



## North Weald Bassett Parish Council

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Clerk to the Council.  
Susan De Luca

29<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**TO: ALL COUNCILLORS**

**PLEASE NOTE TIME AND DATE OF MEETING**

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

You are summoned to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council which will be held on **MONDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022 at 7.30pm** 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 any necessary measures put in place by the Government at the time.

Susan De Luca  
Clerk to the Council

*Members of the public and press are invited to attend this meeting*

### 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 of the Parish Council held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022, which are attached at **Appendix 1**.

#### 4. 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.*

#### 5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public for a period determined by the Chairman of the Meeting. **Please NOTE if the Clerk has not been previously notified of the Question Council may have to note questions and respond to them after the Meeting.**

#### 6. REPORT OF THE CLERK

Members are asked to **NOTE** that all staff have been working on the items within this Agenda. If any Councillor wishes further information on any item please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk or a Member of the Parish Council Staff for further updates. **NOTE:** Any Member wishing to have a communication brought to the attention of the Council should try to give prior notification to the Clerk.

- a) **Weald Common Tree Project and Swale** – Staff and Cllr Buckley continue to work on this – Cllr Buckley has a scheduled date for a meeting with Trevor Baker regarding the start date for the Swale which needs to be completed for the drainage.
- b) **External Audit** – Members are asked to note the separate Item in the main body of the Agenda.
- c) **Various Planning Matters**
- d) **Cemetery Matters**
- e) **Environmental Committee Matters**
- f) **Parish Hall at Thornwood** (Personnel issue)
- g) **Numerous enquires from residents**

## 7. REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS

**MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY ARE ASKED TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT TO THE CLERK WHICH CAN BE DISTRIBUTED TO OTHER COUNCILLORS. THIS WILL ENABLE THE MEETING TO RUN EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY. COUNCILLORS WILL THEN BE ABLE TO BRING UP ANY POINTS THAT THEY FEEL ARE RELEVANT TO THE PARISH COUNCIL AND ASK QUESTIONS OF THE COUNCILLOR WHO HAS SUBMITTED THE REPORT.**

To **RECEIVE** any reports from Members who wish to give a report and/or who are representatives on Committees, Working Groups, Outside Bodies, and other meetings that Members or the Clerk have attended and which, **if available**, will be reproduced at **Appendix 2** if they have been submitted by Members for inclusion, as follows:

- a) Chairman's Report – verbal report
- b) Vice Chairman's Report
- c) District & County Councillors Reports - District Councillors are invited to submit a written report if they are unable to attend the Parish Council Meeting
- d) Parish Councillors - verbal reports will be received if no written report has been submitted
- e) Queens Hall Charity Report – verbal report
- f) Neighbourhood Plan Report – verbal report
- g) EFDC Local Plan Report & Update– verbal report
- h) Highways Report – ECC Members Pothole Scheme

*Cllr C Whitbread previously advised that he had two batches of 18 to share across his division. We had to send him the location and photos of the worst potholes and he will see how many he can get done. He has reminded the Clerk that the good thing for North Weald Parish is that you get two bites of the apple because Cllr Holly Whitbread has the responsibility for Thornwood Common area. **One has been forwarded so far – provided by Cllr Irvine.***

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- a) **List of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts – Up to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**

## 9. EXTERNAL AUDIT -NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT 2021/2022

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the Limited Assurance review of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR – External Audit) has now concluded. In accordance with the regulations, a copy of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been placed on notice boards in the Parish and on the Councils website, together with a copy of the certified AGAR sections 1, 2 and 3. Councillors are also asked to **NOTE** that this year a resident in the Parish exercised their right to inspect the accounts for the

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2021/2022, with the preparation for the public inspection managed by the office staff. This is not just a simple case of making the relevant information available to a resident, but also involves a significant amount of staff time in order to comply with the relevant Audit and Data Protection regulations by redacting any personal information on invoices and receipts which much also be made available to residents. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the questions that can be asked by the public are limited to ‘what’ questions about the councils finances, and not ‘why’ questions, however many of the questions posed by the resident were in fact ‘why’ questions relating to the decisions of the Parish Council as a body. Whilst the Clerk and Finance Officer were within their rights not to respond to such questions as they were outside the scope of the public inspection of the accounts, they did their best to answer all the questions raised by the resident in the spirit of openness and transparency. An estimate of the staff time to deal prepare and execute the inspection was around 21 hours.

### **10. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD ALTERNATIVE MASTERPLAN**

A Presentation by Relight Group was held for Members of the Parish and District Council local Ward Members. Copies of some broad notes of this meeting are attached at *Appendix 3*.

### **11. INVESTMENTS**

The Clerk and PFO are continuing to consider this, however due to the Clerk requiring an extended stay in hospital. This will be looked at before the next Meeting and will liaise with Cllr Blanks.

### **12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES**

There is no further news on the matter regarding the review of Electoral Boundaries. This will affect the Epping Forest District in some way and will mean that District Councillors will probably represent approximate 15,000 residents in each area which will include various Parishes. We are still awaiting further documentation - as soon as this is to hand Members will be advised.

### **13. COFFEE WITH COPS**

The next Coffee with Cops will be held in the Methodist Church on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September between 10 – 12 noon. The Police held the Coffee with Cops in Thornwood on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July between 10am and 12 noon at the Parish Hall. It was not that well attended, but some residents did attend. The relative notices have been placed on the Notice Boards and will be advertised on Social Media .

### **14. WEALD COMMON**

The project is forging ahead with the relevant permissions in place. A further meeting is being held with relevant parties on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. The Chairman will give a verbal update at the meeting.

### **15. HASTINGWOOD B ALLOTMENTS**

At the last meeting Members were advised of the concerns in relation to de-allotmentising Hastingwood B, but also recognised the problems that this may incur. As such the Clerk was instructed to review the government paperwork and law in relation to how this would work and if there were any pitfalls. Members Agreed that they would like to reconsider the sale or renting of Hatsingwood B. Section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925 states – “Where a local authority has purchased or appropriated land for use as allotments the local authority shall not sell, appropriate, use or dispose of the land for any purpose other than use for allotments without the consent of the Secretary of State”.

The Clerk has been researching the updated information on Disposal of Allotment Land however there are many things to consider including future housing in the parish and whether any open space or disused or redundant Allotments could be used for that purpose in the future, Therefore with the amount of housing that North Weald Bassett Parish is expecting, it does seem it could become difficult to apply to the Secretary of State to ask for this area to be de-allotmentised at the current time. It is thought that the new

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developments in the Parish would include an amount of allotment land, however at present this cannot be quantified.

#### **16. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

Members are advised that arrangements are currently in hand for Remembrance Day Events which are held in November. Staff began to work on the events in August. Members confirmed at the last meeting that they wish the arrangements to remain the same as in previous years.

Members of 56 Squadron will be attending the event at the Norwegian Memorial this year as they have been granted the Freedom of The District of Epping Forest and will be marching their colours through Epping Town. There will approximately six Members of the Squadron in attendance). The Clerk will be meeting with Pat Seager at EFDC to discuss further arrangements.

#### **17. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE CAR PARK OPPOSITE ST ANDREWS CHURCH**

The Clerk has received notification from a local resident regarding anti-social behaviour activities in the Church Car Park. The Clerk will bring this to the attention of the Police at the Coffee and Cops Event on the 6<sup>th</sup> September. The Clerk will give an update at the Meeting also.

#### **18. VEHICLE OPERATORS LICENCE – PARIS HALL FARM – HASTINGWOOD**

This matter was brought up at the Planning meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August. It is an application for Vehicle Operators Licence. This has now appeared on the Goods Vehicle Operators Licence List, and it is understood that Cllr Irvine has written as an individual councillor objecting to this application. The application is by Purser Transport Ltd and is for 6 Heavy Goods Vehicles and 4 trailers at Paris Hall Farm, Hastingwood Road, Hastingwood. It is an a Standard International (SI) licence which allows the licence holder to carry both his own goods and goods for other people for hire or reward. These activities can be undertaken both in Great Britain and on international journeys.

#### **19. STREET LIGHT – CHURCH LANE, NORTH WEALD**

Members are asked to *NOTE* that urgent repairs are needed to Street Light number 6007 located in Church Lane, but as this light is located within a very large hedge which we believe is owned and maintained by EFDC, these repairs cannot be carried out until EFDC cut an opening in the hedge to allow access. The Parish Council has written to EFDC requesting this to happen.

#### **20. MEMORIAL TREE HAMPDEN CLOSE**

Members are advised that works to this tree were carried out on the 25<sup>th</sup> August after planning approval was granted by EFDC. Two phone calls were received thanking the Parish Council for the action taken.

#### **21. NOTIFICATION OF ROAD CLOSURES**

The Parish Council has received notification via Cllr C Whitbread of the following road closures:

- Epping Road (nr Woodside) – 18<sup>th</sup> August still awaiting confirmation
- Harlow Common – from Potter Street end going half way down Harlow Common - closure from 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September for drainage defect / Highway improvement works.

#### **22. NORTH WEALD LIBRARY – GOING FORWARD**

Members are aware of the wish to return to the Library. The Clerk will be asking a question at EFDC Full Council – ‘Will our Local Ward District Councillors Support Us in the return of the Parish Council to North Weald Library’. Please see the report attached at Appendix 4 which will also be submitted. The question the Clerk will be asking is:

### **WILL OUR DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS SUPPORT US?**

If District Councillors (and those who are also Essex County Councillors) support the Parish Council in going back to North Weald Library, will they take that question back to Essex County Council for a response? The Parish Council's time in the Methodist Church is coming to an end and we will have to vacate the office by the beginning of October. The Parish Council needs to be back in the heart of the community as soon as possible and be based in North Weald. We understand that the library is back to only opening on:

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9am to 1pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	2pm to 5.30pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	9am to 5pm
Sunday	Closed

The Registrar is no longer based at the library. We feel that we could offer a library service again Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9am to 1pm

We know that the responsibility for libraries falls under Essex County Council, however what the Parish Council is asking is if the District Councillors who have responsibility for North Weald Bassett Parish would look to see whether they would support us in going back to the library. If so, would they lobby Essex County Councillors on behalf of residents and the Parish Council. Now that Harlow Library has reopened and North Weald has reverted to its previous opening hours, residents are now asking when, not if, the Parish Council will be returning. We would refer you to the background papers to help you with this decision.

### **23. 'WARM BANKS'**

As inflation is set to rise to a 40 year high, many local authorities are looking at how they can help people keep warm during the winter months. The cost of living is causing significant anxiety especially as the days become shorter and cooler, and nights longer. Heating homes is simply becoming unaffordable for many.

Warm Banks are simply public places where residents can go to keep warm in cold weather when they can't afford to keep warm in their own homes. Many homes are still using outdated, inefficient appliances such as old gas fires or expensive electric fires. Some people simply do not have the financial resources to change to a cheaper form of heating and are therefore not in a financial position to change their appliance for more energy efficient ones at the current time.

This is where warm banks can become invaluable- they can become a safety net providing a few hours of heat and warmth. This is not a new concept. A Warm Rooms Community Project was set up in Suffolk last year. It has been tried and tested especially with the residents. It was noted that the sad truth was that people who could not afford to heat their homes would not turn their heating on. Whilst younger more fitter people simply put on more layers of clothing, this can be lethal for older members of the community. Warm Banks are not the perfect solution. Local authorities will need to look at other ways of helping and educating people as to how they can keep warm also. Social deprivation can come in many forms, and some people may think it does not affect that many in areas such as Epping Forest, but we at North Weald Bassett Parish Council like to think we are 'forward thinking' and that we could offer this service.

We feel that we could set up a 'Warm Bank' in the Library 3 mornings a week offering a safe warm place for residents to come and enjoy a book, have a cup of coffee and a biscuit and enjoy the company of other residents whilst the Parish Council is in residence in the office. The Parish Council would offer this service for the community on the days that they want to operate the Library (Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.15 to 1.00pm).

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As you will see from item 22 we have continued to express our interest in returning to the Library in North Weald, especially as this public building is under utilised. It may be that Village Halls could also be used in some cases as a Warm Bank. It is also understood that North Weald Village Hall run a Sunday Bar once a month, and it is understood they may be willing to offer this facility as a Warm Bank with Teas and Coffee and Refreshments being offered.

According to National Energy Action 11,400 winter deaths are already caused by cold weather each year and it could be significantly worse this year.

Members are asked if we return to the Library would they wish to **SUPPORT** this initiative.

#### **24. BATTLE OF BRITAIN SUNDAY – 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

The Clerk was approached by Arthur Moreton – NW Airfield Historian - regarding Battle of Britain Sunday. She was asked if we could assist with the arrangements for this event as Arthur is unable to undertake the relative arrangements this year. The Clerk has made contact with Rev Lee Batson and between the Parish Council and Rev Batson we would be able to assist, as it is important that this commemorative event does not go unrecognised. Will the Parish Council support this action.

#### **25. MCMILLANS EVENT**

Councillor Mrs Hawkins wishes to ask the Council if the Parish Hall can be used to raise funds for the Annual Mcmillans Charity Event to be held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September. The Hall would be offered for the event free of charge.

#### **26. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

In the event that the Agenda contains Exempt (pink) pages, or an item needs to be discussed confidentially, to **CONSIDER** the following motion to be proposed by the Chairman:

“That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed. However an item may be placed in the Confidential part of the meeting so long as it is accordance with the Statutory Guidance.

There are TWO confidential items to be considered which are the following

27. NORTH WEALD METHODIST CHURCH

28. NORTH WEALD WIRELESS STATION BOWLS CLUB