

MINUTES of the MEETING of ESSENDON PARISH COUNCIL
Held in the Village Hall on MONDAY 16th March 2020 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Mike Brown (Chair), Keith Venables, Tracey Willetts, Ian Venables, Rex Jones, Fran Christensen, Clerk Nerine Chalmers and 2 members of the public

1. No declarations of personal or financial interest in the Agenda were made.
2. Minutes from 17 February 2020 signed by the Chair.

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

3. a) **Speed Indicator Device**

Relocation of SID will take place in March. No action at this stage on a second SID, priced at £4,510. Possibly to be revisited at a future date.

b) **Forge Cottages Bus Stop**

Confirmation from Vikki Hatfield, Parking and Cemetery Services Manager, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, that preliminary measurements taken at the bus layby indicate that they may be able to extend the layby. However, investigations continue. More details on the outcome of the relocation of the temporary bus stop should be forthcoming in the near future.

c) **Issues previously raised:**

Ringways confirmed that the following works will be programmed early in the new financial year.

10 posts for signs, reattach 3 signs, replace several damaged kerbs. 5 new plastic hollow with timber stake

Glasdon bollards, reset further, remove fallen tree in verge. tree / vegetation / siding out of the whole

length. the culvert at the bottom of Cum Cum Hill, damage to Keep Left Bollard on the B158 on Essendon Hill

d) **Replacement trees for those that were uprooted to provide additional parking**

Two of the trees have been planted at Essendon, there is another one to go in. This will be completed by the end of March.

e) **Village hall:**

- Motion that in the light of the government's advice, issued on 16 March 2020, the Parish Council has agreed that the village hall should be closed with immediate effect, and for the foreseeable future. Proposed by RJ, seconded by KV. Passed nem con.
- With a few exceptions, the concerns raised at the last meeting have been addressed. Thanks to all concerned, and to IV for securing the hall.

f) **ACV on The Rose and Crown**

The ACV expires on 5 November, and the Council will be looking at reviewing and renewing it.

4. **Matters raised by the public**

Nothing to report

5. **Finance**

Cheque signing.

Stationery, Anti-virus software, website subscription, mileage	£168.30
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6. **Planning**

Noted that an appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to refuse planning for the erection of a pool house at West End Manor West End Lane Essendon Hatfield AL9 6AZ

7. Correspondence

- a) Email from resident regarding blocked drains on West End Lane – problem has been reported
- b) Consultation documents received for revised draft WHBC District Plan 2020 – available for viewing via a link on the Parish Council website, or by arrangement with the Parish Clerk. MB reported that no new sites were proposed for Essendon.
- c) Response from Welwyn Hatfield Council to the request that the council empty the playground bin was that the playground is not maintained by the council, so the bin is not their responsibility and they won't empty it. Clerk to follow up since up to 2 years ago, the bin was emptied by the Welwyn Hatfield Council
- d) Rospaplay safety inspection of the playground has been booked for May. RJ will check maintenance, and items on last year's report, including spica and signage.

8. Any Other Business

- a) IV reported that the Village Fete has been cancelled in view of the uncertainties leading up to it.
- b) VE Day celebrations will follow government guidelines. (post meeting note – this has been cancelled)
- c) Gas cover on the pavement outside 27 Glebe Cottages AL9 6HQ is damaged – clerk to report to the Gas company.
- d) Manhole cover on the verge on School Lane is rusty and damaged – clerk to report
- e) Village Hall committee will spend £15,000 on refurbishing the floor. Clerk to investigate possible grants for refurbishing the kitchen. Work booked for August.
- f) Chair has requested quotes for building surveys from 3 local companies:
Westside Services, Hertford
Grafton Builders Consultancy, Hertford
Lake Associates, Hoddesdon

9. Date of next meeting

Original proposed dates for meetings to the end of 2020

20 April	Annual Parish meeting
27 April	Parish Council meeting (chaired by IV)
18 May	Annual Meeting of the Full Council (Election of Chair and Vice Chair)
15 June	Parish Council meeting - audited accounts presented
20 July	Parish Council meeting
21 September	Parish Council meeting
19 October	Parish Council meeting
16 November	Parish Council meeting

Following Government Guidelines, all meetings up to and including 20 July 2020 will be suspended. Where necessary, business will be conducted by email or video conferencing. Proposed that Chair and Vice Chair will be empowered to take necessary decisions to keep the workings of the council running. Proposed by RJ and seconded by TW. Passed nem con.

10. Effects of Covid-19 on the village.

- a) The chair commended the group that has set up a help line for people in the village needing support. See copy of letter below.
- b) There is a need to identify people who are vulnerable and may need assistance. KV to ask WI members to assist with identifying this group, and the chair will request that the church also assists to ensure that anyone needing help can access it.
- c) The Parish Council will assist where necessary.
- d) The Hall Phone will be handed to the volunteer group so that people in the village can make contact.

Meeting closed at 8:00 pm

Letter from Volunteer Group to Residents:

Dear Residents

Since the Outbreak of the Coronavirus Covid-19 some of us have become anxious about the possibility of the need for isolation and how this can create loneliness and vulnerability.

We are a village community and we are all here to support each other when there is a crisis. Many of us are willing to help and have already volunteered our time to set up a village contact number for those who want to talk or need some practical (non medical) help.

This is run by our own villager volunteers.

Call 07442499601 if you: -

- Feel lonely or anxious and want someone to talk with
- Need practical help eg. Shopping or an errand and you're worried about leaving your home

Kindly Note: We are not medically trained. We are fellow villagers so please Do not call us if:

- It is a medical emergency - call 999
- Need medical advice - call NHS 111

If you wish to volunteer please **email alexiavarnavides@gmail.com** and leave your name and mobile number. You will be added to a volunteer Whatsapp group where any queries will be posted and you can offer help when you can.

Let us all work together!

Stay safe

Essendon Volunteers.