



WOODHAM FERRERS AND BICKNACRE PARISH COUNCIL

A QUALITY COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON FRIDAY 1st MAY @ 8PM
@ BICKNACRE MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL, BICKNACRE, ESSEX

DRAFT

Present on Top Table: Barry Arnold, JP Chairman, Lord Hanningfield, DL, Leader of Essex County Council, John Whittingdale, MP, Essex Police Richard Poulter, CBC, Mike Harris, CBC & Karen Kuderovitch, Clerk to the Council

Guests: Cllr J. Saltmarsh, Cllr. C. Saltmarsh, Cllr. L. Brett, Cllr. R. Blanks, Cllr. G. Woricker, Cllr A. Mair, Cllr. Mary Cottee, Sue Grocock, Head of St. Mary's School Woodham Ferrers Adrian Summons, Transport Development Manager, ECC.

Speakers: Norman Robinson – Highways Projects Team Leader, ECC & Gordon Wyper, ECC, , Jill Oliver, Chairperson of Traffic Advisory Committee, Harry Clacy, Danbury CAMEL,

Presentations: Anthony Flaherty, Chair of Bicknacre Community Project & Alison Doherty, Jesters

Displays: Bicknacre Community Project, St Mary's C of E School, Woodham Ferrers, Bicknacre Pre School, Neighbourhood Watch Group, Friends of Priory Fields, Parish & Youth Council, Essex Police, Essex Fire, Bicknacre

Approx. 125 Members of the Public

The Chairman introduced himself and all of the guests present on the top table and thanked them for attending. An overview of the Chairman's report was given together with details of a Quiz Night on 16th May 2009, plans for the Bicknacre Festival Day on 4th July 2009 and the Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Dog Show on 18th July 2009.

The Chairman gave thanks to Adrian Summons, Transport Development Manager, ECC and asked him to present himself to receive a certificate of appreciation in his assistance of the Parish Council securing over £30,000 of bus shelter grants. Cllr. Blanks was also thanked for his efforts.

Presentation: - Anthony Flaherty, Bicknacre Community Project

Mr Flaherty gave an informative presentation which included various interviews of local people of varying ages, giving their views and ideas for use of the Community Centre. The presentation also consisted of:

- Progress to date
- Events
- Naming of the new centre (Priory Acres)
- Registered Company

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- Planning Approval
- The next 12 months

Copies are available by request to The Clerk of this presentation. A small charge may be made

Presentation – Alison Doherty, Bicknacre Community Project/Jesters

Ms Doherty thanked the Events Committee for their work on producing the video footage. Details were given on the types of people and usages for the centre. Details were also given of the proposed building and the plan to produce the most sustainable low/zero carbon public building in Essex and examples of how this would be achieved.

The Chairman read the following statement:

Discussions are in progress with Essex County Council to explore the possibility of re-opening a post office in Bicknacre. Essex County Council fully supports the idea and are working with Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council to achieve this. Shortly a survey will arrive on your doorstep to identify if there is a real need and community desire to re-instate the Post Office.

Presentation: Cllr. H. Clacy

The presentation related to the proposed Mineral Extraction site at Tyndales Farm and its possible affect on local communities should it go ahead.

The Chairman read the following statement from Chief Inspector Glen Maleary who was unable to be present:

In summary, I have improved the 24 hour coverage of policing for your parish by investing more staff based at South Woodham Police Station. I have further improved the level of supervision as well as adding a further Neighbourhood Specialist Officer (NSO) so that the villages have better representation within the Police service.

I am very pleased to report that NSO, Claire Forster is a very industrious Officer, so her personal work rate is amongst our very best Officers. She is combining neighbourhood policing in the true community spirit, along with emergency response and she is further supported by an increased establishment of Police Community Support Officers.

I am delighted to report that crime in 2008-09 was reduced from the previous year and is now about 3 crimes per week for your entire parish and the detection rate has improved by over 7% on the previous year. I am not complacent in relation to these improvements and expect further improvements during this next year. I welcome the support of all those in attendance and all of their neighbours and families, and ask you all to work with the Police Officers and Community Support Officers in providing the right information to help us put Officers in the right place at the right time.

The objectives that I have set for the team include improving public confidence and as such, I welcome your feedback as to how we are doing to further improve crime reduction and in bringing offenders to justice.

Residents and businesses can help with these areas by ensuring that they lock their valuables away and make it as difficult as possible for spontaneous criminal acts. I encourage all members of the parish to look out for each other and to report suspicious activities. We will also seek to reduce road casualties by responding to the public voice at Neighbourhood Action Panels and combine this information with our own historical traffic data and target antisocial use of vehicles.

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Once again, apologies that I cannot be there in person tonight but feel free to speak with your local Officers and let us know where we can help the parish to help us to achieve these key objectives.

Speech: Jill Oliver, Traffic Advisory Committee

Ms Oliver stated the group was established in 2007 and gave an overview of the traffic calming measures planned, which included details on speed indicators, gateways and the recent survey to close Peartree Lane at the bridge.

Speech: Norman Robinson

Norman thanked Jill for her speech and gave further information on the closure of Peartree Lane and the consultation process. Mr Robinson explained the problems experienced with the gateways(narrow verges/private driveways). Bennett junctions were also discussed together with the reasoning behind weight restrictions and alternative routes. Mr Robinson commented that himself and Gordon Wyper were working hard to get the schemes completed.

Speech: Lord Hanningfield, Leader of ECC

Lord Hanningfield gave his commitment to local issues and stated he was proud to represent the people present and to listen to the Parish Councils in the future. The current recession and its affect on local people was discussed. The plans for the Bank of Essex were also given. Statistics in reference to Post Office Closures were given (40+) closed in the County of Essex and that a contract with the Post Office Ltd had been started to facilitate the opening of 15 by mid-Summer. He gave his support for the possible re-opening of the Bicknacre Post Office.

Lord Hanningfield also gave information on apprenticeships and a fund to help recruit in partnership with the Learning Skills Council – aimed at younger people not being able to find employment. The group had been set up to encourage Essex County Council to use Essex business as much as possible and that using local business would help boost the economy.

Lord Hanningfield spoke of the Governments target for the next 3 years was to save £200 million to invest in front line services – and they were working hard to transform and reduce beaurocracy. He voiced hopes to see more money spent on roads and the elderly, with more people in the UK being over 60 than under 16. He gave details of 2 vocational centres in Maldon and Chelmsford. Lord Hanningfield finished by thanking the Parish Council for the invitation to speak.

Speech: John Whittingdale – MP

John Whittingdale commented on his continued support and congratulated the Parish Council on their achievements. Mr Whittingdale stated he was the first representative in the House of Commons and he gave an overview of the week's events, including the expenses hot topic. He stated that with his second hat on he was Chairman for Culture, Media and Sport and talked of the 2012 Olympics and the economic benefits it would bring. As a local MP he stated that he was also trying to help people in the current gloomy economy and gave facts of the rising unemployment. He mentioned that the Job Centre and Citizens Advice

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workloads would increase.

Mr Whittingdale talked about the expansion of Broomfield Hospital, an additional 361 beds and a new maternity wing opening August 2010. He also discussed he was working with the Mental Health Trust to try and sort issues at Primary Level. Chelmer Housing Partnership was also mentioned with forthcoming demands on housing stock and social housing demands. He stated there would be a severe shortage in the area. Mr Whittingdale gave details of his regular surgeries and encouraged people to attend. Details of a proposed new 1500 cell prison at Runwell was give and the creation of 800 new jobs and a site earmarked for 600 houses. Mr Whittingdale invited the audience to ask questions at the end of the meeting. The Chairman thanked Mr Whittingdale for his speech and invited Richard Poulter to speak.

Speech: Richard Poulter, CBC

Cllr. Poulter talked about the traffic calming and thanked the Essex County Council Highways Dept for the £154,000 and to Norman Robinson for his continual advice. Rural Housing was discussed and the financial difficulties of the Rural Housing Trust and Cllr. Poulter assured the audience a new provider called Hastoe had been located. The survey details were given and a clear identification for 12-15 houses was highlighted. Cllr. Poulter stated that possible sites had been looked at. Cllr. Poulter urged people to look at the houses built in East Hanningfield.

Cllr. Poulter gave details of his regular surgeries and made the offer to visit anyone in need and gave his commitment of continual attendance at the Parish Council meetings, in order to keep informed of events.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Poulter for his speech and added some Affordable Housing information.

Open Session

1. A member of the audience made a transport related request not to change the end of Priory Road to a T junction but to a mini-roundabout together with a suggestion for a mini-roundabout at the White Swan, with fewer invasions to Priory Road.

Norman Robinson gave details of the intended plans for traffic calming, which concluded that after technical surveys a roundabout was a favoured option.

2. A member commented on the Park & Ride and that it was not accessible apart from Fridays and could anything be done so it could be used?

Lord Hanningfield stated he hoped for plans to materialise for 3 or 4 in and around Chelmsford. Norman Robinson gave details of plans including Essex Regiment Way and Chelmer Valley, but the decision had not yet been made and it was hoped for the coming financial year.

3. A member asked the question who proposed and sanctioned the installation of the traffic calming measures outside Priory Primary School and made the allegation that it did not work and cars continued to travel at 50-70 mph.

The Chairman responded to say the work was done after consultation with Essex County Council and that in local villages the local people were regularly the worst offenders. A crossing patrol was not permitted.

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4. A member asked the question why speed checks were only carried out mid morning, mid-afternoon and not at the crucial time of 5pm-6pm?
The Chairman replied to say that this time was also done and on the last speed checks 40 people were caught for varying offences.
5. A member directed a question re the Bicknacre Community Project and asked if there was any more information on children's group and there was lots of talk about the Church and Sports Centre?
Alison Doherty of Jesters replied that there were hopes for a nursery, catering for the needs of 0-5 year olds and also hopes to cater for the Youth element as well. It was asked that would 0-5 childcare be in competition with Bicknacre Pre School?. Alison Doherty responded to say that there was no point in doing something already being done very well and that they would 'fill in the gaps'.
6. A member commented on The Hooe playing area and stated it was shoddy and unkept.
The Chairman responded that the BMX ramp was being removed to deter vandalism and litter and the lady was invited to have a separate meeting regarding her issues. The Chairman gave details of an incident at The Hooe where people had received a caution. Cllr.J. Saltmarsh and Cllr. A. Mair were highlighted as regular inspectors of The Hooe and details were given of a Rospa Health & Safety inspection annually.
7. **Neville Jessop (Neighbourhood Watch) congratulated members of the newly established group in Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre and said well done to all involved.**
8. A member asked Cllr. Poulter for confirmation of a site located in Woodham Ferrers for Rural Housing.
Cllr. Poulter gave details of some sites surveyed but advised no firm plans had been agreed.
9. A member gave the opinion that flashing signs in Woodham Ferrers was not enough to slow the traffic.
Norman Robinson replied that there were specific government criteria for safety concerns and to make a section of road safer. ie. accidents. To address a speed related problem accidents are recorded in a specific manner and the criteria used. Speedwatch was discussed with facts given and Mike Harris stated there was an active group in East Hanningfield.
A comment was made that a resident hoped the roundabout at the White Swan would not cause more trouble crossing.
10. A member asked why a mirror could not be situated at the bottom of Edwins Hall Road and expressed her concerns of a fatality happening at the junction.
Norman Robinson explained the reasons briefly and invited the last to make contact so he could give a full explanation.
The Chairman summed up the meeting by reminding the audience that the Councillors give their time freely for the Community and he thanked all Councillors and the Clerk for their continued hard work.

Meeting closed 10.20pm