

# Widford Parish Council

Minutes of the Widford Ordinary Parish Council Meeting  
Tuesday 4th September 2018 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall



**PRESENT:** Cllr Jill Buck, Chairman (JB); Cllr Carol Blackett (CB); Cllr Paul Riddle (PR);  
Cllr Michael Ripsher following co-option  
14 members of the public, Cllr Bob Brunton, Cllr Eric Buckmaster  
Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

**ACTION**

**18.078 Apologies for absence**

1. Councillors: Cllr Babs Edwards (holiday)
2. Others: Sgt Duncan Wallace (holiday)

**18.079 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations**

1. **Interests:** None declared
2. **Dispensation requests:** None received

**18.080 Casual vacancies:** An application for co-option from Michael Ripsher was considered and it was unanimously **RESOLVED to co-opt Michael Ripsher as a member of the Parish Council.** He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Clerk.

**Clerk**

**18.081 Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018**

It was **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018 were a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes after the meeting.

**JB/Clerk**

**18.082 Police report:** No report provided.

**18.083 Chairman's announcements:** None

**18.084 Planning**

**1. New Applications:**

**3/18/1726/FUL & 1727/LBC 3 Nether Street:** Sub-division of dwelling to create 2 no. dwellings. *The Parish Council had NO OBJECTIONS, but did have concerns about parking.*

**Clerk**

**3/18/1668/FUL The Green Man:** Change of use to 2 x dwellings. First floor rear extension. Change of use of outbuilding to 1 x dwelling and parking

Taking into consideration public comments, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to object to this application giving the following reasons:**

**Clerk**

**1. Parking and road safety.** The application is for change of use to create of two 2-bedroom dwellings and one 2-bedroom dwelling. The emerging District Plan in its *Essential Reference Paper 'B' – Vehicle Parking Standards Appendix*, refers to Paragraph 39 of the NPPF. *Table 2: Car Parking Standards, C3 Residential* identifies the requirement for 2 parking spaces per 2-bedroom dwelling. Therefore, these three dwellings need 6 car parking spaces. There are currently an additional four houses which use the same space for parking (two adjoining the Green Man\*, and two on the other side of the car park access). These four houses were developed in 2004 and it is therefore assumed that East Herts ensured there were adequate parking spaces available for these properties, possibly 6 to 8 spaces.  
*\*EHC to be asked to confirm whether new spaces identified in the application are actually owned by the residents of these two houses.*

This fact seems to have been overlooked by the Hertfordshire Highways Consultee response which focusses only on the present application for three properties without taking into account the impact on existing parking needs of the four existing properties. The Council strongly disagrees with HCC Highways' conclusion that the proposed parking is acceptable.

As well as car parking spaces, there is the requirement for sufficient turning space to be incorporated in order to avoid cars and service vehicles reversing out into the High Street.

Failure to ensure adequate parking would force vehicles to park in the High Street, which

would create extremely dangerous traffic conditions. The High Street is narrow, congested, and any additional on- street parking at the top of this blind hill will cause a hazard. The nearby Lambs Cottage is currently being split into two properties with no off-street parking. This is already causing problems in this area. Specifically, from the brow of the hill to the entrance of the Green Man the distance is approximately 92ft. The width of the High Street at the brow of the hill is approximately 19ft (including verges) and the entrance to Nether Street at the junction is approximately 15ft (including verges). Sight lines at the Nether Street junction are very poor and North of that the road becomes very narrow with no pavements or verges. Consequently, the Parish Council is extremely worried by the potential negative impact of further building in this congested area of the village.

**2. Future intentions.** Although it is recognised that only present proposals are for consideration, the Parish Council to express its concern that the pub garden (outlined in blue on the location plan) is separate from this planning application and it is presumed the intention is to apply for permission to build another dwelling here at a later date which will further add to the car parking issue.

**3. Asset of Community Value.** The Green Man is currently the subject of an Asset of Community Value nomination, the decision for that being expected on 19th September. The Parish Council is uncertain whether that affects EHC's consideration of this application. What is certain is the loss of the only remaining public house in this rapidly expanding village will be detrimental to village life and should be retained, if at all possible, as a valued community amenity rather than it being converted into more residential housing.

**4.** Due to the number of issues surrounding this application, Widford Parish Council called for its decision to go to committee. (Cllr Bob Brunton agreed to assist the Clerk with this).

## 2. Decision Notices

**3/18/1543/FUL Plovers, Medcalf Hill:** Demolish existing dwelling. Erect one two-storey replacement dwelling. *Noted as now GRANTED*

**3/18/1264/VAR Greenacres:** Variation to Condition 2: **GRANTED**

**3/18/1027/FUL Land to North of Abbots Lane (Old Orchard):** New dwelling. **REFUSED**

**3/17/2517/FUL;17/00150/REFUSE CPL Disribution (Coal Yard Site)** Demolish existing and erect 5 detached dwellings. **APPEALED** to Planning Inspectorate. **APPEAL WITHDRAWN**

## 3. Other planning matters, including items received too late for the agenda

1. To consider any late planning applications: NONE – but see 3.7 below
2. To note Asset of Community Value nomination of the Green Man PH: NOTED
3. Update: Enforcement investigation into Priory Farm hedge reinstatement: NO UPDATE
4. Adams Farm development update: NO NEW DEVELOPMENT UNDER CONSIDERATION
5. Martlets - renaming of the development – proposed Meadow Gardens: NOTED
6. Widford Housing survey re Places for People: The Chairman said there is a need for social housing and that the PC should comment to that effect on the survey to follow. NOTED
7. Request to support a call-in of the District Plan: It was agreed not to support the proposed call-in because any further delay in the adoption of the new plan would keep the door open for opportunist development.

**18.085 Reports by County and District Councillors:** deferred to later in the meeting

## 18.086 Finance

1. Report of the Council's finances for 1 to 31 July was received (Appendix A)

### Finance Summary from 1 to 31 July

	£
<b>Opening bank balance 1 July</b>	<b>14,083.74</b>
Plus: income to 31 July	2,513.00
Minus: expenditure to 31 July	<u>1,033.93</u>
	15,562.81
Minus previous months' cheques presented in period	<u>847.87</u>
<b>Balance available to Council 31 July (cashbook balance)</b>	<b>14,714.83</b>
Plus: unrepresented cheques as at 31 May	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Bank balance: reconciled with bank statement at 31 July</b>	<b><u>14,714.83</u></b>

Reconciliation of the Accounts to the bank statements was noted and it was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Accounts Statement for 1 to 31 July be accepted.**

Clerk

The Clerk also provided a detailed statement of the budget vs actual position as at 31 July. No issues of concern have been identified. The financial statement was received and noted.

2. Cllr Michael Ripsher, as a non-signatory member, signed the accounts sheet and bank statement to verify reconciliation.

MR/Clerk

3. **List of payments.** It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the payments as listed**

Clerk

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq	Power
22/7	J English	Litterpicking July	116.00	S/O	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
27/7	Clerk	Salary July	320.00	1167	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A) & s151; LA 2011 s41
5/8	David Jarrett	Allotments grass	350.00	1168	SHAA 1908 s29(2)
22/8	J English	Litterpicking Aug	116.00	S/O	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
31/8	Clerk	Salary August	320.00	1169	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A) & s151; LA 2011 s41
4/9	Clerk	Expenses July/Aug	22.00	1170	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A) & s151; LA 2011 s41
4/9	Clerk Petty Cash	Top-up May/June	16.00	1171	LGA 1972 s111
4/9	J Turner	Benningfield 3of 3	100.00	1172	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
4/9	HAPTC	Councillor books	11.22	1173	LGA 1972 s111
4/9	CDA for Herts	Annual fee	35.00	1174	LGA 1972 s111
<b>Recoverable VAT included</b>			<b>£58.33</b>		

Cheques for 4<sup>th</sup> September were signed at the end of the meeting.

Clerk

#### 18.087 Correspondence

The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:

- M Prisk MP: re Green Man PH and related ACV (18.089.3.2)
- M Prisk MP: re Levenage junction issues (18.089.2.2)
- Parishioner: Dangerous overhanging branch, Nether Street (18.089.2.7)  
Highways & EHC: re Nether Street railings (18.089.2.4)
- Parishioner: re Allotments Grazing and Water Licence arrangements (18.088.2)
- PRow Officer: Bridleway 16 update (18.089.1.2)
- Ash View Nursing Home: Parish Council request for a meeting (18.089.3.1)
- Parishioner: complaint about sewage sludge spreading, including damage to Nether Street road surface (18.089.3.4)
- Parishioner: Twitchell ditch causing flooding danger to Benningfield Road properties (18.089.3.3)

#### 18.088 Village Reports

1. **Village Hall and archive:** No report.

##### 2. Allotments

The Chairman gave a report in Cllr Edwards' absence. There are issues with the water having been turned off. The Stables is now owned by the owner of Ashbourne Manor and therefore the meter is on his land. A check revealed no leaks in either the allotments or at the meter. The location of the leak on The Stables land is still being pursued. It was also noted that all the fencing in the paddocks has been knocked over. Copies of the Grazing and Water Licences have been provided to the new Stables owner for information.

##### 3. Playing Field

Cllr Jill Buck reported that there still has not been PFMC meeting due to illness. It has been reported to EHC that the dog poo bin wasn't emptied – this is being resolved.

Clerk

##### 4. Closed Churchyard

1. **Wiseman family monument:** The PCC has made no progress.
2. **Open Churchyard maintenance grant:** Deferred to a later meeting

JB/Clerk  
All/Clerk

**18.089 Highways, footpaths and byways**

**1. Footpath, footways and kerbs.**

- 1. FP6 reinstatement and missing way markers: No update received from the PRoW Officer.
- 2. Bridleway 16: The Bridleway is presently cut off. It is understood that the developer is applying to re-route it.

**2. Highways**

**1. Parish SID:** Cllr Buckmaster reported that studies are being commissioned to ascertain if the issues warrant speed alleviation measures – to be determined once the evidence has been analysed. A parishioner requested that the B1004 Ware Road mid-village be included in the study because speeding there is rife and dangerous. Cllr Buckmaster said he would add that to the study. EB

**2. Levenage Lane junction:** No progress since the last correspondence on 30<sup>th</sup> July. Clerk/EB

**3. Bus shelter repair:** The Clerk reported that this is in hand, although behind schedule. It should be started very soon. Clerk

**4. Nether Street railings:** The Clerk again expressed his concerns to Cllr Buckmaster about a phone call and grant application form received from Laurie Humphries of EHC Conservation. It said the Parish Council must provide another quote to the one already supplied by Herts Highways before a Conservation grant can be considered. The Clerk reiterated that the railings belong to HCC and not the Parish Council, that he has been unable to find anyone who can do the job, and that he is unwilling to pay the £500 or so difference between the Locality Budget grant and the cost quoted by HCC. In good faith, the Clerk said he had already given to go-ahead on the basis of the quote provided by HCC's Paul Patmore and discussed with Cllr Buckmaster. Cllr Buckmaster gave an assurance that if the Clerk wrote forcefully to Laurie Humphries to explain the position, he would support it to ensure the Parish Council does not have to pick up any part of the cost. Clerk/EB

**5. DriveSafe Scheme update:** It is still hoped that volunteers will get this implemented.

**6. TRO 12002 Closure of B180 Hunsdon Road:** Noted.

**7. Report 401000044197:** dangerous overhanging branch in Nether Street: It was noted that this appears to have been dealt with.

**Winter salt.** Notification has been received from Highways that bags of winter salt are available for parishioners' use if there is a need. It was agreed the Clerk would order some if a suitable storage place can be found. Order deadline is 31st October. All/Clerk

**3. Other parish concerns**

**1. Damage to the verge/green outside Ashview.** The Clerk had written requesting a meeting but has received no response. An opinion was given that if the damage has been caused by the developer, then EHC Planning Enforcement should make them reinstate it. There is also the view that parking is also a cause. Cllr Buckmaster said that if he was sent a formal request, preferably with photos, he would ask if bollards could be placed around the Highways land in question. JB/Clerk

**2. The Green Man.** It was confirmed that the Asset of Community Value nomination has been submitted.

**3. Twitchell ditch.** The Clerk said the potential flooding problem is due to the pipe that runs under Benningfield Road which is believed to be Highways responsibility. Cllr Buckmaster said he would support the Clerk in getting this resolved. Clerk/EB

**4. Report of sewage sludge being spread on fields.** The Clerk had forwarded this matter to Cllr Brunton. The parishioner making the original report wished to clarify that, contrary to the Agenda wording, the damage to the road was not in Nether Street but at the turning from the main road into Priory Farm yard where, in the hot weather, the tarmac was being scuffed by the 8-wheel tanker.

**5. Other matters raised:** None.

**18.090 Consultation: Waste Local Plan: Call for Sites 2018.** It was decided not to make a response.

**18.091 Urgent matters** received too late for inclusion on this agenda: None.

Due to it being late, it was ***agreed not to suspend the meeting for parishioners' comments***

**18.085 Reports by County and District Councillors:** deferred item from earlier in the meeting

**County Cllr Eric Buckmaster** gave a report – the following is a precis:

**Rogue Trader Team report for July/August.** Recent incidents included a trader cold calling to carry out gardening work, not leaving any paperwork, and requiring a large payment in cash up front. Once the payment had been made, the trader disappeared without doing any work. In another a scam, a vulnerable victim in Hertfordshire has been phoned by scammers saying they are from Trading Standards, and that they have to pay various fines. The victim has transferred tens of thousands of pounds to them - the money is going abroad. The Scams Team twitter account, for warnings on the latest scams, is @HCC\_TS .

**Essex & Herts Air Ambulance** recently celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the Air Ambulances being deployed more than 20,000 times in this period! It now costs over £500,000 every month to remain operational and cover all charitable costs. Between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018 the helicopters and Rapid Response Vehicles were deployed 49 times in the East Herts District.

**Herts Fire and Rescue Service** has announced that through joint fundraising, Public Health and the Fire and Rescue Service staff have managed to raise enough money to equip the remaining HCC fire engines in the fleet with pet resuscitation equipment that allows fire-fighters to treat pets who have suffered smoke inhalation.

**YC Hertfordshire.** More than 1000 young people completed this year’s National Citizen Service (NCS) summer programme with YC Hertfordshire, equipping them with the vital skills and confidence needed as they approach adulthood.

**Nascot Lawn.** In August a scrutiny topic group looked at respite services for families of severely disabled children. It examined the Section 75 legal agreement terms between Herts Valleys and East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Groups and HCC following the ceasing of funding by the CCG of Nascot Lawn. It was agreed that progress is being made to provide £100k annually from each CCG for 5 years on 3 alternative sites run by HCC.

**Junction 8 of the M11.** Essex Highways plans to undertake improvements to J8 of the M11 and the nearby A120/A1250 Dunmow Road Junction to address current congestion and capacity issues experienced at peak times.

**Fly Tipping** In August notice was given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works to prevent access to the layby by fly tippers are being undertaken, all traffic was temporarily prohibited from using that length of the layby situated on the southern side of A414 Eastwick Road, Eastwick from a point 13m south west of its junction with the westbound carriageway of A414 Eastwick Road south eastwards and north westwards to its ends, a distance of approximately 115 metres, except for access. Hopefully this action will now prevent access to the site by those engaging in this criminal activity.

**District Councillor Bob Brunton** gave the following report:

Nothing has been heard yet on the Minerals Plan for the Quarry.

Two recent EH Planning meetings contained nothing to affect this parish.

Nick Kirby, EHC FlyTipping Enforcement and Inspection Team Manager, has given the following report of fly tips in the area reported to EHC:

	May	June	July
Hunsdon	0	0	1
Widford	1	3	0
Eastwick	0	3	2

Officers have been out to check for evidence but none found in the fly tips. We currently have no investigations or prosecutions in the area.

Cllr Brunton said he would assist the Clerk in asking for the Green Man planning application tot be called into full committee.

**Clerk/RB**

District Plan modifications have now been accepted by the Inspector. Anticipated to Full Council in September for Adoption.

**18.092 Items for future agendas**

- Hundred Parishes Society – to consider membership.
- To consider a grant towards maintenance costs of the open churchyard

**ALL/Clerk  
ALL/Clerk**

- To consider increasing the 2019/20 precept by £1,000 to provide ringfenced funding toward the Playing Field maintenance, and to consider making a grant towards 2018/19 costs.

**ALL/Clerk**

**18.093 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th November at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

**Clerk**

**Exclusion of Press and Public**

It was **RESOLVED** that under **Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960**, the press and public be excluded during the following agenda item, **18.094**, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**18.094 Benningfield Green Annual Licence Renewal**

The Parish Council agreed a course of action and the Clerk would be contacting the parishioners concerned with a renewal proposal.

**Clerk**

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.25pm.

**Signed**.....**Dated**.....