

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 25th MARCH 2008 AT
THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN
WHICH COMMENCED AT 7.45PM**

PRESENT: Councillor J Roper (Chairman) and Cllrs M Benson, J Blackburn, S Butler, I Colpitts, C. Hukin, H Hughes, L McLusky, P Neville, L Page and I Skidmore.

IN ATTENDANCE: A Pack (Acting Clerk to the Council)

APOLOGIES: All Councillors were present
R Findlay absent due to illness

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: There were two members of the public present at the meeting.

The Council wished to record their best wishes to Rebecca Findlay for a speedy recovery.

2008/28 OPENING OF MEETING:
The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting.

2008/29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Councillor P Neville declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item P468-4713 on the payments schedule.

2008/30 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2008.

RESOLVED: The Minutes were a true and accurate record. The Minutes were then duly signed by the Chairman.

2008/31 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2008.

Minute no. 2008/13 The Chairman reported that Grant Shapps MP had agreed to attend a meeting with members of the Parish Council however he was only available for such a meeting on a Friday afternoon. Following discussion it was agreed the meeting should commence at approximately 4pm. All Councillors were requested to advise the Parish Office dates during the next 4-6 weeks, they would be available to attend a meeting on a Friday afternoon.

Minute no. 2008/22 Following discussion it was agreed that a guest speaker would be invited to attend this years Annual Parish Assembly. All Councillors were requested to advise the Parish Office in the next week of suitable speakers. It was agreed however that it would be appropriate, with the changes taking place in the Planning system, to consider inviting Mr. Chris Conway, Chief Planning and Environmental Health Officer of Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council to address the meeting.

Minute no, 2008/25 The Chairman advised that following several changes to Standing Orders over the last few months, all Councillors will receive a fully updated copy of Standing Orders in the near future.

2008/32 UPDATE – WELWYN CIVIC CENTRE RENT REVIEW

Following negotiations with Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council the following annual rental of the Welwyn Civic Centre has been agreed:

Welwyn Parish Council will pay the following sums

An annual rental of £ 30,000 from 2008 – 2014

Rental arrears of £ 15,000 per annum for the years 2004 – 2008 = £ 60,000 to be repaid at a rate of £ 10, 000 per annum from 2008 – 2014

Welwyn Parish Council will therefore pay rental of £ 40,000 per annum from 2008 – 2014.

It was noted however that the whole £ 40,000 would be classed as income to the Borough under Special Expenses and so would not result in an increased charge to Council Tax payers.

It was noted that for the first time Welwyn Parish Council showed a negative figure for Special Expenses.

The Chairman advised that a statement had been issued to the Welwyn Times advising that the Parish Council consider this an amicable settlement.

2008/33 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY – THURSDAY 22ND MAY 2008

Following discussion it was agreed that at this years Annual Parish Assembly only one speaker would be invited to address the meeting as detailed above. All other organisations would be invited to man a display stand, organisations to be allocated space on a “first come, first served” basis and priority given to those who did not have a stand at last years Annual Parish Assembly. **All Councillors were invited to formally advise the Parish Office of suggested organisations as soon as possible.**

The meeting would be publicised on the Council’s notice-boards, by flyers and in the press.

2008/34 CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER ACT – 6TH April 2008

A report to be submitted to the next Full Council meeting for consideration.

2008/35 REPLACEMENT OF EQUIPMENT – MOWERS

The Council were advised that each year all of the Council’s groundwork equipment is serviced; the last piece of equipment to be serviced this year was the gang mover. Unfortunately to make the gang mover operational this year it will cost approximately £ 3,000. The gang mower is 40 years old and is worth approximately £ 500. The Council were advised it would be sensible to replace this piece of equipment with a re-conditioned machine of a younger age.

A memo was distributed to all Councillors detailing four suitable machines ranging in price from £ 7,750 to £ 4,300, attached as **APPENDIX 1**

The Head Groundsman, supported by the Chairman of the Finance Committee recommend the Council purchase the Advanced Turf Machinery Toro 3100D at a cost of £ 4,300 less part exchange for existing gang mower of £ 550. Total cost to replace the gang mover = £ 3,750

RESOLVED: The Council to purchase the Advanced Turf Machinery Toro 3100D at a cost of £ 4,300 less part exchange for existing gang mower of £ 550. Total cost to replace the gang mover = £ 3,750

Carried Unanimously

The Council hold two bank accounts from which the above purchase could be funded.

1. The Capital Reserve Fund
2. The Business Reserve Fund

The Business Reserve Fund is used to cover the maintenance of all the Council’s equipment and this account would have been used to cover the cost of servicing the gang mower. The Acting Clerk was asked which account she considered should be

used to fund this new purchase. The Acting Clerk advised it would seem prudent to use the Capital Reserve Fund for this new acquisition.

RESOLVED: That the cost of purchasing the Advanced Turf Machinery Toro 3100D at a total cost of £ 3,750 be funded from the Capital Reserve Account.

**Vote: 10 for
1 against
The motion was carried.**

2008/36 MARCH REPORTS OF COMMITTEES & WORKING PARTIES.

Planning Committee. Cllr Hukin, Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on 4th March 2008 and answered questions. Councillor Benson advised she had presented her apologies for this meeting however they were not recorded. This to be corrected at the next meeting.

Finance Committee. Cllr Skidmore, Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on 11th March 2008 and answered questions. Councillor Colpitts advised he was not a member of this Committee however his apologies had been recorded. This to be corrected at the next meeting.

Councillor P Neville declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item P468-4713 on the payments schedule.

The Chairman asked that Council approve expenditure for the month of February 2008 totalling **£ 17,722.48**

RESOLVED: The Council accepted the expenditure of £ 17,722.48

Leisure Committee. Cllr Blackburn, Chairman of the Committee, presented reports of meetings held on 18th March 2008 and answered questions.

2008/37 REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairman advised that the Chief Planning and Environmental Health Officer, Mr. Chris Conway and the Head of Development Control, Ms Tracey Harvey both of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council had attended the **WHALC** meeting held on 25th February 2008.

The Chairman advised that Councillor Nick Clark, the Local Council representative on the Local Strategic Partnership, had resigned this position. Any Councillor wishing to be considered for this very important role should advise the Parish Office in the next few days.

The Town Clerk of Hatfield Town Council, Mr. Peter Clark is to organise a meeting to brief all Councillors who are interested in undertaking this role to ensure they understand what would be expected of them. A representative would then be selected.

EXEMPT BUSINESS.

Under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item on the Agenda, the Chairman at this point excluded the public and accredited representatives of newspapers on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

2008/38 DIGSWELL PLAYING FIELDS

This item was deferred to the next meeting

2008/39 FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMENDATION IN RELATION TO SALARIES

A Report was presented to the Council details of which appear in a confidential minute.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained in the above report be agreed.

Unanimously agreed.

2008/40 CLOSURE OF MEETING.

The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Signed:.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

Dated: 22nd April 2008

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2008/39 FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION IN RELATION TO SALARIES

PROPOSED SALARY INCREASE FOR THE FULL TIME CIVIC CENTRE CARETAKER.

A report prepared by the Parish Clerk was table and is attached as

APPENDIX 2

Concern was expressed that this expenditure had not been included in the budget for the year 2008/09. The Chairman advised that the Parish Clerk had prepared a Staff Report in October to be included in the budgeting process of the Parish Council, which included a review of salaries to include the above item. Due to pressure of other issues the Council had not considered this report during the budgeting process. It was noted however that cost of living increases had been included in the budget.

The Council were being asked to approve an increase in Spinal Column Point (SCP) from SCP 11 to SPC 12 effective from April 2007 to reflect the additional duties the Civic Centre Caretaker now performs.

It was noted that the Council's procedures in future should include the consideration of a Staff Report from the Parish Clerk during the budgeting process.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained in the above report be agreed.

Unanimously agreed.

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The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Signed:.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

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