

WOOLMER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held 14th January 2025

Present: Cllrs A Gribble (Chairman), P Corke (Vice Chairman), T Dix, S Hall, R Horton & G Pinney.

In attendance: Mrs J. Pearce (Clerk). Borough Cllr T Mitchinson.

Prior to the meeting Andrew Lewin MP's Senior Parliamentary Assistant, Josh Lee, introduced himself to Parish Councillors and they welcomed him to the meeting. Mr Lee said that Mr Lewin's office is keen to work closely with the Parish Council and would take up any issues the Council wished to raise. He explained that there were 5 personnel based in London and 3 in Welwyn Garden City whom the Council could contact. The Parish Council raised a number of issues including funding for the B197 road scheme, the puffin crossing outside the shops and the impact of the employer NI increase. Mr Lee would like to receive the Parish Council newsletter and will be added to the mailing list.

8.1 To receive apologies for absence: Borough Cllr J Cragg, County Cllr T Kingsbury.

8.2 To consider requests for dispensation and pecuniary & other interests on items on the agenda: Cllr Horton declared an interest in items 8.7b & c.

8.3 To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public: None.

8.4 To approve minutes Council Meeting 10 December: Resolved: The minutes of the Council Meeting of 10 December were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

8.5 To receive reports on meetings & events attended by Councillors: Cllrs Corke, Dix, Hall, Horton & Pinney attended the Carols round the Tree event. Cllr Hall attended the community consultation event in Knebworth, organised by Countryside Partnerships, to view the masterplan for the development of the KB1 & KB2 sites allocated in the North Herts Local Plan. Cllr Hall reported that the planned road access to both sites (approximately 384 homes) is only via Park Lane. A Knebworth resident was collecting signatures for a petition to have an additional road constructed to link KB1, rear of Deard's End Lane, around the edge of KB2 to exit in Wych Elm Lane to avoid congestion in Knebworth. This would have the potential to divert traffic onto London Road via Bridge Road which would not be a desirable outcome for Woolmer Green. Countryside Partnerships had already consulted and received approval for the transport network within the development.

8.6 To receive correspondence: The Council received: Notification from Barclays Bank that from 11 March the business account interest rate will be reduced to 1.35% from 1.40%. Information from HCC on the Government Devolution White Paper. The 2024 Traffic & Transport Data Report from HCC. Results of a survey by Grant Shapps. A letter from a resident about this year's pond maintenance. An update on Lord Foster's lithium-ion battery safety campaign.

8.7 Planning (Cllr Dix & Horton)

a) 6/2024/2371/HOUSE, 14 Wolves Mere, Erection of a single storey rear extension following the demolition of conservatory and alterations to fenestration: No objection.

b) 6/2024/2069/FULL 22A London Road. Amended application: No decision to report.

c) 6/2024/1996/PN33 22B London Road: Application granted.

8.8 Hall (Cllr Corke & Pinney) & Grounds: (Cllr Dix)

a) To receive a report on hall heating: The boiler engineer has recommended replacing a pressurisation unit which has not worked for some time. Cllr Corke will discuss options with the engineer.

Action: Cllr Corke.

b) To consider quote to replace fire alarm panel or system: Resolved: To accept quote for £350 to repair the fire alarm panel.

c) To consider quote to replace changing room boiler: Resolved: To accept quote of £2,750 to replace the boiler.

d) To receive update on lighting tennis court: Deferred.

e) To receive a report on the weekly playground inspection: All is satisfactory. The gate into the orchard has been repaired but damaged again. It is beyond repair therefore the Council agreed to remove it completely.

f) To discuss issue with hall manhole drain: Resolved: To accept quote of £540 to modify drain benching.

8.9 Finance: (Cllr Hall)

a) To receive and approve the payments for December: Resolved: To approve the payments for December.

b) To review accounts performance against budget – December: Awaiting payment for the former Family Centre lease.

- c) To receive and approve the accounts & bank reconciliation for December: Resolved: To approve the accounts & bank reconciliation for December.
- d) To discuss budget 2025/26: Resolved: To approve 2025/26 budget and set precept at £32,397.
- e) To consider grant application: Resolved: To award £500.

8.10 Environment (Cllr Dix & Horton) & Transport: (Cllr Gribble)

- a) To receive update on puffin crossing: County Cllr T Kingsbury is expecting an update from Highways on 21 January.
- b) To discuss other highways matters: None were raised.
- c) Grant Shapps' office had forwarded the results of the residents' survey he had organised. The Council agreed to inform HCC of these results and agree any work that is required, including for this winter. It will then publish the results, along with the HCC response, in the newsletter. **Action: Clerk.**

8.11 Community: (Cllrs Corke & Pinney)

- a) To receive a report on Carols round the Tree: The event was well attended and £271.70 in donations was raised. Woolmer Green Band had raised £338.56 at previous events and £105 on a Just Giving page. A total of £715.26 was raised for Alzheimer's Research. The Council thanked Cllr Pinney for leading the carols. Hopefully a presentation can be arranged. **Action: Clerk.**
- b) To set date for Village Day: Sunday 1 June.
- c) To set date for Wheels on Woolmer Green: Monday 5 May.

8.12 To receive announcements. *(for information only)*.

The new curtain track will be fitted on 15 January.

8.13 To agree date of next Council meeting – Tuesday 11 February at 7.30pm.

JRP 15.01.25

Signed: _____
Chairman.

Date: _____