

# WETHERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held at Wethersfield Village Hall on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 commencing at 7.30pm.**

Present: Cllr B Vincent (Chairman)  
Cllr A Bowers (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr J Barker  
Cllr M Buchan  
Cllr K Daniel  
Cllr N Godley  
Cllr D Martin  
Cllr M Taylor  
Mrs A Lucas (Clerk to the Council)

In Attendance: Cllr P Schwier (Braintree District Council)  
22 Members of the Public

## **23/18-19      ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Barry Vincent was nominated to be Chairman of the Parish Council. **RESOLVED** that Cllr B Vincent be elected as Chairman of Wethersfield Parish Council for the ensuing municipal year.

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Barker for his hard work whilst he was Chairman of the Council.

## **24/18-19      CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Cllr Vincent made the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## **25/18-19      ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Alan Bowers was nominated to be Vice Chairman of the Parish Council. **RESOLVED** that Cllr Bowers be elected as Vice Chairman of Wethersfield Parish Council for the ensuing municipal year.

## **26/18-19      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

## **27/18-19      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr Godley and Cllr Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest in Wethersfield Village Hall (Minute ref: 42/18-19). Cllr Godley also received a dispensation to speak on matters relating Wethersfield Village Hall.

**28/18-19**      **MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2018**

- (i)      Cllr Bowers proposed the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018. They were seconded by Cllr Godley, agreed by the Council as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- (ii)     The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018 were noted.

**29/18-19**      **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

- A Dog Chase resident requested the Parish Council's continued support for the closure of one end of the road to traffic and expressed concern at the delay.
- A resident stated he felt the Parish Council showed neglect and lack of action in not applying to make the Post Office an Asset of Community Value earlier.
- The Chair of Wethersfield Village Hall CIO informed the Council she has been in communication with the Post Office and the possibility of opening some limited postal service in the village hall is being explored.

She also informed the meeting about Community Agents (formerly Village Agents) who support older people and their carers to find and implement independent living solutions.

Freshwell Health Centre will be dispensing medicines in the village hall on Wednesdays between 12.45pm and 1pm from early June. Support from volunteers will be needed.

On Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> October there will be an "Open Afternoon" to celebrate the refurbishment of the hall.

- A resident informed the Council a speed watch group was formed a number of years ago and she believes all the necessary equipment is still available for use.
- Concern about the loss of amenities in Wethersfield was expressed.
- A suggestion was made to send flyers to all residents in the parish to remind them about each Parish Council meeting.

**30/18-19**      **REPORT FROM THE CLERK**

The following update on matters arising, together with correspondence received was approved:

**Closing one end of Dog Chase to traffic**

There is nothing further to report on this at the current time.

**Section 106: Blackmore End Playing Field access improvements**

Various information requested by Braintree District Council was sent on 27<sup>th</sup> April and a response is awaited.

**Footpath from Nortofts Farm to Petches Bridge junction**

There is nothing further to report.

**Wethersfield Village Hall Club: Water Leak**

Wethersfield Village Hall Club has been asked to provide at least two quotations for consideration by the Parish Council. These are still awaited.

**Blocked Drain in Slip Road alongside The Green**

This drain has now been cleared by Essex Highways.

**Parking Problems in Syers Field, Blackmore End**

The Local Highways Panel Request was submitted to BDC on 17<sup>th</sup> April. This will now go through the formal validation process.

**Manhole Cover in West Drive**

The broken manhole cover has been assessed by Essex Highways as not requiring immediate action. The reference number is 2563337.

**Stile on Footpath 36**

The damaged stile has been reported to Essex Highways and can be tracked with reference number: 2566761.

**Blackmore End Village Hall: EPC Certificate for Village Hall House**

The clerk has been provided with a copy of the EPC certificate (rated E and dated 25 April 2014) for the rented property attached to the village hall.

**Asset of Community Value: Wethersfield Village Hall and Post Office**

A nomination form has been completed and was sent to BDC on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.

**Update on Planning Applications Listed in the Minutes dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018:**

1. **17/02253/FUL: Land South of Silver Street, Wethersfield**  
Erection of 9 dwellings with associated access and landscaping.  
**APPLICATION APPROVED**
2. **18/00337/FUL: Brook Farm, Braintree Road, Wethersfield, CM7 4BX**  
Demolition of existing barn and erection of new barn for the storage of agricultural machinery.  
**APPLICATION APPROVED**
3. **18/00392/FUL: Hyde Farm, Gosfield Road, Wethersfield CM7 4DR**  
Proposed barn conversion  
**PENDING CONSIDERATION**

**Correspondence Received:**

- (i) A letter from BDC dated 19<sup>th</sup> April has been received and circulated regarding consultation on planning applications and attendance at planning committee.
- (ii) The library will be stopping in Wethersfield at 11.20am every 3 weeks on a Saturday. Details are on the website.

**31/18-19      RESIGNATION OF A COUNCILLOR**

The Chairman accepted the resignation of Mrs Eve Newell with regret.

The Parish Council thanked Mrs Newell for her contribution over many years, and the Chairman agreed to write to her to convey our thanks for her service.

**32/18-19      REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

The District Councillor highlighted the following matters of local interest:

- There are 1800 properties in the district where planning permission has been granted but work has not yet been undertaken.
- Work on the bridge at Finchingfield is still being negotiated.
- The West of Braintree Garden Village is for 2500 houses.
- If residents have trouble contacting the police through the 101 number he suggested using the online service.
- The Councillor Grant Scheme is continuing.
- In the district 88% of adults have access to the internet, of these 53% are over 75 years of age. 93% of people have smartphones

**33/18-19      PLANNING**

- (i)      **18/00618/FUL: 13 Meadside, Wethersfield, CM7 4BN**  
Amendments to approved garage (application reference 17/00486/FUL) including the addition of first floor studio with north-facing dormer window and other associated alterations.  
**NO OBJECTION**
- (ii)      **18/00726/FUL: Sandhills House, Braintree Road, Wethersfield, CM7 4AG**  
Erection of a single storey rear extension.  
**NO OBJECTION**
- (iii)      **18/00742/FUL: Little Thatch Brick Kiln Green Blackmore End, CM7 4DT**  
Erection of replacement garage and improvements to existing access and bridge.  
**NO OBJECTION**
- (iv)      **18/00783/FUL: Mission Cottage, Blackmore End, Wethersfield, CM7 4DD**  
Erection of single storey rear extension to enlarge kitchen and provide utility. Repositioning of existing kitchen window in new extension. Repositioning existing side door in new extension. Infill existing site door opening.  
**NO OBJECTION**

- (v) **18/00762/FUL: Land Adjacent to 39 Saffron Gardens Wethersfield, Essex**  
Erection of 1no. 2 bedroom dwelling.  
**A LETTER OF OBJECTION WILL BE SENT**  
**Action: JB/clerk**

### 34/18-19 GRANT/DONATIONS

The motion to grant £200 to BEARS as agreed at the meeting held in April 2018 (minute reference 11/18-19) was proposed by Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr Godley and approved unanimously.

### 35/18-19 PERSONNEL

The motion to increase the clerk's salary point 20 from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 from £10.099 per hour to £10.301 per hour, an increase of £0.202 per hour, in accordance with the NALC salary scales was proposed by Cllr Vincent, seconded by Cllr Barker and approved unanimously.

### 36/18-19 FINANCE

- (i) It was unanimously agreed to defer the motion proposed by Cllr Daniel at the February meeting for a further month. (Minute reference: 17/204 (ii)).

- (ii) The following cheque payments were made:

Item No.	Cheque No.	Cheque Date	Payee	Description	Column1
1	102117	09/05/2018	EALC	Advanced Councillor Training Day 2 on 15th May 2018 (Delegate: Cllr Keith Daniel)	£85.00
2	102118	09/05/2018	BEARS (Basics Essex Accident Rescue Service)	Donation as agreed at meeting in April 2018	£200.00
3	102119	09/05/2018	Mr B Vincent	Plants for planters in Blackmore End (Parish Council to be reimbursed by Sec 106 funds)	£115.92
4	102120	09/05/2018	Mr E Butcher	Litter picking for April 2018 (including Beazley End)	£120.00
5	102121	09/05/2018	Mrs A Lucas	Clerk's salary (54 hrs @ £10.30 per hour)	£556.03
6	102121	09/05/2018	Mrs A Lucas	Expenses 4 Colour Ink Multipack	£75.03
7	102122	09/05/2018	BHIB Insurance	Insurance for Parish Council and Wethersfield Village Hall	£1,804.76
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>£2,956.74</b>

Payment of the invoices was proposed by Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr Martin and approved unanimously.

- (iii) The financial year end 2017/18 carried forward figure of £36,428.10 was approved.
- (iv) Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for 2017/18 was approved.
- (v) Section 2 of the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for 2017/18 was approved.

- (vi) The motion to purchase a gift, up to the value of £50, for the internal auditor who has worked on the Parish Council's Annual Return free of charge was proposed by Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr Godley and approved unanimously.

**37/18-19      ADOPTION OF POLICY FOR EMERGENCY EXPENDITURE**

The motion to adopt the following policy was proposed by Cllr Vincent: *“If the clerk or a councillor is made aware of an urgent matter which is the responsibility of the council, and which requires action before the next scheduled meeting, a minimum of **four** councillors must be consulted and agree before such expenditure can be authorised. Consultation between the four councillors may be in the form of a face to face discussion, telephone conversation or exchange of emails but in any event confirmation must be given to the clerk by the chairman before payment can be made”*. This motion was seconded by Cllr Taylor and approved unanimously.

**38/18-19      RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

This vacancy will be re-advertised and circulated to adjoining parishes.  
**Action: clerk**

**39/18-19      SEC 106 – BLACKMORE END PLAYING FIELD ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS**

It was unanimously agreed for Section 106 funds to be paid directly by Braintree District Council to Blackmore End Playing Field rather than via the Parish Council.

**40/18-19      CLOSURE OF THE POST OFFICE**

Cllr Bowers stated that the imminent closure of the post office was a grievous loss to Wethersfield and there was considerable strength of feeling in the community.

Cllr Barker informed the meeting that a late offer to run the store was made the previous evening and was declined by the present owners

**41/18-19      MOVING THE DEFIBRILLATOR**

The motion to relocate the defibrillator from the post office to outside the village hall was proposed by Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr Buchan and approved unanimously.

Cllr Barker agreed to check on any cost implications.  
**Action: JB**

**42/18-19**      **WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

- (i)      Emergency expenditure to repair the leak in the kitchen was unanimously agreed in line with the emergency expenditure policy (minute reference: 37/18-19).
  
- (iii)     Alternative arrangements for scooter parking have been made.
  
- (iii)     It was agreed to defer this until the next meeting.

**43/18-19**      **WETHERSFIELD COMMUNITY WEBSITE**

- (i)      The flyer is going to be slightly redesigned and will be circulated for approval prior to a motion at the next meeting.  
**Action: JB**
  
- (ii)     A complete handover to the new webmaster should be taking place on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**44/18-19**      **DATA PROTECTION POLICY**

- (i)      A request was made for a volunteer to undertake an audit of the clerk and councillors to comply with GDPR.
  
- (ii)     EALC has confirmed that all Parish Council's are now exempt from employing a Data Protection Officer

**45/18-19**      **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND STANDING ORDERS**

Cllr Vincent confirmed the working party has had a further meeting to update the Standing Orders. They will be referred to EALC for advice on their suitability and circulated to councillors when complete to seek adoption.

**46/18-19**      **VEHICLES SPEEDING THROUGH WETHERSFIELD**

- (i)      Cllrs Bowers and Vincent agreed to move the speed sign from Blackmore End to Wethersfield.  
**Action: AB and BV**
  
- (ii)     Cllr Godley agreed to find out more about the dormant speed group which was mentioned in the public participation session and report back at the next meeting.  
**Action: NG**

**47/18-19**      **ITEMS FROM COUNCILLORS TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA**

*Councillors are asked to inform the clerk of any items by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018.*

**NEXT MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL:** The next meeting of Wethersfield Parish Council will be held at Blackmore End Village Hall on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018 commencing at 7.30pm.

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Signed: .....  
Chairman

Date: .....