



Theydon Bois Parish Council

Parish Office, The Village Hall, Coppice Row,
Theydon Bois, Essex CM16 7ER

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Sally Crone
Responsible Financial Officer: Mr Greville Norman
Minutes Secretary: Mrs Margaret Lechley

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at The Village Hall at 8.30pm on Thursday 8th December 2011

- Councillors Present:** Cllrs Jones (Chair), Philip, Berry, Gooch, Howard, Purkiss, Sowerby, Vincent and Wood
- Apologies:** Cllrs Hammond, Hannibal and Greville Norman (RFO)
- Officers Present:** Sally Crone (Parish Clerk) and Margaret Lechley (Minutes Secretary)

93. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Hammond, Hannibal and Greville Norman (RFO).

94. **Declarations of Interest (existence and nature) with regard to items on the agenda. Members of the Council are subject to the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 (S.I.2007/1159) (The Revised Code)**

Councillor Howard declared a personal interest in item 3 of the Clerk's Report (item 4 of the Agenda) regarding the proposed Residents' Parking Scheme as he is a resident of Thrifts Mead.

95. **Public Participation session with regard to items on the Agenda**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

96. **Correspondence – Clerk's Report (Appendix 1)**

The Clerk explained that a full copy of her report had been circulated to all Councillors and was available from the Parish Office for any resident who may be interested. A copy of the report is attached to these Minutes. The Clerk drew particular attention to the following items:-

- ⤴ Letter from Essex Environment Trust dated 5th December confirming the agreement of the Trust to the revised fencing proposal for the Community Centre.
- ⤴ Letter to North Essex Parking Partnership concerning Residents' Parking Schemes, with particular reference to Thrifts Mead, Green Glade and Pakes Way.
- ⤴ News Release from EFDC concerning opening hours of the Civic Offices during the Christmas period.
- ⤴ The Clerk reported that the Bull Public House had asked to make a donation in addition to the sum already raised during the recent Parish Council street collections in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

97. To discuss and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29th September 2011, 27th October 2011 and 24th November 2011 (Appendices 2, 3 & 4).

Following a brief discussion and some minor amendments, the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman on behalf of the Council.

98. Finance and General Purposes Committee

98.1 The RFO had circulated a Report to all Councillors prior to the Meeting (Appendix 5). In the absence of the RFO Councillor Philip reported as follows:

- that the current VAT owed by HMRC is below £1000 and therefore it is not presently worth making a claim for a refund.
- Total cash at bank and in hand is approximately £170,000
- The current liabilities are just over £3000.
- Annex A attached to the RFO's Report comprised a provisional statement of balances as at 30th November. Increases to note were in the following areas:- elections, Highways Matched Funding and the Village Newsletter
- Annex B attached to the RFO's Report comprised the draft revised budget for the current year 2011/12 and the draft original budget for 2012/13. Assumption has been made that the Council will wish to keep the precept for 2012/13 the same at £103280 the level for 2010/11 and 2011/12. The major differences between the actual 2011/12 budget and the original budget submission are as follows:
 - ⤴ *a small increase in the budget for the Parish Clerk*
 - ⤴ *a small increase in the Cemetery budget*
 - ⤴ *a significant increase in the Community Liaison budget. This is due largely to the communications/ website/ advertisement.*
- Councillor Philip reported that compared to the original figure of £109,840 for 2012/13 the proposed figure of £118,438 represented an increase of approximately 9%. Assuming that no further issues arise after this meeting, this will be the figure carried forward to the meeting in January 2012.
- Councillor Purkiss highlighted the fact that under Highways and Environment Matched Funding the £9000 represented the current year but an additional £5000 should also be carried into the Designated Reserves. **Councillor Philip agreed to action this with the RFO.**
- Councillor Gooch agreed to source the projector budgeted at £300 under the Planning Committee expenditure to take place in the current financial year.
- Finally Councillor Vincent expressed his thanks to the RFO for the very clear presentation of the budgets and for the professionalism he applied to the Council's finances.

98.2 **Agreed: to approve the payments made since the last Parish Council Meeting on 24th November 2011 and to authorise the Chairman to sign said list of payments on behalf of the Council.**

98.3 **Agreed: the appointment of Louise Fuller as the Internal Auditor for 2011/12.**

**Proposed by: Councillor Philip
Seconded by: Councillor Wood**

Carried unanimously

98.4 **To discuss the recommendation of the F&GP Committee to approve the proposed**

draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Village Association.

The Clerk explained that the draft document had first been mooted under the previous Council but that the original draft had now been amended following discussions with the Village Association Executive Committee. The F&GP Committee had suggested some amendments as marked in red on the draft which had been circulated to all Councillors. The Clerk outlined the key points in the document. The Clerk also drew Councillors attention to the historic Agreements between the Council and the Village Association concerning the grant made by the Council to the Village Association in connection with the refurbishment of the present Village Hall – these documents also having been circulated to all Councillors.

Agreed: Subject to the removal of the offer to assist where possible with VAT the document as amended in red was approved and would now be sent to the Village Association for final approval and signature by the respective parties.

99. Community Liaison Committee

- 99.1 Councillor Sowerby reported that the recent Theydon Seniors event had around 35 attendees and had been another very successful gathering, receiving very good feedback. There had been perhaps more media coverage than was anticipated but the Council had itself informed only the Epping Forest Guardian and the Theydonnewsdesk team and other coverage had presumably been by the invitation of other participants in the event. Councillor Wood felt that communication with volunteers and as to the rota of duties needed to be improved and it was agreed that this would be addressed for the next event. The Clerk reported that ML was drafting the “Thank You” letters to the volunteers.

The next Theydon Seniors Event is scheduled to take place on Friday 23rd March 2012.

- 99.2 Councillor Sowerby thanked everyone for their teamwork at the recent Christmas Market event. She reported that there were naturally some learning points. She mentioned in particular the need for more signage to Santa's Grotto and more lighting in general.

Overall feedback has been extremely positive and the vast majority of shopkeepers had entered into the festive spirit. The “Best Dressed Shop Window” competition was won by Lauren Louise.

Councillor Berry highlighted the need for “Thank You” letters to all those concerned and in particular for those who had stepped in at the last minute to offer their help. **ML will action these.**

It was agreed to put an item in the March edition of the Village Newsletter thanking all those who had played their part, and also canvassing for opinions on the event and ideas for the future.

Councillor Sowerby said that the leftover packets of sweets had been donated to the village Preschool and St Mary's Sunday School.

- 99.3 Diamond Jubilee Event – Councillor Hannibal has joined the organising group as a representative from the Parish Council.

100. Planning Committee

- 100.1 Councillor Gooch reported that dates had not yet been set for the Appeals relating to the proposed Commuter Car Park and Foster Care home at The Old Foresters Site, Abridge Road.

Councillor Gooch also reported that the applicants from 40 Forest Drive had attended the Planning Meeting this evening to speak about their case. However the matter had not been on the Agenda and so the applicants had been invited to attend, together with their architect and revised plans, the next Planning Meeting scheduled to take place on 5th January 2012.

- 100.2 Councillor Gooch also reported that the Chairman of the VDS Committee had contacted the Council with a view to involvement of VDS Committee Members in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Philip confirmed that in the first instance further consultations on the Local Plan must take place at District Council level; this would comprise consultation on the Issues and Options Consultation Paper and on the Draft Plan. The intention is that Neighbourhood Plans will be Local Council led albeit with the involvement of residents. Councillor Philip explained that following the recent consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework that he (in his capacity as Portfolio Holder for Planning & Technology at EFDC) had requested that the Forward Planning Team must investigate the submission of the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate more quickly than had been originally intended with the aim now being to submit the Local Plan to the Inspectorate by February 2013. Transitional provisions will apply in the meantime. For the purposes of the Council's budgeting costs it will therefore not be necessary to include any provision for the costs of production of a Local Plan in Financial Year 2012/13.

101. Community and Youth Centre

- 101.1 The update on the Fencing Project was included in the Clerk's Report under Item 1 (Appendix 1).

102. Highways and Environment Committee

- 102.1 Councillor Purkiss reported that the "Theydon Bois" sign, on entering the village from Piercing Hill, had gone missing.

He also reported that although nothing had been agreed formally with regard to the proposed refurbishment of the section of Orchard Drive pavement between the junction with Coppice Row and the Primary School, it is likely that for a sum of £9000 to be contributed by the Council by way of 'matched funding' Essex Highways will carry out the work, approximate value of which is £24-£25k. Repairs to the joints in Green Glade and Pakes Way will also be undertaken. .

Councillor Purkiss reported that the problem with blocked drains at the junction with Green Glade and Theydon Park Road appeared to be the same as when the drains had collapsed.

- 102.2 Councillor Purkiss reported that four grit spreaders and salt had been purchased. The Highways Committee now need to agree the priority areas.

It was agreed to hold a meeting of the Highways and Environment Committee prior to the Councillors' debriefing on Thursday 15th December 2011.

103. Neighbourhood Action Panel

- 103.1 Councillor Jones outlined the request which he and Councillor Jones had received from the Neighbourhood Action Panel that the Parish Council should purchase a speed gun for the use of community volunteers. The plan is that this would be manned by named volunteers. The cost of the camera is approximately £1000. At recent NAP Meeting PC Andy Cook had reported that other local Parishes using such an initiative had seen a reduction in speeding.

Councillor Jones reported that the Neighbourhood Action Panel would organise the initiative but

it is likely that the cost of both the camera and any necessary training would have be met by the Council.

A lengthy discussion followed covering the perceived pros and cons of this proposed initiative. Councillor Purkiss said that the problem of speeding cyclists also needed to be addressed. Councillor Howard mentioned the problem caused by the proximity of the 30 mile per hour speed limit sign on the bridge from Abridge to the zebra crossing in the village. The issue of Essex police cuts was also mentioned. Councillor Gooch said that as Abridge Village Parish Council had used these measures to curb speeding but then seemingly suspended the initiative that it might be an idea to contact them to ask for their feedback

Councillor Vincent proposed that the Council approve the request from the Neighbourhood Action Panel to purchase a Community Speed Gun. Councillor Jones seconded this motion and the following vote took place:

In favour: Five

Against: Four

Councillor Purkiss objected very strongly and was of the opinion that it had been unfair to vote on this item as a full Council was not present. Councillor Jones confirmed that nine of the possible eleven Councillors were present and that this was irrelevant.

Councillor Jones acknowledged that the Agenda Item had not referred to the cost of the initiative owing to such information not having been available. Thus she proposed that the Council should take an amended vote on whether or not to participate in the Community Speed Gun scheme with a proposal as to meeting the cost to be carried forward as an Agenda Item at the next Council Meeting.

**Proposed: Councillor Vincent
Seconded: Councillor Jones**

In favour: five

Against: three

Abstentions: one

103. Cemetery Committee

103.1 Councillor Vincent reported that Councillor Hammond had circulated an e-mail to the members of the Cemetery Committee suggesting that the Council should write to the donor of the purchase monies requesting that he now transfer the purchase monies to the Council's Solicitor.

Councillor Jones reported that she had now spoken to the Planning Officer and been informed that the application will not be going to Committee for decision and thus it is likely that approval will be granted before Christmas. This being the case Councillor Jones confirmed her agreement to the donor being contacted.

Agreed: that the Clerk will write to the donor explaining the likely timeframe and suggesting that he forwards the funds to the Solicitor.

104. Reports from Representatives

104.1 Councillor Howard reported that the Limes Medical Centre is in the process of setting up a Patient Liaison Group and are looking for 100 people to take part.

105. Any other urgent business

There was no other urgent business to discuss.

106. Following Agenda items will exclude Public and Press

106.1 Renewal of CCTV Maintenance Contract and Village CCTV - update

Councillor Vincent reported that the CCTV Maintenance Contract will not be renewed pending the proposed upgrade of the system in the current financial year. He also reported that he had drafted the Specification for the Tender for the upgrade.

Agreed: Councillor Vincent to forward the draft CCTV Specification to the Clerk for approval by the members of the Highways and Environment Committee in readiness for commencement of the Tendering process on 5th January 2012

Councillor Vincent said that he intended to meet with Adrian Petty at EFDC to discuss current compliance and policies relating to CCTV systems generally.

The Bull Public House has allowed space in their office area to accommodate the recording equipment and screens. Councillor Vincent reported that Sally Allen, the proprietor of the Bull, has the authority to agree to this.

Agreed: The Clerk will write to the Proprietor of the Bull for consent to providing the electricity required. There may be a need for the Council to consider the installation of its own broadband link at the Bull and the requirement for a dedicated broadband link was noted.

Parish Council Meeting 8th December, 2011 Clerks Report

Agenda Item 4 Clerk's Correspondence

I would like to report the following items of correspondence which are available in a folder on the desk to the rear of the hall for anyone who wishes to read them after the meeting:

1. Letter from Essex Environment Trust dated 5th December confirming the agreement of the Trust to the revised fencing proposal for the Community Centre thus the promised grant of £3980 remains unchanged. Councillor Hammond is liaising with the Contractor/Supplier and the RFO such that the Supplier will invoice TBPC for the materials and deduct that amount from the Contractor's final bill. Hopefully the fencing will be installed in January 2012.
2. Email to Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society, Theydon Youth and Theydon Bois Pre-School (and copied to TBCAYT) thanking them for their promised donations to the fencing project.
3. Letter to North Essex Parking Partnership concerning Resident's Parking Schemes with particular reference to Thrifts Mead, Green Glade and Pakes Way. Receipt of emailed acknowledgement from Richard Walker confirming that the matter has been passed to Shane Taylor (Team Leader of the Technical Services Team) for investigation.
4. Exchange of emails with Kerry Briars of Macmillan Cancer Support expressing their delight at the amount raised (£655) by the Parish Council during the recent Street Collections.
5. Letter from Essex County Council dated November 2011 concerning the Mobile Library service with effect from 3rd January 2012 and with revised timetable. No changes in the service for us.
6. NALC Policy Briefing on Localism Act
7. Bus Passenger News November/December 2011 and Local Bus Tender Round 2012 (No change for our service).
8. News Release from EFDC concerning opening hours of the Civic Offices over the Christmas period. The offices will close at 5pm on Friday 23rd December and will re-open on Tuesday 3rd January at 9am.

N.B In relation to the Parish Office please note that I will be intending to close the office at mid-day on 23rd and will be away between Christmas and New Year so will also be back at work on Tuesday 3rd January.

9. Email from Health Protection Officer for West Essex PCT urging take up of the Seasonal Flu Vaccination particularly for the elderly and pregnant women.

10. Contract Notice – Invitation to Tender reference CCTV Upgrade and Maintenance Contract dated 6.12.2011. Notice on Boards and Web-Editor has been requested to place on website.
11. Email from Theydon Bois Primary School requesting help in publicising the forthcoming annual senior citizens Christmas Morning on 14th December from 10.30am until 11.30am in the School Hall.
12. Draft Minutes of Planning Meeting held on 24th November already circulated.
13. Draft Minutes of Community Liaison Committee Meeting held on 17th November (to follow)
14. Draft Minutes of Cemetery Committee Meeting held on 17th November (to follow)
15. Draft Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 23rd

Sally Crone, Parish Clerk, 8.12.2011