

Wareside Parish Council

Minutes of Wareside Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 17th April 2025 held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr Nicola Gildersleve (NG), Cllr Paul Goodman (PG) (Chairman), Cllr Kerry Raworth (KR), Cllr Stuart Richards (SR) and Cllr Mike Ryan (MR).

Others: Rebecca Burdick (Clerk) (RB)

Members of the public: None.

The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm.

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence

Cllr Bob Kerr (BK), Cllr Kim Nicholson (KN)

2. Declarations of interest and dispensations

- a) To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda (including non-pecuniary).
MR - agenda item 11 - due to living in close proximity to the old school site being discussed.
- b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests.
None.
- c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate.
None.

3. To approve and sign meeting minutes

- a) Thursday 16th January 2025 - approved by all Cllr present and signed by PG
- b) Thursday 27th February 2025 - approved by all Cllr present and signed by PG
- c) Thursday 20th March 2025 - deferred to next meeting when KN is present to sign as chair

4. To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public

None.

5. Planning

- a) To consider planning applications received by EHDC received between 20th March 2025 - 17th April 2025

Application: 3/25/0571/LBC

Proposal: Existing hardwood framed windows (installed approximately 25 years ago), casements and fixed lights to be routed out and slimlite single glazing to be replaced with 4 x 4 x 4 double glazed units

At: Tudor Cottage Bakers End Wareside Hertfordshire SG12 7SH

WPC comments: None

- b) To review planning decisions made by EHDC received between 20th March 2025 - 17th April 2025
None.

7. To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster emailed his monthly report - please see appendix for full report. No District Cllr report received.

8. To receive updates from Councillors/Clerk on:

a) Little Oak Heath

i. LOH Maintenance

RB updated the council that E-Scapes start ground maintenance in the last week of March, PG and RB walked around Larkshill and LOH to check all the work agreed had been completed and it had, including full cutting of the orchard area. PG noted that there were some large hawthorn bushes that required manually cutting down as the machine used to cut the area was not able to get to them. MR noted that the paths did not require cutting at the time the maintenance was started, RB explained that the other areas did require the work undertaken and we have already reduced path cutting to once a month. If the work was reduced further it would not be cost effective for the contractor to visit. KR suggested we try to monitor growth in advance and if we think this is going to happen again (particularly in the Summer months) we could divert the contractors to Larkshill to do additional work there instead of to cut the paths.

RB and PG updated the council that when they were at LOH checking the grounds maintenance work they noticed that a den area had been constructed on the piece of LOH between the houses and the playground. Pieces of wood, fence palings from the playground, tree protectors, pieces of the goal posts and other miscellaneous materials had been used in the construction. RB showed the PC pictures and a video she had taken on her phone. Members of the PC noted that this behaviour is difficult to stop and if it was removed would it encourage further damage to the playground/goal posts. RB noted that the area was a health and safety risk to users of the area and should someone get hurt in the area on the items the public liability aspect of the PC insurance may not provide cover had the PC known about the area and not taken appropriate action. This was noted by the PC and it was suggested that the items which pose a health and safety risk should be removed. KR said that she would go over the area and remove the items.

ii. Playground maintenance

RB updated the council that the broken top of the "swinger" piece of equipment has been replaced by Broadmead Leisure. PG and RB reported that there are now 10 broken playground fence palings. They managed to retrieve 4 within the den area and attach them back to the fence. RB to buy more fence palings to fix the remaining broken ones.

b) Larkshill

KR noted that after the clearance work done at Larkshill there are a lot of tree branches, whilst some have been chopped into logs there are some remaining that would benefit from being chipped in order to further tidy-up the area. The chippings could then be used to line some of the paths. KR has asked in the village if anyone has a suitable wood chipper that could be borrowed but has been unsuccessful. SR noted that a family member regularly hires machinery for work and he would inquire where he gets it from and pricing.

9. To review the quote for defibrillator purchase and installation into the telephone box from Community Heartbeat trust

RB provided the PC with the finalised quote from Community Heartbeat Trust for purchase and installation of the defibrillator including replacement of the light inside the box. It was unanimously resolved to order the defibrillator from Community Heartbeat under a managed solution with an annual support plan.

10. To discuss and approve the Spring edition of the Wareside newsletter

RB presented a rough draft of the newsletter which had been delayed due to awaiting contributors requiring additional time to complete their pieces. RB asked Councillors to read through the draft over the weekend and provide any comments. RB noted she needed to add photos, MR advised he had some relevant pictures of wildlife taken at the allotment and in his garden which he would send to her.

11. To receive update on Wareside CofE School, Sports & Playing Field.

PG updated the PC that a short meeting was held with HCC on 28th March. PG had confirmed to HCC that the PC is still interested in acquiring the land and is currently developing a plan to make this possible. PG also noted that he had been in discussion with Sworders to try and get an idea of what the value of the land would be. PG asked the PC if they would like him to begin discussions with villagers who may be able to fund the purchase of the playing field on behalf of the PC. The funding would be secured on the basis that those providing it will not make a profit from the arrangement and on the understanding that the ownership and management would be transferred to the PC. KR noted she may know villagers that would like to contribute. The PC unanimously agreed for PG and KR to discuss funding opportunities with villagers on behalf of the PC.

12. To discuss Community Governance Review (CGR) Draft Recommendations

RB updated the PC that at the November PC meeting they discussed the CGR - particularly that Ware Town Council had requested a review of the boundary between Ware and Wareside - wanting the inclusion of the "Ware North" development within Ware. Following agreement of the PCs position at the November meeting PG and RB submitted a response on behalf of the PC to the first consultation (please see appendix).

The Community Governance Review working group met on 6 February 2025 to consider the consultation responses and provide a set of draft recommendations for EHDC to approve at the 26th February meeting. Their recommendations specifically regarding the request of Ware were written as follows:

"Ware Town and Wareside Parish 2.21 Ware Town Council requested a CGR in July 2022 to review the boundary between Ware, Wareside and Thundridge, so the whole of the Ware2 Development proposed in the East Herts Masterplan falls within Ware. 2.22 Wareside Parish were against the above proposal and argue that the loss of the precept from the new development will have an impact on their ability to deliver services to the parish. 2.23 The working group considered both arguments and have made a draft recommendation that the boundary is not moved as the Ware2 development had not yet received planning permission and there were currently no residents within this area to consult with. The group felt that the public consultation on the draft recommendation might provide further evidence either way to moving the boundary."

RB noted that the working group summarised the PC as being "against the proposal" which is not what the PC response said. Also interestingly Thundridge PC did not appear to make any comments to Ware's proposal

EHDC agreed with the recommendations and resolved that the Council agree to the Draft Proposals for the Community Governance Review launching a public consultation on those (noting that the Final Recommendations will be considered at a future Council meeting, taking the results of the public consultation into account).

It is now the final consultation, where the PC and the public can comment on the recommendations. The PC must decide if they wish to respond to the consultation and if yes what they wish the response to be.

The PC noted that the draft recommendation not to move the boundary was unexpected and it was unfortunate that the working group had summarised the PC opinion as being against the proposal when our response did not state this as our position. RB suggested that it may be worth having a meeting with Ware Town Council to discuss their proposal as they no doubt will be disappointed with EHDC recommendation. PG noted this would be beneficial as we could then discuss the suggestion the PC had made in its consultation response that *“a mechanism could be found through which some of the lost precept could be made available to Wareside Parish Council. Assistance from Ware Town Council in securing better services for existing Wareside residents would also help to offset the loss of influence which would result from their proposal.”*. The PC agreed, RB to email Ware Town Council Clerk to arrange. PG noted that a decision would have to be made on what response, if any, the PC wished to submit to the consultation following this meeting, RB advised that in order to meet the consultation deadline this decision would have to be made at an extraordinary meeting which she would schedule.

13. Finance

a) To approve signing of orders for payment online via BACS

Payee	Work done/goods received	Amount
Rebecca Burdick	Salary (March)	£274.28
Broadmead Leisure	Bi-monthly inspection (Feb)	£68.00
Broadmead Leisure	Replacement of “Springer” top	£175.00
E-Scapes Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance - March	£288.00
E-Scapes Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance - April	£374.00
HAPTC	Annual subscription	£422.05

b) To sign the precept form from EHDC

The precept was agreed at the January meeting however RB had not brought the required form for signing. PG as Chairman, KR and SR as Councillors and RB as Clerk and RFO signed the form. RB to send a copy to EHDC.

13. Urgent matters not included on this agenda (for full discussion on the next agenda)

None.

Meeting finished at 21.35pm

Next meeting 22nd May 2025 at 19.30

Signed:

Date:

Chair Cllr Paul Goodman

Appendix

CGR 2025 - Wareside Parish Council Consultation Response

This submission is in response to Ware Town Council's request that the Review move the boundary between Ware and Wareside so that the whole of WARE 2 as defined in the The East Herts District Plan 2018 becomes part of Ware.

A significant proportion of the new homes forming the Ware 2 development will be built on land currently within the parish of Wareside.

We understand that under the proposal put forward by Ware Town Council, all of these new houses plus a number of existing properties within Wareside parish would become part of Ware Town.

In common with many local councils, Wareside Parish Council is struggling to meet its ongoing day to day costs from its precept which is its only source of current income. Additional projects are increasingly at risk. Two issues facing us at present provide useful examples. The cost of supplying a new defibrillator will have to be met out of dwindling reserves. The Council is expected to pay the cost of running out of date inefficient street lighting which it cannot afford to upgrade.

We simply cannot afford to lose the precept from the existing properties which would become part of Ware Town. Furthermore, some of the additional precept from the new properties would have allowed us to improve services to parishioners either through the increased income itself or by allowing us to access borrowed money for capital projects - an option not currently available to us. These improved services would have gone some way towards offsetting the detriments many parishioners feel we face as a result of the Ware 2 development.

For example, we recently lost our village school partly as a result of the proposed provision of new schools within Ware 2. Once the new development proceeds there will inevitably be an increase in traffic through the parish leading to further detriment to the existing inhabitants. The development will result in the loss of much loved countryside within the parish.

Looked at from a different perspective, many of the existing dwellings in the parish do not have access to proper high speed broadband and the mobile signal in much of the parish is poor. A more regular bus service would be appreciated particularly by residents without access to a car. These services will no doubt be provided to new residents of Ware 2. Were the new houses to be built within Wareside, the Council would have had greater influence to explore with developers and providers the possibility of securing upgrades to the services to existing dwellings as part of the project.

Our objections to the Ware Town proposal could be met to an extent if a mechanism could be found through which some of the lost precept could be made available to Wareside Parish

Council. Assistance from Ware Town Council in securing better services for existing Wareside residents would also help to offset the loss of influence which would result from their proposal. We would welcome the opportunity to explore these suggestions further with them and with EHDC.

Finally, if the boundary is moved we assume that the recent decision to ward Wareside parish will be reversed. The decision to ward was based on the presumption that new homes from the Ware 2 development would be built in Wareside parish. In the absence of these new homes, warding is unnecessary.