The Clerk continues to write to ECC regarding lack of action on works to Public Rights of Way in the parish. This matter has also been taken forward by Cllr Chris Whitbread.

25. GRASS CUTTING WITHIN THE PARISH

Members are asked to **NOTE** the Parish Council's concerns with the standard of grass cutting on the public areas within the parish. The Clerk and the Chairman of the Parish Council will give a verbal report.

26. THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE BEACONS – 2ND JUNE 2022

Members are **ADVISED** that details regarding the lighting of Beacons to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee will be included as an item for consideration on the agenda for the next Parish Council Meeting to be held in September. Information regarding the organisation of events is available to view on the Essex Association of Local Council's website: [Platinum Jubilee \(ealc.gov.uk\)](http://ealc.gov.uk)

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