



Watford Rural Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

Held on **Wednesday 8th May 2024 @ 7.30pm Parish Hall**

Attendance: Councillor Angela Arnold
Councillor Valerie Coltman
Councillor Mashkoor Khan
Councillor Joan King
Councillor Stephen King
Councillor Clare Leahy
Councillor Ronan MacManus
Councillor Sean McCluskey
Councillor Alison Scarth
Councillor Jason St John
Councillor William Waite
Councillor Joanna Walker

Apologies: Councillor Hrithik Dattani
Councillor Sakhana Uthayakumar

Non-Attendance:

Officer: Gareth Williams (Clerk)

-
- 2425/1 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**
Cllr Joan King was nominated by Cllr McCluskey, seconded by Cllr Coltman. No other nominations.
Cllr Joan King Elected to Chair.
- 2425/2 ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**
Cllr. J. King duly signed the Declaration to Office of Chairman, this was witnessed and signed by the Proper Officer.
- 2425/3 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**
Cllr Clare Leahy was nominated by Cllr Macmanus, seconded by Cllr Coltman. No other nominations.
Cllr Leahy elected to Vice-Chair.



- 2425/4 NOTICE OF A “MOTION TO ACCEPT CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR”**
Jason St John introduced himself and left the meeting whilst Council discussed his application. Proposal: To accept him as a Councillor to Watford Rural parish Council Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**
- 2425/5 ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**
Cllr. St John duly signed the Declaration to Office, this was witnessed and signed by the Proper Officer.
- [To allow Sgt Cheesewright to get back to duties, this next agenda item was moved forward]*
- 2425/9 POLICE MATTERS**
Sgt CHEesewright introduced himself to the Council and gave an update on recent Police activities and future planned operations.
- 2425/6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies were noted and accepted.
- 2425/7 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**
None
- 2425/8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
The Chair suggested to Members of the Public that she would endeavour to allow comment on any agenda item they wished to contribute to.
- 2425/10 REMOVAL OF THE 328 BUS ROUTE**
Our Councillors and members of the public had a full and frank discussion with Hertfordshire County Councillors, Cllr Alley and Cllr Ranger (whose areas cover our Parish Boundaries) on why Arriva have stated their unwillingness to continue, the current situation and finally, potential solutions should an operator not be found. Suggestions that, if an operator is found that Herts County Council re-evaluate their current Service Level Agreements to ensure a longer period of contractual termination and to state Key performance indicators that they must adhere to e.g. cancelled buses, punctual etc.
If the tender does not find an operator, WRPC will re-evaluate setting up a Volunteer based Community Bus with Community travel based charities to ensure a provision to at least allow Hospital appointments to be attended.
- 2425/11 ALTHAM WAY MEADOW & ASTRO TURF PITCH**
The Owner of Oxhey Jets gave an update on the current situation with regards to Three Rivers District Council closing the astro turf pitch. Once again, Cllrs from WRPC, TRDC and HCC, discussed the situation with Members of the public. It was generally agreed that TRDC gave a historical commitment to Oxhey Jets when they move from the previous location that they will maintain and run the astro turf pitch) albeit through Everyone Active, their Leisure Operator. The TRDC cllrs present agreed that they would bring it up at the various committees that this could fall



under. WRPC expressed an interest in maintaining the land and running the astro turf pitch (until the decision is made on the application to create an astro turf main pitch, which will be used by the community, but only on the proviso that HCC gift the land to WRPC, as they would be taking on all the responsibility and costs involved. The clerk was asked to see if we can get around the table meeting with all the interested parties to see if we can get this essential community leisure space up and running again asap and secure its long term future.

2425/12 MARKET

The Clerk gave an update on the current situation. Herts County Council will not consider a meeting to discuss early adoption to allow the Market to take place. Countryside is still looking into the insurance aspects for them to give permission for a market to be held in the interim. Cllrs expressed their frustration. We now have five Market Operators interested in running the market.

2425/13 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES COUNCIL MEETINGS ON

Full Council April 10th 2024 - Noted and Agreed.

2425/14 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON AGREED ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING AND DISCUSS MATTERS ARISING

Agenda Item 141b (2022/23) HERTS COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

Still no reply from HCC over the issues at Lidl's.

Agenda Item 2324/114 - COMMUNITY MATTERS/CORRESPONDENCE TO CONSIDER c)

Potential Funding available from Herts County Council for Over 55's activities

Costs obtained for Seated Chair yoga and Tai-Chi Awaiting Seated Dance. Once we have all three, the clerk will put in a funding bid.

Agenda Item 2324/138 COMMUNITY MATTERS/CORRESPONDENCE TO CONSIDER

- a) Grant Application – Community Learning Partnership – Art & Crafts Workshops
£2300
As agreed at Council, Chair and Clerk were delegated authority and agreed to fund based on the answers supplied by CLP
- b) Grant Application – Carpenders Park Residents Assoc. - Community Hall Kitchen Refit
£1250
Paid

Agenda Item 2324/139 – PLANNING

24-0187-FUL-Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of two storey detached dwelling - 2 Brookdene Avenue Oxhey Hall – As requested by Council, an objection letter written to TRDC re. parking concerns with the application

The Clerk was asked to investigate the proposed location of the mobile phone mast near Oxhey Jets Pitch, as it would hinder Oxhey Jet's future plans. The clerk wrote on behalf of the council to the firm dealing with the mast positioning application, explaining the potential issues and suggested alternatives. See Below:

Other items of note:



- Annual Wildflower beds cut in and seeded. Fingers Crossed we have some lovely flowers in the summer.
- Card swiper seems to have been fixed now by our IT dept.
- Financial Closedown for 2023-2024 has taken place. No issues.
- Children from Woodhall School came to play games with some of our lunch clubbers (and the clerk!) Really good fun had by all. We plan more joint activities over the coming months.
- Our insurers have confirmed they are dealing with the damage claim to remove two of our ancient oak trees within Greenfield Park. They have gone back to the resident’s solicitor to ask them to provide more evidential detail before going further.
- Clerk seeking solar panel funding for the agreed installation.

2425/15 COMMUNITY MATTERS/CORRESPONDENCE TO CONSIDER

To receive any questions from local community organisations. To consider any written correspondence. NB in relation to our powers.

- Manor View Practice, Oxhey Drive – request for funding for Healthcare Equipment. Practice Managers were willing to fund 20% themselves so WRPC were asked to fund the rest. Agreed that the benefit for the community was substantial. Proposal: To fund the remaining 80% Health Care Equipment for Manor View Practice, Oxhey Drive. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**
 Proposal: The Clerk to purchase a plaque to go with the equipment stating WRPC funded. An opening day to be arranged later. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**
- Grant Application – Impactful Governance – LGBTQ Mentoring Service for local residents. The Clerk produced the answers from the questions posed by Cllrs last meeting to assure Council that the money would benefit our residents. Proposal: To award grant funding of £2500 as requested. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**
- Reply from the Three Rivers Police Chief Inspector, acknowledging the issues with Police attendance at meetings and promising efforts would be made to attend ongoing.

2425/16 PLANNING

- No comments on any current applications

[9.20pm RM,MK,WW left the meeting]

2425/17 TO APPOINT COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES, OUTSIDE BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

| COMMITTEE | COUNCILLORS 2023/2024 |
|---|--|
| FULL COUNCIL Frequency: 1 st Wednesday of the Month (except May in a parish election year (2 nd /3 rd Wed) and January (2 nd Wed) <i>NB No Meeting in August</i> <i>White Paper</i> | All Councillors Clerk in attendance |
| FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION Frequency: As and when required (3 rd Wednesday of the | Cllr S. King Cllr J. King (Ex-Officio) Cllr J. St John |



| | |
|--|--|
| Month) <i>NB No Meeting in August</i> Chairperson Ex-Officio Member <i>Blue Paper</i> | Cllr W. Waite Cllr S. McCluskey Cllr A. Arnold* Cllr H. Dattani* Cllr V. Coltman* Cllr A. Scarth Clerk in attendance |
| EVENTS Frequency: 3-4 times per year Chairperson Ex-Officio Member <i>Green Paper</i> | All Councillors Officer in attendance |
| HUMAN RESOURCES Frequency: As and when required <i>Peach Paper</i> | Chair Vice – Chair Cllr A. Arnold Clerk in attendance |
| COMPLAINTS Frequency: As and when required <i>Yellow Paper</i> | Chair Vice – Chair Cllr A. Arnold Clerk in attendance |
| PLANNING Frequency: As and when required | All Councillors Clerk in attendance |
| | |
| OTHER BODIES | COUNCILLORS 2024/2025 |
| JOINT COMMITTEE OF PARISH COUNCILS | Chairperson Vice-Chairperson Clerk |
| HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS | Cllr S. King will apply |
| SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE COMMUNITY BOARD | S. King |
| CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU | None yet (Cllr S. King to ascertain if this is still viable) |
| TRDC LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD | Cllr J. St John |
| ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM | Cllr V. Coltman |

[9.25pm] Chair proposed to suspend STANDING ORDERS and extend the meeting for another 15 minutes. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**

2425/18a

DIRECT DEBITS

The following Direct Debits to be confirmed. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**

| Organisation | Description |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Three Rivers District Council | Garage Rental |
| Virtual Business Source | Payroll |
| Talk Talk | Telephone & Broadband |
| Land Registry | Land Enquiries |
| Amazon Prime | General Goods |
| Lex Auto Lease | Council Van Hire |



2425/18b BACS/DEBIT CARD PAYMENTS

The following regular BACS/ debit card payments to be confirmed. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**

| Organisation | Description | Organisation | Description |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Amazon | General Goods | Newsquest | Funday Advertising |
| Castle Water | Utility Bill | P Barham | Preferred Supplier - Heating |
| Complete Fire Protection | Fire Safety/Alarm | Peter Ridley Waste Systems | Food Caddy Liners |
| Croxley Alarms | Security Alarm/Monitoring | PKF Littlejohn | External Auditor |
| EDF Energy | Gas & Electric supply | Remner Print | Funday Raffle Printing |
| Direct Line | Van Insurance | Ricky Tyler Landscapes | Open Space Maintenance |
| Futurelink Network Systems | IT Support | Ricoh | Printing/Photocopying |
| Harrisons Packaging | Dog Waste Bags | South Oxhey Radio Taxis | Community Taxi Scheme |
| Herts County Council | School Crossing Patrol | Payplus/HMRC/LGPS | Payroll |
| Herts Full Stop | Stationery and Cleaning Supplies | TBS Hygiene | Dog Bin Waste Collection |
| J Stratford | Preferred Supplier - Maintenance | Tesco | Online Shopping Lunch Club |
| JB Electrical | Preferred Supplier - Electrician | | |
| Lamps & Tubes Illuminations Ltd | Christmas Lights | | |

2425/18c SUBSCRIPTIONS & CORPORATE MEMBERSHIPS

The following Memberships/ Subscriptions were put forward. Unanimously Agrees. **RESOLVED**

2425/19 FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

- a) March 2024 Payments and Receipts were noted and approved.
- b) April 2024 Payments and Receipts were not available to be reviewed
- c) Fire Risk Assessment report. Discuss findings. The report had not been sent. The clerk informed the Council that having a stair lift would introduce a fire risk but this could be offset by the purchase of a manual evac stair chair. Council confirmed the decision made in Aprils Meeting to install a stair lift for disability access to the upstairs (2324/141c).
The Clerk to purchase an evac chair
- d) TRDC – Licence & Planning training – Cllr J. Walker to attend Planning Training. The Clerk reminded the Council that HAPTC offer planning training at reasonable rates too. The Clerk and the Admin Officer to attend the licensing training as no cllrs stated a wish to attend.
- e) WRPC Maintenance at Greenfield Avenue, Carpenders Park. The Clerk explained that it has come to light that we are maintaining TRDC land erroneously. Council decided that once the damaged fencing has been re-installed or fixed to a satisfactory level, WRPC will review the best way forward with TRDC.



f) DATES AGREED FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

The following dates were agreed by Council

| | |
|--|--|
| Full Council | Finance & Admin, Planning, Events, HR, Complaints |
| May 8th | As and when required |
| June 6 th NB Thursday | |
| July 3rd | |
| <i>No August Meetings</i> | |
| September 4th | |
| October 2nd | |
| November 6th | |
| December 4th | |
| January 8th | |
| February 5th | |
| March 5 th NB Annual Parish Meeting beforehand | |
| April 3rd | |

g) Financial & Management Risk Assessment 2024-2025 – Proposal to accept. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**

h) Review Standing Orders 2024-2025 – Due to the lateness of the meeting: Proposal: To adjourn the Review Standing Orders till Junes meeting. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**

i) Review Financial Regulations 2024-2025 - Due to the lateness of the meeting and the issue of a new model template for Financial Regulations: Proposal: To adjourn the Review Financial Regulations till June’s meeting. Unanimously Agreed. **RESOLVED**

2425/20

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

The meeting finished at 9.40 pm. Next Full Council meeting will be held on Thursday 6th June 2024 @7.30pm