

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

held at 7pm on Wednesday 17th January 2024

Village Hall, York Road, Earls Colne.

1. **PRESENT:** Cllr N Spelling (Chair) County Cllr. Chris Siddall, Cllr. N. McKean (minute taker), Cllr. J. Parish, Cllr T. Calton, Cllr. L. Baukham-Leys, Cllr J. Jemmet, District Cllr. G. Spray
Assistant Clerk E. Fitch

Public attendees; G Brown, C Cannings, B Lynham, R Barton

2. **Briefing from the chair:**

The Chair welcomed Cllr J Jemmet to her first Parish Council meeting

3. **To receive notification of absence**

District Cllr. G. Courtauld, Cllr. J. Happs, Cllr R. Ranns, Cllr K Kerslake (maternity leave)

4. **To receive declarations of interest –**

No declarations of interest.

5. **Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda**

NS brought forward item 11 as most in attendance were present to discuss the museum.(Agenda item 11)

Minutes of the meeting between ECPS and ECHM on 14/12/2023 agreed as a true record of the meeting.

NS proposed a change of date from the 24/1/2024 with confirmation required from the meeting chair (Rev. Mark Payne). Date to be confirmed once agreed, with a view to form a working group.

Proposed by NS, Seconded by NM. LBL agreed to stand in for NS if the meeting is in February 2024. NM and JP to attend.

TC reiterated that the points of the previous statement stand as a position statement not a policy statement.

NS requested visitor numbers and financial position of the museum for the forthcoming meeting and that points made during a meeting with Colin Canning and Malcom were to be confirmed

6. **To approve the minutes of the following meeting (November 2023)**

Minutes approved by all Cllrs.

7. **Finance**

TC explained that BDC have asked for further details to support the precept rise. A template has been provided by BDC for comparison and transparency. No further vote will be required on this as no details are changing. Information to be completed by TC and NS.

NS ask for confirmation that all Parish Cllrs. Had seen the statement for the increase in precept. Statement proposed by NS, seconded by JJ. All voted in favour

8. **Essex County Council Matters**

NS brought to the attention of CS the pot hole at the bottom of Coggeshall Road. This had been reported by the clerks assistant who had been questioned aggressively by the call handler, and made a point to CS that a complaint was being made. CS advised Cllr Tom Cunningham was to be approached for a

response, and that he was aware that several accidents had been reported in that area including an ambulance. CS would look at the area in question to see if it had been repaired.

CS informed the Parish Council that the ECC budget meant an increase to council tax payments equating to £1.50 a week for a band E household. Additional savings would be required going forward and suggestions were bringing together call centres, transforming office spaces to housing.

Funds are still available from the Cllr grant scheme.

TC brought to CS's attention the issue with blocked gulleys on Station Road.

RB would like to thank the community workers for their efforts for the works on the drainage in Hayhouse Road / Curds Road.

Tc read a letter from a resident relating to the poor state of the Coggeshall Road.

CS agreed that gulleys are the responsibility of Essex Highways and if reports are logged he can follow up with a report number .

NM raised an issue with new lighting fitted along Station Road not working.

9. **Braintree District Council matters**

GS explained budgets are difficult. Ongoing budget discussions are to be approved on the 19th of February. Car park charges will increase but the aim is not to cut frontline services. There is a £2m budget gap to be filled over the next 2 years.

BDC Planning department have confirmed that they fulfilled their land supply for 5.8 years which makes it easier to defend planning applications. GS is pleased with recent planning reforms but acknowledged that the pace of planning appeals is slow and that she has written to the planning inspectorate.

NS asked how the appeals process works. GS explained that household applications are generally a paper exercise, with some major cases requiring a site visit where no questions are allowed to the inspector.

GB, CC, RB left the meeting.

10. **Planning**

- a. TC application regarding the access to the Persimmons site is still pending.
- b. TC proposed that no objections are to be made to current applications
- c. Seconded by NS, All in agreement

11. Item addressed under public participation session

12. **Village Hall porch door**

NM asked if all Cllrs had received copies of the quotes for the replacement doors to the village hall entrance.

Vote required on the preferred option. NS proposed to change the entrance to a single door with side panel, seconded by TC, all in agreement. NM to approach Colne Valley windows.

EF raised concern with the rear door following inspection by the locksmith.

13. **Allotments**

NS asked for volunteer to find 3 quotes for stand-pipe for the allotments by the Queen's Road car park to be funded from S106 funds

NM agreed to complete this.

14. **Village Hall Defibrillator**

NS, request has been made for lighting by the defibrillator. EF advised that Sibleys Electrical will look at this when they attend to carry out PAT testing.

15. Community special

NS announced that Spike Townsend has retired from the PCSO role. 2 names have been put forward expressing interest in the role. NS asked if we would still want to support the continuation of a PCSO. All in agreement, NS to liaise with Colne Engaine PC.

16. Update on Village Greens

NS Village greens documents have been sent to the solicitors with the fee of £50 to register the asset. Resident to be informed as soon as we have an update from the land registry.

17. Update on Charging points

NS confirmed that UK Power Networks are to connect the charging points within the first 2 weeks of February. Allego to commission 1 week after connection. Charging points should be working by the end of February.

18. There will be no meeting in February.

NS reminded all that there will be no meeting in February 2024 as several councillors have prior commitments.

19. Items for the March agenda

JP asked for the refurbishment of the stage area to be added to the agenda.

TC asked JP if the PPG had re-convened since covid? NS confirmed that a meeting was scheduled for the 6th of February. JP to attend.

NS reminded Cllrs that training dates have been published and are available through EALC.

NM asked for Christmas events discussions to be added to the agenda

Public Meeting closed at 8.02pm

After the meeting Jackie Parish announced the sad news of the passing of Hugh Street on 15/1/2024. Hugh was a vital member of the Parish Council and worked very hard to establish the charging points in the village. He will be remembered fondly and the thoughts of the Parish Council go out to his family.

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Chair LB Spelley

Date: 21st March 2024