

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2010 AT
THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN
WHICH COMMENCED AT 7.45PM**

PRESENT: Councillor J Blackburn (Chairman) and Councillors M Benson, A Blackett, S Butler, I Colpitts, C Hukin, R McKay, P Neville and I Skidmore

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor H Ober

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: One member of the public was present.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting.

2010/013 DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Councillor Colpitts declared an interest in item 2010/018 as he is a member of the Sports and Social Club.

2010/014 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22nd FEBRUARY 2010.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 22nd February 2010 be approved and signed.

Unanimously agreed.

2010/015 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22nd FEBRUARY 2010.

There were no matters arising.

2010/016 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Planning and Licensing Committee. Councillor C Hukin Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meetings held on the 2ND February 2010 and answered questions. **Application number N6/2689/873B** Reinstatement of the road sign to Danesbury Park Road at its junction with Codicote Road. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) advised on the 12th February 2010 that they are to install a double sided street sign as requested.

Leisure Facilities and Opens Spaces Committee. Councillor L McLusky, Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on the 8th February 2010 and answered questions

2010/031 Proposed Youth Club. A Youth Sub-Committee meeting is to be held on the 4th March 2010 in the Parish Centre. Councillor McLusky reported that Oaklands School are looking into the possibility of accommodating the Connexions Mobile Youth Bus on their premises.

Finance Committee. Councillor I Skidmore, Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on the 15th February 2010 and answered questions.

2010/004 Internal Audit. Councillor Skidmore advised the second interim internal audit is taking place on the 23rd February 2010, and the year end internal audit is to be completed on Tuesday 25th May 2010. This follows the closure of the 2009.2010 accounts by RBS Solutions which is to take place on the 19th May 2010. The next Finance Committee meeting has therefore been changed from Monday the 17th May to Monday 21st June 2010, to enable the Finance Committee to agree the Accounts and supporting documentation prior to the Full Council Meeting, which is scheduled to take place on the 28th June 2010.

2010/017 SPECIAL EXPENSES 2010/2011

Concern was expressed that for Digswell Playing Fields, a departmental overhead of £ 4,570 had been charged for the 2010/2011 year. This represents a 71% increase in expenditure. As this had not been charged in previous years, and no employees of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) are involved in the delivery of this service, the Acting Clerk to request clarification on this charge. The Handside site in Welwyn Garden City had incurred no special expense charge for 2010/2011 however the previous year £ 22,500 had been charged to this cost centre.

Post Meeting Note: Response from WHBC attached as **APPENDIX 1**

2010/018 REVIEW OF RENTS RECEIVED FROM TENANTS OF COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTY

Spindlebury Cottage £ 825 per month= £9,900per annum

Two local Estate Agents were requested to value the rental for the property per annum, bearing in mind its position on the playing fields. Reports were circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 1. It was noted that Councillor Ober was not in attendance.

In view of the investment by the tenant in the maintenance of the property, it was agreed that the lowest valuation would be used to set the rent for the three year period 1st April 2010-31st March 2013

It was proposed by Councillor McKay, seconded by Councillor Colpitts and

RESOLVED “that the annual rent of Spindlebury Cottage be increased to £ 11,100 per annum for the period 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2013.

Unanimously agreed.

Following discussion it was agreed the property would be reviewed on an annual basis however the rent would only be reviewed on a three year cycle.

Sports and Social Club Lease

The Sports and Social Club Lease is due for renewal March 2010. The Sports and Social Club have agreed that Brown and Lee Chartered Surveyors undertake a professional valuation. Report awaited.

2010/019 GRANT AID POLICY

A draft Grant Aid Policy produced by Councillor Neville was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 2. Councillor Neville advised he had produced the Policy as part of his successful application for the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA).

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Neville, seconded by Councillor Blackburn and

RESOLVED “that the Grant Aid Policy be adopted”.

Unanimously agreed

2010/020 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The National Association of Local Councils has forwarded a revised Model Standing Orders. The Chairman and the Acting Clerk to review the Model Standing Orders and to report any suggested amendments to the next meeting.
2. To consider adopting a Terms of Reference to control the release of articles into the media from the Council. A suggested Terms of Reference was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 3. A revision to the Term of Reference was tabled and is attached as **APPENDIX 2**

Following discussion it was agreed that it was in everyone’s interest to have a policy in place as this would protect the Council in their dealings with the media. An amendment was agreed to the tabled Terms of Reference as follows: 3(a) delete comer after Clerk and add ‘and’.

It was proposed by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Benson and

RESOLVED “that the amended Guidance on Media Releases, Terms of Reference be Adopted”.

Unanimously agreed

EXEMPT BUSINESS

Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following items 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 the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the items.

2010/021 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING (EXEMPT BUSINESS) HELD ON THE 25th JANUARY 2010.

RESOLVED” that the Minutes of the Council Meeting (Exempt Business) held on the 25TH January 2010 be approved and signed”.

2010/022 APPEALS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED “that the amended wording of the COT3 be agreed”.

2010/023 The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

Dated 29th March 2010