

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011 AT  
THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN  
WHICH COMMENCED AT 7.45PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Neville (Chairman) and Councillors M Benson, M Castle, C Hukin, J Khan, B McKay, L McLusky, B Morris and I Skidmore.

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

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors J Blackburn and A Woolgar.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** No members of the public were in attendance

**OPENING OF THE MEETING**

The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting.

**2011/117 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor McKay declared an interest in item 2011/121 as he is currently in dispute with CP Plus and is also a resident with no off street parking.

**2011/118 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY AND THE 22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2011**

**RESOLVED** "that the minutes of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> July and the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2011 be approved and signed".

**Unanimously agreed.**

**2011/119 MATTERS OF REPORT ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS  
Proposed Management of Burnham Green**

No further progress to report.

**The future Management of the Civic Centre beyond 2014**

A meeting is being held with the head of Corporate Property, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011 to discuss terms of a new lease.

**Welwyn Parish Plan Action Group's request for a Housing Needs Survey of the Civil parish of Welwyn.**

Councillor Skidmore advised WHBC have advised that the allocation of affordable housing proposed in the Frythe development is not only for the residents of Welwyn, the housing is available to anyone in the Borough who would qualify for affordable housing. The Parish Plan Action Group cannot afford to fund a Housing Needs Survey therefore if the proposed WHBC Local Development Framework identifies a site in Welwyn suitable for affordable housing in the future, a Housing Association could be requested to undertake such a survey.

**Directory of Local Businesses.**

Councillor Benson reported a Directory of Local Businesses had been produced by the Council in 2005 and would forward a copy to the Working Party. Councillor Castle advised he has compiled a list of all businesses in the village and confirmed the Working Party are progressing this project.

2011/120

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**Planning and Licensing:** Councillor Hukin, Chairman of the Committee presented a report of the meetings held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August, and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and answered questions.

**Leisure Facilities and Open Spaces:** Councillor McLusky, Chairman of the Committee presented a report of the meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2011 and answered questions.

**Finance:** Councillor Skidmore, Chairman of the Committee presented a report of the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and answered questions.

**Investment Strategy**

To ensure sufficient funds are available for agreed projects this financial year it is proposed that £ 100,000.00 be invested for a one year period. Details were circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 1

To be proposed by the Chairman of Finance Councillor Skidmore

“that the Council approve the investment of £ 100,000.00 in a 1 year Fixed Rate Business Bond with Santander Business Banking”.

Following discussion it was proposed by the Chairman and

**RESOLVED**” that this item be deferred to the next Full Council meeting”.

**Vote: 6 for**

**3 against**

**The motion was carried.**

2011/121

**CAR PARKING RESTRICTIONS PROPOSED BY WHBC TO INCLUDE CHARGING FOR THE USE OF HIGH STREET AND LOCKLEYS DRIVE CAR PARKS.**

Working Party meetings were held on 12 and 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011. The Agenda for the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> September and Notes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011 are attached as

**APPENDIX 1**

The Council’s response to the formal consultation was tabled and is attached as

**APPENDIX 2**

The Chairman Councillor Neville congratulated the Working Party on working so effectively as a team and for generating public interest and alarm at the proposed introduction of charging for parking in Welwyn car parks, and for bringing this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

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

**RESOLVED** “that the Council ratify the letter sent to WHBC detailed in Appendix 2 of the Agenda”.

**Unanimously agreed.**

Councillor Neville had as an emergency measure invoked Standing Order B3 detailed in the email which was tabled and is attached as

**APPENDIX 3**

It was proposed by Councillor Skidmore, seconded Councillor McLusky and

**RESOLVED** “that the Council endorse the invoking of Standing Order B3 which enabled the Clerk to act at her discretion, as advised by any Councillor member of

the Working Party, to do all such lawful things, including incurring reasonable expenditure, as may appear expedient to oppose the car park charging proposals”.

### **Unanimously agreed**

Councillor McKay advised the Working Party had raised the profile of the Parish Council in the village and demonstrated that the Council can act quickly and effectively in the interests of the village. The Working Party have a meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and would like to request the WHBC Cabinet meeting being held on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011 be held in Welwyn village as it is at this meeting the decision whether to charge for parking in village car parks will be taken. Following discussion it was agreed the meeting should be held in St. Mary’s School hall if this is available. Holding the meeting in Welwyn would make it more convenient for interested residents to attend. If St Mary’s School is unavailable, the Clerk to try to reorganise an existing booking in the Civic Centre, to a different day, to enable the meeting to be held in the main hall.

Councillor McKay reported the Working Party had considered holding a Public Meeting but due to short time scales, dismissed this idea. Black ribbons were tied up around the village to emphasise the death of the village and leaflets were distributed to the whole of Welwyn. Councillor McKay thanked Councillor Castle for developing a web site, [www.saveourvillage.org.uk](http://www.saveourvillage.org.uk), which enabled people to log on, pick a street, pick up leaflets and distribute to the selected location. 5,000 leaflets were printed and at least 4,500 of these were distributed. Copy of the leaflet attached as

#### **APPENDIX 4**

Four banners were commissioned which read **‘WELWYN SAYS NO TO PARKING CHARGES’**, these have been erected around the village centre.

The Council’s solicitors had researched whether there was a condition imposed when the High Street car park was gifted to the then Welwyn Rural District Council, stipulating that the car park had to remain free of charge. No such condition has been found. A copy of the solicitors response was tabled and is attached as

#### **APPENDIX 5**

The services of a retired District Judge had given confidence that WHBC have broken a few rules regarding the informal consultation process and this will be followed up by the Working Party. It is the Working Parties understanding that WHBC are not allowed to use revenue from charging for parking for general purposes, this point to be investigated. The Working Party has given radio interviews and an article is in the Welwyn and Hatfield Times, a petition was delivered to the Mayor and the Chief Executive of WHBC on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011. The Working Party to investigate also whether other Councils are experiencing the same problems and what they can do to obtain national coverage of this matter. Councillor Castle advised the [www.saveourvillage.org.uk](http://www.saveourvillage.org.uk) web site has proved a successful way to inform and obtain peoples comments, the web site has had 2420 hits including 83 today (26<sup>th</sup> September 2011). The web site will be used during the next six weeks as a conduit informing and gathering information. Councillor Woolgar visited every business premises in the High Street and all are now displaying posters

The next Working Party meeting is scheduled to take place on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

2011/122

**REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Two vacancies require a Council representative as follows:

- Anglo French Twinning Association
- Oaklands Primary School Governor

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

**RESOLVED** “that Councillor Woolgar be nominated to fill the vacancy on the Anglo French Twinning Association with Councillor Morris as an alternate if required”.

**Unanimously agreed.**

2011/123

**HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS**

Minutes of a meeting with Hertfordshire Highways held on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2011 were circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 3

Herts Highways to be requested to advise who manages trees in Adele Avenue, Digswell and in Welwyn Generally.

2011/124

**BDO LLP EXTERNAL AUDITOR**

The external audit was completed on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011 and a notice advising the public was posted on the Council’s notice boards for 14 days commencing on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2011

BDO LLP’s report requesting additional information was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 4.

Additional information was provided and a copy was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 5.

BDO have now completed the Audit and the Annual Return, the issues arising report and the notice of completion of Audit was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 6.

The external auditor BDO had requested a revised asset register to show the actual cost of each item and, if known, the date purchased. In future years the only changes to the asset register would be if an item was disposed of or a new item added. This change required the asset register to be restated for the 2009/2010 year and the 2010/2011 year.

It was proposed by the Chairman Councillor Skidmore, seconded by Councillor McKay and

**RESOLVED** “that

- a) the Annual Return detailed in Appendix 6 be approved and accepted by the Council
- b) the issues arising report be approved and accepted by the Council
- c) It was noted that an action plan was not required”.

**Unanimously agreed.**

2011/125

**COMMUNITY TOILET SCHEME**

Councillor McKay reported that the participating commercial property was to sign the Community Toilet Scheme agreement during in the week. Hertfordshire

Highways however had advised it may take months to obtain agreement for signage to be displayed on the highway, it was agreed therefore to install the signs on privately owned land directing people to the first community toilet, to enable the scheme to be progressed. One plaque is also to be installed in the toilets of the commercial premises.

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

**RESOLVED** "that six signs for installation on private land and one sign for installation on the commercial premises be purchased and installed at a cost of £ 506".

**Unanimously agreed**

**2011/126**

**STANDING ORDERS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

The Chairman Councillor Neville and the Clerk reviewed the Council's Standing Orders, Policies and Procedures Manual, a copy was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 7.

Deletions are marked in RED, additions are marked in GREEN

This item to be deferred to the next Full Council meeting. Councillors to bring paperwork detailed in Appendix 7 to this meeting.

**2011/127**

**ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD**

A request was received from a church member to trim back the tree near the front porch of the church as it was obscuring the clock from all but a very limited angle. A member of the Parochial Church Council agreed that this work was required. As the tree is in a conservation area, permission to undertake this work was sought from WHBC. WHBC advised the tree now has a TPO and therefore a further application to undertake this work was required. An application has been submitted and a response is awaited. This item to be discussed at the next Full Council meeting.

**2011/128**

**PARISH CENTRE/WELWYN SCOUTS DRAINAGE WORK**

The Council have been advised that to complete the drainage work already undertaken, the last section of the drain situated behind the buildings adjacent to Austin's Funeral Directors requires repairs. Two quotations have been received to complete circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 8

1<sup>st</sup> Welwyn Scouts have been informed that as this section of the drain is only used by the Scouts and the Council this is a joint responsibility. Response awaited.

**2011/129**

**CIVIC CENTRE**

The steps and paved area to the side of the Civic Centre require re-building. Three quotations to rebuild the steps have been obtained a) re-using the existing material and b) using new material, tabled and attached as **APPENDIX 6**

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

**RESOLVED** "that the quotation from BBP Building and Maintenance Ltd to rebuild the steps and paved area to the agreed specification using all new material for a total cost of £ 5,870 be accepted".

**Vote: 8 For**

**1 Against****The motion was carried.****2011/130****REQUESTS FOR GRANT AID**

St Mary's Church requesting grant aid of £ 300 towards their annual Advent Window Project. Grant application was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 10.

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

**RESOLVED** "that a grant of £ 300 be awarded towards the Advent Window project".

**Vote: 5 for  
4 against**

**The motion was carried.**

Herts Air Ambulance requesting a contribution towards their free life saving Helicopter Emergency Medical Service. Grant application was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 11

It was proposed by McKay, seconded by Councillor Castle  
"that a grant of £ 300 be awarded to the Herts Air Ambulance".

**Vote: 3 for  
5 against  
1 abstention**

**The motion was not carried.****2011/131****CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.25pm.

Signed.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

31<sup>st</sup> October 2011