

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2009 AT
THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN
WHICH COMMENCED AT 7.45PM**

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

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor H Ober

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: No members of the public attended the meeting.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting.

2009/117 DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Councillor Skidmore declared a personal interest in 2009/122 as his wife is a volunteer advisor of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

2009/118 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24th AUGUST 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 24th August 2009, be approved and signed.

Unanimously agreed.

2009/119 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24th AUGUST 2009

Minute No 2009/109. Traffic Flow and Parking Restrictions in Welwyn Village. Councillor McKay advised that Hertfordshire Highways had advised that due to lack of funding, the additional parking requested in Church Street, whilst the temporary one-way system is in place, will not now be introduced.

2009/120 MORE POWERS FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Details of this initiative were circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 1

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

RESOLVED "that Welwyn Parish Council request Grant Shapps MP to sign Early Day Motion No 1545 in support of Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Bill".

Unanimously agreed.

2009/121 MEMBERSHIP OF CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND(CPRE)

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

RESOLVED “that the Council renew their membership of CPRE for the 2009/2010 year.

Unanimously agreed.

2009/122 GRANT AID

1. A grant application from Ms Carr, St. Mary’s Church Welwyn with St. Michael’s, Woolmer Green to co-fund the Welwyn Advent Windows website for the sum of £ 200 was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 2

Following discussion it was agreed that although the Council fully support this initiative, they would not support a grant towards the development of a web site, the Council would however consider a contribution towards another form of publicity for this initiative.

2. Councillor Skidmore proposed that £ 500 be allocated in the 2010/2011 budget to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). Paper attached as **APPENDIX 1**

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Skidmore, seconded by Councillors McKay and

RESOLVED “that a grant to £ 500 be allocated to the CAB in the 2010/2011 year, should an application for funding be received”.

**Vote: 8 for
1 against
2 abstentions**

Councillor Skidmore to advise the CAB and to request statistics of usage of the CAB by Welwyn residents.

2009/123 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Planning and Licensing Committee. Councillor C Hukin Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on the 7th September 2009 and answered questions.

Leisure Facilities and Opens Spaces Committee. Councillor McLusky, Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on the 14th September 2009, and answered questions.

Minute No 2009/082. Youth Working Party. The Acting Clerk confirmed that the co-opted members of the Youth Working Party, could participate in the newly created Youth Sub-Committee in all items for discussion, however only elected Councillors could participate in the vote.

Minute No 2009/083. Christmans Lighting. Corrected to read Christmas Lighting.

Civic Centre. A copy of the Full condition, repair and maintenance survey was distributed to all Councillors. The Acting Clerk advised that in order to complete all items marked as category 'A, Urgent and should be carried out without delay', the Council needs to consider whether to repair the two roofs of the Civic Centre as an interim measure whilst discussions are undertaken with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC). A report from the Surveyor was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 3.

Approximate estimates to complete interim repairs plus long term repairs attached as **APPENDIX 2**

Interim repairs plus professional fees would therefore cost approximately £25,875.00

Long term repairs to the main hall pitched and flat roofs would cost approximately £ 84,575.00

A letter has been sent to Grant Shapps MP requesting his support in the Council's bid to obtain ownership of the Civic Centre, which following a Public Meeting has the full support parishioners. Following discussion it was agreed that the Acting Clerk to obtain quotations for minimal repairs to all items detailed as category 'A'. The flat roof however was repaired last year; therefore evidence to be obtained to verify that this roof needs additional works.

Finance Committee. Councillor Skidmore, Chairman of the Committee, presented a report of the meeting held on the 21st September 2009 and answered questions.

Minute No 2009/020 Internal Auditor. Councillor Skidmore advised that the Internal Auditors fees for completing an end of year Audit was £ 450 and for completing the mid-year interim Audit was £ 250. Total Annual Internal Audit fee is therefore £ 700.00. This fee is in line with what other Parish Councils pay for this service.

Minute No 2009/029 BDO Stoy Hayward – External Auditors. Councillor Skidmore advised BDO Stoy Hayward had requested the Council complete an Intermediate Audit Questionnaire as their income or expenditure was greater than £ 200,000 last year. The Finance Committee had reviewed the documents and recommended approval by Full Council.

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

RESOLVED "that the completed Intermediate audit questionnaire be approved".

Unanimously agreed.

BDO Stoy Hayward had also request that amendments to the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2009 be approved by Full Council following approval by the Finance Committee. Copy of the amended Annual Return was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 4

The Acting Clerk had initialled the requested changes which were the inclusion of Not Applicable (N/A) on Page 2 No 11. Confirmation that the Annual Return was approved by the Council and recorded as minute

reference No 2009/089, dated 29th June 2009. That the Annual Governance Statement was approved by the Council and recorded as minute reference No 2009/089 on the 29th June 2009.

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

RESOLVED "that the amended Annual return for the year ended 31st March 2009, with the amendments initialled by the Acting Clerk, be agreed".

Unanimously agreed.

St. Mary's Church Wall. The Chairman advised that a survey has been conducted of the church wall and due to the proximity of and quantity of graves; the foundations required will be complex. A foundation design will be required. Paperwork was tabled and is attached as **APPENDIX 3**

Costs incurred to date are £ 2,172.40 for the Survey and an additional £1,850 to prepare a foundations report. The Acting Clerk advised grants are available and an application to the appropriate bodies will be made once the full cost of restoration, and were necessary, re-build of the wall is known.

Councillor Skidmore advised all Councillors had received a Summary of Income and Expenditure to the end of August 2009 and a list of receipts and payments for the month of August. In future all Councillors will receive a list of receipts and payments on a monthly basis and a Summary of Income and Expenditure following each Finance Committee meeting. Councillor Benson wished to record the Council's thanks to the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Acting Clerk for bringing the Council's accounts into a position to be able to provide detailed accounting information on a regular basis.

2009/124

PROPOSED NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE WELWYN PARISH

An information leaflet regarding the proposed site of a new secondary school was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 5.

Councillor Butler advised, herself and Councillor McLusky had attended a meeting in Knebworth Village Hall called to discuss the campaign to erect a school on 30 acres of land donated by the Cobold family. The land is located in the green belt in the Welwyn Parish. The Cobold Family also want to sell 60 acres of land for property development, part of the profit from this development would be donated to the proposed school, Knebworth Village and Knebworth House. The benefit of this scheme, would be a school for local children, it is a very safe site with proposed woodland, ponds and sports facilities which would be available for the wider community. The negative side would be transport difficulties, the site is not near Knebworth village, it is very close to a cemetery and the intake of pupils would be approximately 600, which is small when compared with other secondary schools and would also have no provision for sixth form education.

Councillor Neville had attended a meeting at Woolmer Green Parish Centre on this same subject. The scheme is for a grant aided school however there was no information regarding the long term future of the proposed school and whether Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) would include this

school in their plans for the future. Following discussion it was noted that improving existing schools to enable local children to be placed in schools of their choice would seem a better way forward. The Council decided to take no action on this proposal at this point in time.

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.

2009/125 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 24th AUGUST 2009

RESOLVED” that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 24TH August 2009 be approved and signed”.

2009/127 The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 10pm

Signed.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

Dated 26th October 2009