

Wheathampstead Parish Council

26 March 2009, 19.30h

Present Councillors: K Stammers (Chairman)
I Begg
J Burgess
N Clements
D Hills
T Reason
J Turner
S Walford
A Waterfield

Julia Warren (Parish Clerk)

Press 0
Public 4

184-09 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors A Brewster, G Clark and N Page (personal reasons)

185-09 PUBLIC SPEAKING

A request was received and granted for Mrs Lee to hold her son's 5th birthday party on the memorial playing fields.

186-09 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Clements declared a personal interest in Minute 191 -09 (regarding banking arrangements), as he is a licensed financial services advisor.

187-09 MINUTES OF COUNCIL

The Minutes of the meetings held on 26 February 2009 were approved

Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the meetings held on 26 February 2009 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

188-09 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The following committee reports were received:

Allotments Committee	3 March, 26 March 2009
Village Plan Committee	14 January, 9 March 2009
Pump Committee	17 March 2009
Village Day Committee	17 March 2009

Resolved:	To receive the reports of the following committees:
	Allotments Committee
	3 March, 26 March 2009
	Village Plan Committee
	14 January, 9 March 2009
	Pump Committee
	17 March 2009
	Village Day Committee
	17 March 2009

189-09 LEASE OF RECTORY GLEBE (formerly known as RECTORY MEADOW & THE FERNERY)

The draft lease for the Rectory Meadow and Fernery had been received from St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance's solicitor and comment from the Parish Council's solicitor.

- Resolved:**
- 1 The sub committee comprising Chairman, Councillors Page & Turner and Parish Clerk to consider the response and report to Council.**
 - 2 That this response be considered having viewed the plan of land in question.**

190-09 RISK ASSESSMENTS

Updated risk assessments had been produced and previously circulated as was delegated to Councillor Begg and the Clerk (Minute 129-09). These were discussed and it was noted that a log of play equipment inspections should be kept. Councillor Page is a tree warden and aware of the Council's ownership/responsibility for trees within the Parish. The need for adequate insurance was discussed, particularly in the context of trees

- Resolved**
- 1 Clerk to check insurance coverage for Council to confirm its adequacy**
 - 2 To confirm and adopt risk assessments, inclusive of amendment at 1 above, as at March 2009.**

191-09 INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW INCLUDING BANKING

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended) require Council to annually review the effectiveness of its system of internal controls. This is an integral means of continually improving governance and accountability. Internal audit is an integral part of the system of internal control. Members considered the previously circulated report including the report from David Smy, Internal Auditor.

Banking arrangements were also considered, with particular reference to the recent financial banking crises. Council considered types of deposit and whether deposits should be spread to different lending establishments.

- Resolved:**
- 1 That money should be retained for the present at Barclays Bank but that Treasury Deposits should be initiated by the Clerk.**
 - 2 That the Clerk investigate banking opportunities through the Post Office and report to Council within 6 months.**
 - 3 That the Internal Audit report of David Smy (HW Controls & Assurances LLP) be noted. This reports that the 'Council operates a system of internal controls which is adequate and effective, given the resources available to it, and for the most part adheres to the Guide (NALC Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales – A Practitioners' Guide 2008) and other accounting and control principles for the financial year 2008/9.'**
 - 4 To note and action the issues noted by Internal Audit, including:**
 - a Consider insurance cover in particular fidelity guarantee cover**
 - b To ensure correct notification regarding data protection under the Data Protection Act 1998**
 - c To consider the number and responsibilities of committees**
 - 5 That the Chairman sign the review of internal auditor effectiveness and mechanisms as circulated.**

192-09 VILLAGE PLAN

Richard Brett was thanked for compiling the Plan. Version 1 had been circulated and was discussed. It was agreed to approve this as version 1, but note that amendments and improvements would be constant for this living document and incorporated in version 2. Reference was made to English Heritage's initiative to survey conservation areas which could be pertinent. Additional material could also be brought to notice through the consultation event on 3 April in the Memorial Hall – part of the St Albans Rural Vision.

It was agreed that the Village Plan plus supporting material would be made available electronically, some black and white hard copies would be printed

- Resolved:**
- 1 To approve the Village Plan Version 1**
 - 2 To launch the Village Plan at the Annual Parish Meeting on 22 April 2009**
 - 3 To make the Plan available electronically**
 - 4 To print a limited number of black and white copies.**

193-09 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The format and individual responsibilities for the Annual Parish Meeting on 22 April 2009 were discussed. It was agreed that a similar format to previous years be adopted

- Resolved:**
- 1 That the chairman of each committee give a presentation for up to 5 minutes**
 - 2 That in the absence of the chair of the Memorial Hall Committee from the APM, the Memorial Hall Committee presentation be given by the former chairman (until November 2008), Councillor Stammers**
 - 3 That the first committee presentation be for the Village Plan Committee**
 - 4 That Councillor Begg circulate an electronic template for presentations**
 - 5 That the Clerk source a projector and lectern for the evening**
 - 6 That the Clerk obtain wine and soft drinks on a sale or return basis from the Village off licence.**
 - 7 That committee chairmen meet the preceding Sunday to finalise their presentations**

194-09 ALLOTMENTS

Under the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908 Council must review charges and agree rent for 2009-10 in order to advise tenants and give the requisite year notice. Demand for allotments exceeds supply, a waiting list for Village Residents had existed for some years, the majority favouring Hitchens or Glebe fields. There has been no increase for 2008-9. Charges and access to the allotment fields – gates and signage in particular and a review of the allotment rules had been considered by the Allotments Committee, ratification was sought to send out invoices.

- Resolved:**
- 1 That the charges for allotment fields for 2009-10 be as agreed at Minute 180-09**
 - 2 That the Grazing charges for 2009-10 be as at Minute 183-09**
 - 3 That the review of allotment rules and regulations , per Minute 179-09, occur**
 - 4 That additional allotment plots be created in Glebe Field as Minute 181-09**
 - 5 That the Clerk obtain combination locks to secure the gates of Glebe and Hitchens fields**
 - 6 That Glebe and Hitchens fields have a sign notifying access for allotments only**

195-09 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The need for a personnel committee to be formalised was discussed.

- Resolved:**
- 1 Councillor Reason to become a member of the Pump Committee and Village Day Committee**
 - 2 To formalise the Personnel Committee, as convened to set and appraise the Clerk's objectives.**
 - 3 Personnel committee to comprise Councillors Stammers, Brewster and Begg.**

196-09 VILLAGE DAY

The need for commitment from councillors for village Day was discussed. Councillor Burgess has produced a task document in the form of a handout which would be distributed to all following the next Village Day Committee meeting. This included a rota of tasks.

- Resolved:** **Clerk to distribute Village Day handout to all councillors for information and to agree commitments**

197-09 EXTENSION OF MARFORD ROAD FOOTPATH

Council confirmed its support for the extension of this footpath and it was included within the Village Plan (T26). Responsibility was noted to be with Hertfordshire County Council who had previously been advised by WPC of its support for cycle ways.

- Resolved:** **Clerk to write to Mr Harvey**

198-09 BUTTERFIELD ROAD – future Nature Reserve & parking areas

No further information had been received from the Council's solicitor. It was thus agreed to defer this until clarification was obtained.

- Resolved:** **To defer this item pending a response from Council's solicitor.**

199-09 BINS & HIGH STREET TIDYING

A detailed discussion regarding litter bins, with particular reference to the High Street took place including debate over positioning and the removal/repositioning of bins on the Mill Quay and adjacent to the floral seat overlooking the Mill bridge.

- Resolved:**
- 1 That the SADC litter bin recently moved to the pavement at the top of the Mill Steps remain in its present position for the present time.**
 - 2 That Highways & Public Transport Committee be responsible for sourcing and installing a securely fixed bin on the Mill Quay.**

- 3 That the Clerk negotiate the addition of the emptying of this bin & sweeping of the steps to R Dawes' bin emptying contract (weekly in summer months, fortnightly in winter months)**

200-09 BANK BALANCES

It was reported that as at 28 February 2009 balances were:

Brocket View Drainage Account	4, 242.70
Current Account	5, 000.00
Premium Account	<u>183, 726.67</u>
	<u>192, 969.37</u>
Less unrepresented cheques	34,599.00
Cash at Bank	<u>158, 370.37</u>

Resolved: To note the report.

201-09 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The schedule of accounts for payment amounting to £29,462.34 had been circulated.

The need for authorisation of expenditure was discussed and Members agreed that their resolution of 29 January 2009 (Minute 42-09) should be clarified to avoid ambiguity. It read 'that purchase ordering be through the Parish Office.'

- Resolved:**
- 1 To pay the accounts per February 2009 schedule amounting to £29,462.34 Nett**
 - 2 That only purchase orders signed by the Parish Office would be honoured by the Council.**

202-09 PLANNING

The following plans were considered:

5/09/0380	24 Dale Avenue	Two Storey front extension and alteration to openings
5/09/0350	54 High Street & 1 & 1a Church View, Church St	Installation of awnings to north & east elevation
5/09/0206	Thistledown Farm, Bower Heath	Temporary permission of site for a mobile home (resubmission following refusal of 5/07/0334)

5/09/0241	6 The Broadway, Gustard Wood	Front Dormer Window
5/09/0294AB	New Mill, Lamer Lane	Prior approval – extension to existing agricultural barn
5/09/0348	12 Sauncey Wood	Demolition of existing and erection of replacement five bedroom detached dwelling (resubmission following refusal of 5/08/2845)
5/09/0487	Lamer Park, Lamer Lane	Loft conversion with two side dormer windows
5/09/0511	36 Marshalls Way	Extension to roof and rear elevation to provide accommodation in the roof space with insertion of roof lights to front and rear elevations

**Resolved Parish Council recommendation to SADC:
NO OBJECTION**

The following plan were considered

5/09/0344LB	Ayres End Barn, Ayres End Lane	Internal alterations to include removal of internal wall between kitchen and utility room, creation of opening for double doors between kitchen and reception room and insertion of steel beams and poles to support chimney to kitchen
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**Resolved: Parish Council recommendation to SADC:
OBJECTION – RECOMMEND REFUSAL**

**On the grounds that this represents
overdevelopment in the Green Belt**

5/09/0374	Wheathamp- stead Education Centre, Butterfield Road, Wheathamp- stead	Variation of Condition 5 (the height of the proposed dwellings shall not exceed a maximum ridge height of 8 metres) of planning permission 5/08/2204 dated 23/02/2008 for the demolition of existing and redevelopment of site for residential use at a density of 30 dwellings per hectare and associated access (outline) (Amended Description).
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**Resolved: Parish Council recommendation to SADC:
OBJECTION – RECOMMEND REFUSAL**

On the grounds listed per plan 5/09/0182**203-09 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Councillor Clements gave a report on highways meetings attended with Wheathampstead House School with Herts highways officers regarding pedestrian access and suggestions of junction changes including a future possible roundabout and guesstimated costs; and briefly regarding future parking banned zones in the Village. He would give detailed reports to the Highways & Public Transport Committee

Resolved To note the report

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22.04h.

Dated this day of 2009

Chairman