



# Theydon Bois Parish Council

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

Clerk to the Council: Ms Julie Taylor Secretary & Assistant to the Clerk: Mrs Elizabeth Thomas

## Minutes of the Parish Council held at The Village Hall

at 8.00pm on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**Councillors Present:** Cllrs Philip (Chair), Gooch, Howard, Purkiss. Cllr Hannibal arrived later.

**Apologies:** Cllrs McDonald, Vincent, Hammond, Wood, Jones and Julie Taylor (Parish Clerk and RFO)

**Officers Present:** Elizabeth Thomas (Assistant Clerk)

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs McDonald, Vincent, Hammond, Wood, Jones and Julie Taylor (Parish Clerk and RFO)

### 2. To discuss and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

Signed as a true record by Cllr John Philip.

### 3. 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 (SI.2007/1159)(The Revised Code)

None

### 4. Public Participation Session with regard to items on the Agenda.

Resident raised item re. budget & precept – to be dealt with later.

Resident questions: What will be allocated for planning consultants in the case of the EFDC Local Plan, and how fast can funds be accessed. Other parish councils in the district are raising larger amounts, we don't want Theydon Bois to be at a disadvantage. Cllr Philip: we will cover this under Budget.

Resident questions: is there any progress on Green Belt Review, and what procedure is in place for the Neighbourhood Plan? Cllr Philip: we have nothing to report on Green Belt Review – not even a draft report yet. Cllrs Philip & Gooch met

last week regarding the Neighbourhood Plan, and funding is earmarked for this. It will be run by a committee on which T-BAG and Rural Preservation will be represented. Cllr Philip has met with the manager of Forward Planning, to set up further meeting with Cllr Gooch – positive response.

Workshops: Cllr Philip stated that there is one about design going on simultaneously with this meeting – these will contribute towards local plan options document.

## **5. Correspondence – Clerks Report**

- New TBPC shed is fully functional and the costing has been passed to VA: cheque is here.
- I have the Memorandum of Understanding from TBVA – it has been updated. To go to all councillors then to next Full Council for discussion and signing.
- Parish Office has new phone – working very well so far.
- EHAAT air ambulance trust collected our donation from Christmas, £621.
- Cemetery rates rebate: this was confirmed at Finance Committee on Jan 20 and is in excess of £3K.
- Orchard Drive neighbour is still unhappy and wants waiting times changed – referring this to NEPP
- Still complaints about parking on the green. We have begun a dossier for Highways complaints in Parish Office so please let everyone know they should send their comments to us and we will add them.
- Good news – manhole cover on the corner of Coppice Row and The Green has been fixed.
- Meeting in October – room booking schedule could not accommodate Full Council on the 27<sup>th</sup>, so we are meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> instead.
- New Kitchen at Village Hall – this is to be installed in April.
- New trees have been planted at Village Hall, thanks to all concerned in this venture.
- Landmark Trees research has had a good response – we have collected many forms and passed them to Jane and her team. Awaiting next step.
- There has been fly-tipping on the Green: email about this was circulated to all councillors. JP raised with environment portfolio holder at EFDC (Will Breare Hall)
- Due to popular demand, we put up date lists for mobile library and litter picking on our notice boards

## **6. Finance and General Purposes Committee/Community Liaison Committee**

### **6.1 Payments made since the last meeting were approved.**

### **6.2 Budget 2016-2017:**

Cllr Philip presented a breakdown of the budget (sheet attached).

- There has been a rise in Band D Equivalent residents to 1976 this year from 1953.6 last year. Parish Support Grant has been decreased in the last 4 years; Theydon Bois allotted this year: £2929.

- Band D Precept to be kept the same as last year: £106,190.
- Cemetery & Allotments income lower than last year.
- Income for next year for Parish Council is £136,719. We are looking to be prudent over spending, we will have a deficit budget for next year and we are looking to fund the Neighbourhood and Local Plans. Our reserves will allow us to do this. We will also use un-spent projects money from last year.
- Cemetery gardener and hedge-cutter has been consolidated. Water and rates are the same.
- Finance & General Purposes: we have £3,200 to cover the election – this is done via EFDC and they recharge to us. It all depends on how many candidates we get. Payroll is up marginally.
- More funding to be available for Christmas and the quarterly Seniors Events.
- Main expenditure includes: Payments to Public Works Loan for Village Hall & Community Centre; Allotment maintenance; CCCTV maintenance (remaining the same); Grass and hedge trimming (cost has risen); Projects – including Playground at Theydon which will need to be attended to; Highways has £5k retained for TRO on the Green and £7k allotted for highways infrastructure; Planning has a £10k budget for planning advice, Local and Neighbourhood Plans, and applications issues, £20k each for Local and Neighbourhood Plans themselves – so £50k for planning next year - deficit is £53,921 for the year.
- Reserves include £3,200 for elections, £10k each for match funding, planning, and Local Plan. There is £70k in restricted reserves which will reduce as the new storage unit is paid for.
- Contingency for end of next year is £194K
- We have funds to spend on any unexpected issues – the Council is in a very strong position.

Cllr Purkiss: Should we raise the precept if we need more funding for planning issues?

Cllr Philip: If we need more to spend we can access it – we will still be secure. District wants parish councils not to put too much into reserves any way.

Cllr Gooch: It's uncertain how fast the Green Belt Review will be, in case we need to borrow money.

Cllr Philip: We can borrow against the precept if we need to.

Resident: How fast can the parish council access reserve if need be?

Committee: each PC committee has control of its own budget of up to £50k. Each year our reserves have increased. The restricted sum is safe and is there to be put into projects for the benefit of the village.

- BUDGET: Proposed by Cllr Philip, seconded by Cllr Gooch. All in favour.
- PRECEPT: £106,190 + Parish Support Grant £2,929. Proposed by Cllr Philip, seconded by Cllr Gooch. All in favour.

(Cllr Hannibal arrived at this point)

### **6.3 CCTV: Essential Security.**

Cllr Gooch: we are trying to set up a meeting with them, I am happy to meet them along with Cllr Vincent. Cllr Vincent is satisfied with the figures, I would like clarification over exactly what is in the maintenance contract. They should be proactive: last year the cameras weren't working in Theydon and it wasn't good. Cllr Vincent has authority to look at CCTV images (you have to sign for this)

Cllr Philip: Frank Bell, Hall Manager can view the Village Association cameras. We should be able to do that – what about a screen in Parish Office?

Committee: Parish Office Staff to scan and send Essential contract to all councillors so they can read and know what they are signing up for: comments to be back in Parish Office by close of play 3rd February 2016. (*Essential spec for the contract was scanned and distributed with advice to comment on Jan 29 2016*) We will hold on until Councillors Vincent and Gooch have met with Essential – approve and sign appropriate paperwork tonight and send only when the PC reps have given us the green light.

#### 6.4 Parish Council Website

Proposed that this needs to be updated. Jim Watts (website manager): we aim to be proactive with it and update as much as possible, e.g. after Full Council, where the minutes go on there as a matter of course. Suggested that councillors could forward reports for the site with items that are important to the village

CLlr Philip: we could have the website as a standing item on Community Liaison agenda.

CLlr Gooch: inquired whether the software was all right.

Jim Watts: it's an oldish programme, but I will transfer it to my new computer: may need to add a subscription to update the system. We should meet this cost from sponsor fees.

### 7. Planning Committee

This has been a busy month, with several important applications including:

- **Marcris House care home:** Proposed closure and redevelopment – strong objection as change of use is unjustifiable.
- **Blunt's Farm:** more development – objection. If this goes to Committee CLlr Gooch will speak.
- **Land adjacent to Gun Cottage:** Stables in the open Green Belt – objection.

### 8. Highways and Environment Committee

- Supporting residents v. commuters on the top green. Cones we place there have often been dispersed and the police have agreed to support the junction. This is an ongoing problem all over Theydon Bois. We have met NEPP and discussed the situation, they are mapping the top and lower green for yellow lines, which could be in situ by summer 2016.
- EFDC parking office – they are drafting a letter to pass to Green Glade and Pakes Way residents as they too are on the NEPP agenda. Need to get the letters out by the due date or we will lose the slot. CLlr Gooch: we have met with NEPP before and they were reasonable and made sensible suggestions.
- Woburn Avenue resident asked if they could have a consultation: if that person will act as a rep we could get it onto the list. To check the Woburn resident's details and get NEPP on board for this.
- Bench outside Lauren Louise has been fixed
- Pavement marked up for repairs in shopping area – tree roots are the culprit but a package is agreed and we are just waiting for statistics.
- Belisha beacon – ongoing.
- Tree at The Hoppitt – has not been removed, has been there some time.
- Holes in the road to Epping – this road was in a severely cratered state this winter and potentially lethal in the dark. CLlr Purkiss, after a lot of trying and redirection, managed to speak with a director at Ringway Jacob and

lodged his complaint. The road was fixed that evening, the problem being rooted in a collapsed sewer owned by Thames Water. This is now repaired and the holes backfilled and awaiting final touches.

**9. Community Liaison**

**Christmas:** Suggested the Market on Dec 2 (original proposed date for market of Nov 25 deemed too early); this would fall on the same Day as Epping's event but stall holders and attendees are not likely to do both markets. Agreed. Seniors event to be held around Dec 9: to check this out with Tracey the bookings clerk and follow up. *(In progress as of Jan 29 2016).*

**10. Cemetery Committee**

No new reports.

**11. Health Matters**

**Epping Forest GPs:** Waltham Abbey & Loughton have weekend services which are proving very popular.

**Health Watch Essex:** comments service to begin to allow feedback on medical services.

**12. Date Of Next Meeting:** February 25 2016

**13. Any Other Urgent Business for Report (without decision)**

- Office staff reported that notice board at the gate is hard to open and shut due to wind and rain damage over the winter – could be hazardous. Cllr Purkiss has contact who can assist.
- Cllr Howard raised matter of people putting dog waste in regular litter bins: it happens but dog bins are worth having and people should be encouraged to use them.

**14. Following Agenda items will exclude Public and Press**

None.

**Councillor Philip closed the meeting at 9.11pm**

**Julie Taylor**

**Clerk to the Council**

**Councillor John Philip**

**Chair of the Council**