



# Highwood Parish Council

66 Victoria Road, Writtle, Chelmsford CM1 3PA

3 January 2019

**To: MEMBERS OF HIGHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Highwood Parish Council to be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 9 January 2019 in the Village Hall, Loves Green, Highwood, to transact the business shown in the agenda.

The press and public are welcome to be present.

Louise R Fuller  
Clerk

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## A G E N D A

**Please note that the meeting will be suspended at 8p.m. for a presentation from Matt Hine, Operational Tasking Supervisor, Casualty Reduction Section, Essex Police. He has been asked to attend to explain how data from Speedwatch is processed, to talk about Trucam, and about the back office pressures.**

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence. 🖐️

Cllr Cameron has sent his apologies for this meeting. As he was not in attendance at the November meeting, he will not have attended a meeting for six months (12 September 2018 to 12 March 2019). Therefore he **REQUESTS** the council to grant leave of absence; this can last until the elections in May if required.

### 2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 🖐️

To **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on 14 November 2018 as a correct record.

### 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**3.1** Councillors to **DECLARE** any disclosable or other pecuniary interest or other interest in any items on the agenda, in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Pecuniary or other interests should be declared at this time, or at any point in the meeting where they become apparent.

Councillors must inform the Monitoring Officer of Chelmsford City Council, via the Clerk, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change in their pecuniary or other interests.

**3.2 DISPENSATIONS** 🖐️

To **CONSIDER** any requests for dispensation from the provisions of S31(4) of the Localism Act 2011.

S31(4) states that a member may not participate in any discussion or vote upon a matter, at the meeting, in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Requests for dispensation must be made in writing to the Clerk.

**4 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public.

In accordance with the agreed procedure public questions will be taken and shall be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes or such other period as may be determined by the Chairman of the meeting.

**5 REPORTS**

To **RECEIVE** brief reports on the following matters.

Chelmsford City Council	City Cllr N Chambers
Essex County Council	Cty Cllr J Aldridge
Play park, Edney Common	Cllr D Cameron
Play area, rear of VH	Cllr P Latham
Village Hall	Cllr S Maclean
Public Rights of Way	No report received as yet.

**6 REPORT OF THE CLERK**

To **RECEIVE** the report of the clerk.

**1 Village Hall hire for council meetings**

The village hall management committee considered the council's request to return to the charging band for local organisations and it was agreed. A credit note has been issued. The amount for 2019 will be £152.00; an increase from £132.00 as all hire fees have been increased.

**2 Flagpole**

The flagpole and flag have been ordered and will be delivered to Cllr Maclean.

**3 Operation London Bridge**

The portrait of the Queen has been obtained; also a mount and frame (stand-up or hanging) and a piece of black ribbon. The village hall has given permission for the portrait and a book of condolence to be placed in the foyer of the village hall when the need arises.

**4 Play in the Park**

Further to the discussion at the last meeting, the school has declined to participate.

**5 Playdale invoice**

Following concerns about the suitability of the exercise bike which was installed, although the council still had reservations about the equipment, Playdale offered a reduction of the invoice as a gesture of goodwill and the invoice was paid.

**6 Road signs, Blackmore/Ingatestone Road junction**

Following a report from a member of the public, a request was made for these road signs to be cleaned and the vegetation cut back. The work was carried out very quickly by the Highways Rangers.

**7 Table tennis table**

At the last meeting it was agreed that a concrete table would be purchased. Subsequent research has identified other suitable options e.g. resin. The council is asked to agree that the best option may be purchased; also, to consider whether a base such as concrete needs to be laid for the table.

## 8 Fencing round play area

Progress has been slow as the contractor took a long time to submit the necessary information for the proposed fencing. I hope it may be possible to have an update in time for the meeting. To save having to wait till the following meeting to make a decision on the fencing and car park surfacing, I **RECOMMEND** that a decision on ordering the fencing and surfacing is delegated to the clerk in consultation with councillors.

## 7 ST PAUL'S CHURCH – GRANT APPLICATION

A grant application has been received from St Paul's Church. The treasurer says the PCC will be grateful for any assistance the council is able to make.

### 7.1 MAGAZINE

In March 2017 the council agreed to pay a grant up to a maximum of £1,220 for the costs of the magazine.

The grant application details the printing cost of each issue and the editorial costs. The total for 2018 was £1,217.89.

The council is asked to **CONSIDER** the grant application for the magazine.

### 7.2 CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

In March 2017 the council set a cap of £600 on the grant for churchyard maintenance.

The grant application informs the council that the total amount spent on the churchyard was £700.00 in 2018.

There has been recent correspondence from bodies including NALC (National Association of Local Councils) about the legality of parish councils supporting churchyard maintenance. The Local Government Act 1894 specifically prohibits councils from paying towards "property relating to the affairs of the church". However the Local Government Act 1972 gives parish councils the power to contribute to another person's expenses in providing a cemetery in which residents in the council's area may be buried. For many years parish councils have taken the view that this permits them to pay towards churchyard maintenance but NALC does not agree. Thus there is always the possibility that someone could challenge the council's action in making a grant for churchyard maintenance. A conclusive answer is only possible if someone takes the matter to court for definition or the government passes specific legislation to clarify the matter. The former course would be expensive and is most unlikely but of course can not be ruled out. The government has declined to take the latter course as it considers that the later legislation overrules the 1894 Act. NALC says "whilst there is no consensus on this issue, a council that considers making a payment in these circumstances needs to consider whether it is prudent to take a course of action that it cannot be certain is legally valid". The council is asked to **NOTE** this advice, consider the risk and **CONFIRM** it is happy to continue making a grant to the church for grounds maintenance.

The council is asked to **CONSIDER** the grant application for the churchyard maintenance.

## 8 AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

Two amendments to Standing Orders are proposed. As per SO81, this proposal, when proposed and seconded, shall stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the council.

**8.1** SO1, which refers to the night of council meetings: replace "Tuesday" with "Wednesday"

**8.2** SO14: delete whole standing order as it restricts the total tenure of office for

the Chairman and Vice Chairman to three years. This has not been implemented, certainly for the past eight years at least, and it would not be enforceable as the legislation says that the Chairman must be elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council and this can not be overridden. Whoever is elected as Chairman at the Annual Meeting holds that office regardless of any previous service.

**9 FINANCE**

**9.1 Accounts for payment** 

To **APPROVE** the accounts for payment (list will be available at the meeting).


**9.2** To **NOTE** the account balances as at 31 December 2018.

**9.3 Cheque Signatories**

Current cheque signatories are councillors Cameron, Latham, Sargent and Horsnell. As the bank account requires two signatures or online authorisations, four signatories is an ideal number to allow flexibility if a councillor is indisposed or unable to access the internet when payments need to be made, but still keeping the number of signatories small enough to reduce the risk of fraud. However the system does rely on the signatories having set themselves up for online banking and having their online login details to hand. There have been recent difficulties when payments were not made in a timely manner and suppliers, the clerk and HMRC were kept waiting for money that was well overdue.

**Recommended:** as Cllr Horsnell has not registered himself for online banking, and is short of time to do this, he should be replaced as a signatory by another councillor who is able to authorise online payments more easily.

**9.4 Earmarked reserves**

 As discussed at the last meeting, see attached report.

**10 HIGHWAY MATTERS REPORTED BY COUNCILLORS AND CLERK**

1 Speeding Traffic (standing item)

**11 COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE** 

To **RECEIVE** such communications and correspondence as the Clerk may place before the Council.

None.

**12 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT**

To **RECEIVE** notice of the following documents received by or deposited with the Clerk.

None.

**13 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a) To **NOTE** the parish council's comments made on planning applications between meetings.

**App. no.** 18/01978/FUL  
18/01979/LBC

**Location** The Green Man, Edney Common

**Proposal** Demolition of existing timber building and construction of single storey rear extension

**Comment** No objection

**App. no.** 18/01759/OUT  
**Location** Land south of Hands Farm, Radley Green Road  
**Proposal** Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for two dwellings

**Comment** The council objects to this application as the site is outside the village envelope; the proposal would be infilling on green belt land.

**App. no.** 18/01990/FUL  
**Location** Field opposite Barrow Farm, Metsons Lane  
**Proposal** Retrospective application for the siting of mobile home within the Radical Bikes site, for occupation by employees


**Comment** The council objects to this application as it is inappropriate development in the green belt and would set a precedent. There is no change in the site which would affect the reasons given for refusal by CCC of the previous application. Other businesses operate without the need for on-site 24-hour security and there must be other methods to achieve these ends.

**App. no.** 18/05223/TPO  
**Location** 12 Woodland Way  
**Proposal** (W1) - Hazel/ Hawthorn - Within site of 12 Woodland Way - Fell - Reason: In poor condition, low value to area and being a hazard to small children and pets. All coppices to be removed and shallow stump grinding carried out, native mix hedge would be installed within the woodland.

**Comment** The council objects to this application. When the planning application for Woodland Way (known then as The Nest) was submitted, there was considerable local concern about the loss of the woodland. It was a condition of the approval that the woodland be retained and there is no reason why this should now be varied. If in poor condition, the trees/shrubs can be rejuvenated by hard pruning/coppicing. The owners bought the property knowingly with woodland present; it seems unlikely that it poses a threat to small children and pets and this appears to have been put up as a spurious reason for removal of inconvenient vegetation. The suggestion of planting hedging within the woodland has been made as a sop to objections but is meaningless as there will already be woody plants growing there; hedges go along the outside of the wood.  
Maybe the clue is in the name "Woodland Way" which would cease to have much meaning if all the properties grubbed out the woodland.

**App. no.** 18/01946/FUL  
**Location** Outbuilding north east of Highwood Cottage, Ingatestone Road  
**Proposal** Conversion of stables to dwelling house  
**Comment** TBC

- b) To **CONSIDER** the following planning applications   
None.

c) To **CONSIDER** any other planning applications received since the agenda was prepared. 

d) **DECISIONS BY CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL**

To **NOTE** the following planning decisions by Chelmsford City Council.

**GRANTED**

**App. no.** 18/01709/FUL  
**Location** The Willows, Cock Lane  
**Proposal** Replacement dwelling

**App. no.** 18/01723/FUL  
**Location** The Croft, Cock Lane  
**Proposal** Single storey rear additions, one flat roof with rooflight, one pitched roof to match existing dwelling

**REFUSED**

**App. no.** 18/01653/FUL  
**Location** 5 Highwood Cottages, Ingatestone Road  
**Proposal** Proposed ground floor rear extension

e) **PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE**

i To **NOTE** any planning correspondence received and respond to consultations as appropriate.

None.

14 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS – for information only**

To **NOTE** any matter of an urgent nature which a Member or the Clerk may wish to draw to the attention of the Council, and/or request to be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

Note: no decisions may be taken during this item as the required statutory notice of the business will not have been given.

15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

7.30 p.m. Wednesday 13 March 2019.

16 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC** 

To **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public from the following item under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as it refers to staffing matters.

17 **RECRUITMENT OF NEW PARISH CLERK** 



See attached report.

18 **PAY AWARD FROM 1 APRIL 2019**



See attached report.