**Minutes of Theydon Mount Parish Council AGM**

**Held at the Gatehouse, All Saints Church, Coopersale Lane, Theydon Garnon, CM167NX** **on 17th April 2023**

**1. Election of Chairman –** Peter Connell (PC) was proposed by Hilliard Brewitt (HTB) and seconded by Patrick Bamford (PB). Decision - PC elected as chairman.

**2. Election of Vice Chairman-** Keith Farrow (KF) was proposed by HTB, seconded by PB. KF elected as Vice Chairman

**3. Apologies –** had been received from Heather Brady (HB)

**4. Minutes of last meeting -** Minutes of meeting held 27th February 2023 were ratified as were the minutes of the previous AGM.

**5. Declarations of Interest -** None

**6. Finance –** PB briefed council on the years finances including income, expenditure, reserves against commitments and current bank balance.

It was agreed that the Clerk should be paid £1000 for services which was agreed by council and approved.

PB then advised council regarding the AGAR return and sought relevant signatures from appropriate councillors.

Internal Auditor for 2023/24 was confirmed and signatures on certificate of exemption were obtained from council members.

Renewal of Annual Insurance – RA advised council that BHIB Insurance had just sent him the reminder regarding annual parish council insurance with the schedule and renewal quotation which he would forward to PB shortly. Renewal date = 1 June 2023.

PB circulated a number of cheques against outstanding payments and obtained appropriate signatures and counter-signatures for them.

**7. Review and adoption of governance policies for 2023/24**

PB advised TMPC that there being no changes required to the current governance policies that he sought approval for their adoption for the coming year. Decision - approved

**8. Chairman’s report**

PB advised TMPC that since he would be providing his report to the immediately following Parish AGM, it could be held over for a few minutes. Decision – agreed.

The meeting closed at 19:30

**Signed… Peter Connell Chair of TMPC**

**Dated: 21/4/2023**

**Theydon Mount Parish Council**

**Chairman’s report to TMPC AGM and Parish Meeting 17th April 2023.**

Peter Connell, as chairman, welcomed (21) attendees to the meeting. Apologies had been received from 12 residents who were unable to attend as well as Councillors Heather Brady and Keith Farrow, the latter of whom celebrated 35 years as a parish councillor on the day of the meeting. Peter introduced himself, Hilliard Brewitt and Pat Bamford as the remaining councillors , all of whom had joined the council two years ago, together with Rod Angood who had joined as parish clerk in August last year.

The chairman reviewed the work of the council during the past year. He emphasised that the power of a parish council is limited but was able to exert influence and be a louder voice than individual residents in a number of important areas as follows:-

**Planning**

 All planning applications within the parish and surrounding area are notified to the parish council which always comments on applications and where it considers it appropriate, supports or objects to applications. In doing so the council follows two main principles – 1. The protection of Green Belt land from inappropriate overdevelopment and 2. The impact on traffic levels. Any comment is guided by National Planning Policy and the Local Plan . The Epping Plan has only recently been adopted. It provides for significant housing and business development but no large scale development in Theydon Mount. However, nearby developments can have an impact on traffic levels on our roads.

With this in mind your council formally objected to a planned concrete crushing plant in Abridge on the basis of increased volumes of heavy traffic in Epping Lane and Mount Road. The application was refused.

There is currently a pending application to convert agricultural buildings to commercial use at Hornes Farm in Mount Road. Developments of this nature are permitted under the National Planning Policy and even though the site is situated in our neighbouring parish of Theydon Garnon, we have objected on the basis of the traffic impact the development would have on our roads – Epping Lane, Mount Road and Banks Lane. A decision is pending on the application.

During the year an application was made to use fields on historic parkland adjacent to Hill Hall as a commercial alpaca experience including public access to the site. The parish council expressed local concerns at the planning meeting following which planning permission was refused on the basis of the increased traffic and the nuisance to neighbours.

**Condition of parish highways**

*Affinity Water* - The parish council has supported local residents in expressing concerns about water leaks especially in Mount Road. We are now in correspondence with our local MP, Alex Burghart who is communicating with both Affinity Water and Essex Highways on this issue. We hope to see a positive reaction in the near future.

***Potholes and flytipping*** - We have been lobbying our local county councillor, Jaymee McIvor and EFDC district councillor, Holly Whitbread, who have been made very aware of the issues we face. Holly is working with Councillor Lee Scott, who is the county councillor responsible for highways in Essex. Central Government has made an additional £14.5 million available to Essex for road repair and we are lobbying for our share of that.

***Traffic calming and speed limits***. - We have formally applied to Essex Highways via our county councillor for the imposition of speed limits and traffic calming measures on our roads. Sadly, our applications have been rejected. A copy of the rejection note is attached. The reasoning behind the refusals seems to be misplaced and the data relied upon is inaccurate. The parish council is determined to pursue our traffic problems with Essex Highways. Residents will be asked to sign a petition to support these efforts.

***Community events***. - One of our main objectives is to promote the community of Theydon Mount. We held a Jubilee Lunch last year (jointly with our neighbouring parishes, Theydon Garnon and Stapleford Tawney} which was a great success. This year we will host a Coronation street party on the 8th May. Later in the year we also hope to hold a parish BBQ.

We believe all of these events help to bring the community together.

There being no questions from the audience, the AGM closed and councillors were able to meet with and talk with the attendees.

**APPENDIX A – Essex Highways Response to TMPC Submission Regarding Speed Related Accidents Within The Parish.**

**Context:**

***In January 2023 Theydon Mount Parish Council (TMPC) submitted a portfolio of evidence (photographs, documents etc) covering around 11 separate accidents on the roads within the parish over the previous 6 months to Councillor Jaymey McIvor (Essex County Councillor for Ongar and Rural)***

***It was requested that Councillor McIvor forward this portfolio on to Essex Highways with our request for serious consideration of some traffic calming and speed limit reduction initiatives to make our parish roads safer.***

***The current speed limits on all roads within the parish is 60 mph, which are narrow, without pavements and traversed by every conceivable vehicle including heavy goods vehicles that when mixed with people, dogs, horses, cyclists, cars and farm equipment constitutes what TMPC considered was an unacceptable risk to all.***

***Below is the response from Essex Highways that was passed back to TMPC through Councillor McIvor.***

**From Essex Highways**:

**BANKS LANE**

Unfortunately, there is no evidence of a pattern of collisions along the stretch of Banks Lane. There has been one serious collision in 2021. The road is a PR2 route, and the traffic authorities are encouraged to adopt the Institution of Highways and Transportation’s3 urban safety management guidelines, in which road hierarchies are adopted that reflect a road's function and the mix of traffic that it carries. The layout and length of Banks Lane is capable of facilitating two-way traffic.

We would NOT suggest a speed survey along the varying stretches of Banks Lane, as it would probably result in no evidence of speeding. The status of the road combined with the collision data does not warrant reducing the speed from the current speed.

The lack of signage at the blind bend at Gaynes Park is something that could be considered to alert driver travelling in both directions that the bend is approaching.

**MOUNT ROAD JUNCTION WITH BANKS LANE**

There is evidence of two collisions over the last five years. Again, the road is a PR2 route and if a speed survey was to be carried out the results would probably show no evidence of speeding. Extra signage could be considered for both directions warning drivers of the approaching Banks Lane turn. A reduction in speed would not be appropriate for this length of road.

**MOUNT ROAD 3 NEAR MOUNT HILL FARM**

There have been no recorded collisions over the last five years. The layout on this length of Mount Road is capable of facilitating two-way traffic. This section of the road does not warrant a 30mph speed limit.

**MOUNT ROAD JUNCTION WITH EPPING LANE**

There has been one slight accident at this location over the last three years. A speed survey would probably not show evidence of speeding.

There is give way signage 100 yards and at the junction onto Epping Lane, alerting drivers that the junction is approaching. The visibility is good at the junction. A reduction in speed would not be appropriate for this length of road.

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**EPPING LANE – SKINNERS FARM**

There has been one slight collision over the last five years. Whilst the road does narrow in parts, the layout on the designated length of Epping Lane is capable of facilitating two-way traffic. A reduction of speed at this location would not be appropriate.

Whilst it can be appreciated that certain rural PR2 roads do narrow in parts it would not be possible to restrict larger vehicles from these roads.

Signage can be looked into on the lengths of road suggested but we must take into account signage clutter on rural roadways.

The fact is, we can take into account that collisions have happened on occasions, but we cannot stop those drivers that continue to speed. Changing the speed limits does not guarantee adherent to the speed limit on these stretches of roads and compliance would be difficult.

Speed surveys are currently on hold until funding is available.