

WOOLMER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held 13 September 2016

Present: Cllrs A Gribble (Chairman), P Corke (Vice Chairman), S Hall, J Hawkins, G Pinney.

In attendance: Mrs J. Pearce (Clerk). Borough Cllr Roger Trigg.

3 representatives from the owners of the Entech site & 1 member of the public for part of the meeting.

5.1 To receive apologies for absence: Cllr A White as he is on holiday.

5.2 To consider requests for dispensation and pecuniary & other interests on items on the agenda: None.

5.3 To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public: The owners of Entech said that the site is underutilised and propose that it should be mixed development that would create more employment, facilities and an acceptable amount of housing. They feel that the case for this proposal has not been heard but are preparing for a pre-application.

Cllr Trigg said that the three ward Cllrs are against the proposals in the Local Plan for Woolmer Green and have raised the issue with planning officers who said that employment land is needed and that the development would be close to the railway.

Cllr Hall asked what are the "exceptional circumstances" that require Green Belt to be used when a brownfield site is available. Cllr Trigg said that Planning had to meet housing targets.

A resident suggested that Brexit should have an influence on future housing needs.

5.4 To approve minutes of the Council Meeting on 12 July: Resolved: The minutes of the 12 July Meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5.5 To receive reports on meetings attended by Councillors: All Cllrs attended a meeting with the owners of the Entech site. Cllrs Hall and Hawkins attended the July Market. Cllr Hawkins attended the August Cllrs Surgery. Cllr Pinney attended Cllr training.

5.6 To receive correspondence: The Council received: A survey from Serco about their waste collection service which the Clerk completed. Details of a change in trading style from Came & Co. insurance. Notification that Bridge Road will be closed for inspection works sometime in the next eighteen months. A query about crassula hemsii from an Oaklands resident. A letter from a resident about the hall playground. Notification that Carvers Croft will be closed for works sometime during the next eighteen months.

5.7 Planning: (Cllr Corke)

a) 6/2016/1644/LAWE 22a London Road, Certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of building as B1(c): No observations.

b) 6/2016/1554/HOUSE 20 Broadfield Road, Erection of front porch and first floor side extension: No objection.

c) 6/2016/1266/HOUSE, 15 Oak Road: Application granted.

d) 6/2016/1251/HOUSE 22 Wolves Mere: Application granted.

e) 6/2016/1153/PN11 22a London Road: Application refused.

f) 6/2015/1972/COND, The Fox, 21 New Road, Update on 3(landscaping), condition 4 (highways report): Awaiting a response from planning enforcement.

g) To consider a response to the Draft Local Plan consultation: The Parish Council will be stating the case that the Entech site is not viable as employment land and should be a mixed development and that the Green Belt site in Woolmer Green should be removed from the Local Plan. Cllrs considered that the draft response was comprehensive.

5.8 Hall & Grounds: (Cllrs Corke & Hawkins)

a) To receive a report on hall windows: Awaiting quotes to replace the windows.

b) To review progress of installing a defibrillator: The equipment has arrived and awaiting installation.

c) To discuss hall security at parties: The company previously providing security has stopped the service and most security companies want a minimum of five hours work. Cllr Pinney is able to provide a three hour service through his company "Discos Revenge" for £150 which is paid by the hirer. Resolved: To approve the appointment of Cllr Pinney's company to provide security.

d) To review re-launch of Badminton Smash Up: Only one person has come forward so far. A minimum of eight children are needed to make it viable to re-launch.

e) To receive a report on the weekly playground inspection: A bolt on the basket swing is missing and new fittings are on order but the order process is slow. The playgrounds were inspected each weekend and, apart from the missing bolt, are satisfactory. As part of the general maintenance all bolts should be tightened regularly and have been done apart from the higher level ones which will be done during the annual inspection.

Action: Clerk.

f) To review progress of installing the bench: Cllr Pinney will arrange for the supply and installation of three benches at a cost of £600 via Dignity funeral services. It was suggested that the shortfall of £150 could be found in sponsorship. **Action: Cllr Pinney.**

g) To consider funding for moving the basketball net: To move the basketball net into the ball skills court would cost £595. It was suggested applying to Stevenage Community Trust for match funding.

Resolved: To contribute £200 from the Entertainment Fund if a funding application is successful.

5.9 Finance: (Cllr Hall)

a) To receive and approve the payments and accounts for July & August: Resolved: To approve payments and accounts for July & August.

b) To consider charge to Knebworth FC: Resolved: To suggest a charge of £2029.50 for the season.

c) To approve the conclusion of the audit: The Clerk reported that no issues had been raised from the external audit and the paperwork will be approved at the next meeting.

d) To discuss damage to wedding dress: A hirers wedding dress was torn on a large staple protruding from a door frame and the cost of repair is not cost effective. The Parish Council insurers confirmed that the incident would be covered if the hirer wished to make a claim. Cllrs agreed to ask if the hirer has wedding insurance before suggesting she could make a claim from the Parish Council's insurance. In the event of a successful claim the Parish Council will be liable for the £250 excess.

5.10 Environment (Cllr White) & Transport: (Cllr Gribble)

a) To receive a report on PPP work for 2016: Deferred until next meeting.

b) To review progress of trees requiring a TPO: Deferred until next meeting.

c) To discuss highways matters: The data from the latest speed survey has been received showing little change from last year. Cllrs noted that the police attended an accident near the Chequers pub on Sunday 11th September.

5.11 To consider ideas for the Parish Council Christmas card: Cllrs agreed to hold a village photographic competition to choose an image for the Parish Christmas card. Information will be included in the next newsletter. **Action: Clerk.**

5.12 To discuss arrangements for a New Year's Eve party: Cllr Pinney will organise a community family New Year's Eve party. Information will be included in the next newsletter. **Action: Cllr Pinney.**

5.13 To receive announcements. *(for information only):*

a) It was requested that introducing reduced hire rates for residents be included on the next agenda.

b) The community orchard has been nominated for a CPRE Award and the awards ceremony is on 18th October.

c) Cllr Hall will attend the Cllrs Surgery on 1st October.

d) A resident in Wolves Mere has asked if they could buy a piece of hall land at the rear of their property to extend their garden. Cllrs said all residents in the row would have to agree to make it a viable proposition.

5.14 The next Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th October at 7.30pm.

JRP 20.09.16

Signed: _____
Chairman.

Date: _____