

**MINUTES OF ASHELDHAM AND DENGIE PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD on Monday 4th March 2018 at 7.00 p.m.**

Present: - Cllr A Fluker, Cllr R Moull, Cllr Mrs C Faulkner & Cllr Nick Kelly

In attendance: Mrs. S Sayer (Clerk)

Members of the public: 4 (including Mr. Bob Turner from Dengie Crops Ltd)

Cllr Fluker welcomed everyone present to the meeting starting promptly at 7p.m.

18-19/159 – ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Nick Kelly signed the acceptance of office and it was witnessed by the Clerk.

18-19/160. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Andrew Snowdon who was unable to attend due to another recent surgical procedure.

18-19/161. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members made the usual declaration that all members live and/or work in the District and declared a global declaration. Cllr Faulkner made a non-pecuniary interest in planning application reference number 19/00161 which had been added to the agenda with the agreement of all councillors present as the deadline date occurred before the next Parish Council meeting.

18-19/162. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The minutes of the 4th February were approved & signed. Proposed: Cllr Faulkner and Seconded by Cllr Faulkner – AGREED.

18-19/163. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC



An opportunity for members of the public to speak and raise issues

Code of Conduct consistent with “Nolan Principles” set out in Appendix 1 and the provisions of S29(1) Localism Act 2011.

Mr Cooper gave a vote of thanks to Cllr Fluker in his District capacity for obtaining litter picking equipment for the Asheldham Residents Group, which means that they will be able to tackle some more litter picks during the course of the year than currently happens as the equipment will be readily on hand.

Mr. Bradley Faulkner briefly described the planning application for a large shed to house his tractor and equipment with a 4 m wide entrance and personal side door. It was understood to be a pretty standard shed for this type of use. The base would be of concrete wall to make it more secure with green powder coated sheets.

18-19/164.HIGHWAY & PUBLIC FOOTPATH ISSUES

-  Clerk presented a revamped highways spreadsheet with all current issues at the front and those that had been closed at the back.
-  Clerk to urgently report the give way sign down on the bennet junction on Southminster Road/Foxhall Road

- ✚ Also the utilities Cover that is sticking up in the middle of the Tillingham Road on the bend opposite Sandlings and The Rest. It was reported that a motor cyclist has already come off due to hitting this raised defect.
- ✚ Also the fallen down chevron post on the Tillingham Road (Dengie Straight Bend) to be reported as this is a particular dangerous bend and requires the signage.
- ✚ Cllr Fluker to contact Essex County Councillor Kevin Bennet in relation to the Asheldham Bends project which is understood to still be in the system, but the Parish has not received any updates in this regard.
- ✚ Clerk to write to Tillingham Parish Council to see if they would be prepared to support Asheldham and Dengie's application to ECC to implement a 40mph speed limit from Reddings Lane to the existing 40mph buffer.
- ✚ Clerk to write to ECC Highways requesting that the existing 30 mph speed limited be reduced from just before the bennet junction on Tillingham Road(B1021)/Foxhall Road to 20mph for the distance of the bends until coming up to the Dengie Straight on Tillingham Road. It is felt that as the posts are already in situ that it would be a change of the round sign from 30 mph to 20 mph and any repeaters along the way.
- ✚ It was felt that taking up a service level agreement with the Community Protection Officers would be deferred until June in readiness for the Summer.

18-19/165.PLANNING MATTERS

Planning application(s) received since the last meeting –

FUL/MAL/19/00161

Asheldham (P)

Tillingham (W)

Construction of garage outbuilding ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling house. The Cottage Tillingham Road Asheldham Essex (UPRN - 200000914689) Mr & Mrs Bradley & Chloe Faulkner
Members reviewed this application and supported. Cllr Faulkner abstained.

a) Correspondence received over the course of the month and circulated via e-mail:

- i. List of planning applications 5/6/7/8/9 - noted
- ii. List of planning decisions and appeals 5/6/7/8/9 - noted

b) Planning enforcement updates

- i Keelings Lane – Caravan -17/00149/CU – Rachel Arnall from the Enforcement team at MDC emailed the following:- Keelings Lodge was closed on 25.01.19 for the following reason:

“The caravan is ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwelling house.

It is established case law that the use of a caravan within a residential curtilage for ancillary purposes to the use of the dwelling house does not constitute a material change of use and therefore it is excluded from the definition of development as stated in section 55 of the 1990 Act. As this case does not relate to development, it can be closed”.

18-19/165.PLANNING MATTERS – cont’d

- ii Caravans etc. – Land east of bungalow – 16/00421/CU – Rachel Arnall stated that “this case is still ongoing and communicating with the owner to resolve the breaches”

Members raised concerns that this enforcement was taking far too long and charged the Clerk with writing to Enforcement and requesting more details of what is happening and an update of exactly what they are enforcing on the site as things have been known to change since inception of this case.

Members requested that the Clerk raise an Enforcement Query with MDC Enforcement Team, regarding a piece of land adjacent to the Quarry where an entrance appears to have been installed and some work carried out. This plot of land is believed to be contaminated and possibly an old ammo dump.

18-19/166.FINANCE

- a) Members received the end of month reconciliation to 27th February which balances to the bank statements and was signed off accordingly.
- b) Payments totalling £440.71 were agreed and made up as follows:-
 - Clerks Salary and Expenses - £263.59
 - Annual Parish Council Ins - £257.60
 - Computer/Printer Rep – £60.00 (£40.00 to be reclaimed from two Parish Councils) net cost £20.00.

Bank Reconciliation to 27/2/19 including actual cash book balance after March payments.

	A	B	D	E	F
1				£	
2					
4	BANK	27/02/2019			
5	Community account no. 80925519			£450.00	
6	Business Premium account no. 80950459			£4,844.82	
7					
8			Bank Account Total	£5,294.82	
9	Income 2018/19				
10	Balance carried forward 1st April 2018			£3,081.35	
11	Precept			£5,714.00	
12	VAT refund			£108.83	
13	Bank Interest			£7.53	
14	William Ayletts	William Ayletts money (Asheldham & Dengie)		£66.50	
15	EALC	Training Bursary 75% reimbursement		£277.50	
16	G&B Finch	Donation - Defibrillator Project		£200.00	
17		Total income 2018/19		£9,455.71	
18		Less uncleared receipts		-£200.00	£9,255.71
19		Total income 2018/19			
20	Expenditure 2018/19		Payments cleared up to and including 27/2/2019	-£3,960.51	
21			overpayment clerks salary February to be reclaimed end March	-£0.38	
22					
23	Bank Balance		income less expenditure as at	£5,294.82	
24					
25					
26			cash book balance	£5,294.82	
27			Total of March Payments	-£440.71	
28					
29			Actual cash book balance as at 04/03/2019	£4,854.11	
30	LESS	RESERVES	Election expenses	-£1,000.00	
31					
32					
33			Remaining usable funds.	£3,854.11	
34	Signed:		Print Name:	Date:	04/03/2019

Balance of Ayletts Account as at 4/3/19 - £210.50

SIGNED.....
 CHAIRMAN – CLLR ANDREW SNOWDON
 ASHELDHAM & DENGIE PARISH COUNCIL
 1ST APRIL 2019

18-19/167 DEFIBRILLATOR

A detailed discussion took place regarding the project and Cllr Fluker informed members that pledges of £2100 had been made which covered the cost of the equipment and 5 years of maintenance at the approximate cost of £100 per year. Clerk was charged with:-

- a) Ascertain from the Village Hall Committee exactly where they would be happy for it to be located, near an electricity supply and if they would contribute the use of the hall for the training.
- b) To obtain the model that Dengie Crop Driers have had installed and get a quote from that company for the entire package, Defibrillator/metal case/accessories and training.
- c) Cllr Fluker to speak to an Electrician about installing the equipment
- d) Follow up with the Dengie First Responders and get their input.
- e) Clerk to contact those people who had made a pledge and let them know that the project is progressing well and request the amount that has been pledged.

Members would like to see the equipment installed as quickly as possible and registered with the local ambulance service.

18-19/168. MAY ELECTIONS

The Clerk handed out the Parish Councillor packs that had been downloaded from the MDC website. The deadline for the completed packs to back at MDC is 3rd April 2019. There is a checking service provided at MDC so that applicants can ensure that their forms are correctly completed. Clerk to supply members with a copy of the Electoral roll or members can request the Electoral roll number from the Clerk of the person they are asking to be proposer and seconder.

18-19/169.REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Councillor Fluker informed those present that the MDC budget had been set and savings of £1.5 million would be delivered by October 2019.

Maldon District Council Tax will increase by 2.3% which for a Band D property means a £4.41 increase per year.

MDC have reduced the grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau from £74,000 to £63,000 but the CAB should through efficiencies and other savings be able to maintain all their current services.

Funding for Burnham and Maldon Tourist Information Office's is being withdrawn. Although tourism is on the increase and the official figures state that 4.3 million visitors come to the district each year only 20,000 use the information offices which cost £140,000 to run. The number of Tourists visiting the Website has increased massively over the last few years and as a result the Council will be investing more in its digital platforms including ticket sales. It is hoped that volunteers and other third parties could take over the running of the TIC's.

Phase One of Full Council Transformation (FCT) has been completed. Phase two has started and it is anticipated that overall the staff levels after FCT will reduce by 15%. Case Workers who are multi-tasking will now deal with any general queries. Monitoring of performance and service delivery which remains strong is ongoing.

Phase two starts now and will continue until October 2019 after which time the whole council will be digitalised making the customer experience and service better and overall more

accessible. Full Council Transformation will ensure that Maldon District Council remains sustainable and autonomous for the foreseeable future.

18-19/170.VILLAGE BEACON

It was established that the beacon was still attached to the telegraph pole, albeit it 4-5 feet shorter as it had been cut at ground level. The metal basket, having a solid metal base would need a minor refurbishment and a coat of paint. Professional advice would need to be taken as to the integrity of the telegraph pole and whether it was still long enough. The site for installation needed to be identified and agreed with a third party and the depth needed to ensure stability. Clerk to write again to the Insurance Company, informing them that the beacon was part of the scheme by Manpower for the Queen's Silver Jubilee Year and ask them to find out from other Parish Council policies what they have their beacons insured for. It was estimated that the basket and pole, uninstalled would probably be worth about £1500. If the pole was not suitable to be re-used then a pole from BT Open Reach would cost about £40.00.

A site for installation was identified on the verge opposite the triangle on the junction of Hall Road/Manor Road and Keelings Road. This verge is the property of ECC and the Clerk to make enquiries as to the possibility of permission. The other site mentioned was on the green outside the Church as this would be a safer area for residents to gather for planned events.

18-19/171.DENGIE VILLAGE SIGN PROJECT

The Clerk handed a copy of the report that had been sent via email from Cllr Andrew Snowdon, with the request that it not be circulate prior to the meeting as he considered it maybe contentious. The report as detailed was read out by Cllr Fluker the Vice-Chairman.

Report on the Dengie Village Sign -Andrew Snowdon-Chairman, A&D Parish Council.

To be read to the meeting and filed in the Minutes, in response to the request by Cllr Fluker.

Reporting on this project was suspended from the parish council agenda some months ago as progress has been slow, and it was agreed the matter should only be put on the Agenda only when there was progress to report.

The idea of village signs predates my involvement with the Parish Council, and looking at the paperwork from the Asheldham Village sign, appears to have started in 2012. The Asheldham Sign was the result of the Asheldham Residents Association, with the only input from the Parish Council being the insurance cover after the sign was erected.

I joined the Parish Council in November 2015, at which time there was no mention on the Agenda for a Dengie Village sign. The issue of a Dengie sign was raised on the Agenda in February 2016. It is in the minutes that Cllr Ledger; the Chairman was to consult with Mr Burton, whom I believe had suggested a Dengie sign, to see if he was prepared to take the matter further. The Parish Council was reminded of the fact that involvement in the Asheldham sign by the Parish Council was limited to insurance under the Parish Council insurance policy, and that the same would apply to the Dengie sign, i.e. it is a resident's project not a Parish Council matter. Also, the Minutes show Cllr Fluker very keen that Dengie should have a sign.

18-19/171.DENGIE VILLAGE SIGN PROJECT – cont'd

By March 2016, the Minutes show that I had been designated as “lead” for the project, and that a committee should be formed from local residents to progress the project. This committee was formed in May 2016.

This was the initiation of the project. At this point I would like to make it clear that my involvement started when I asked if there physical and material help where possible. When nominated to take “lead” this was on the understanding that the project was a resident’s project alone, and that I would as a Cllr. act as a contact point between residents and the Parish Council. Furthermore, I made it clear that I would not be directly involved as a signatory to any subsequent bank account, or lead in fund raising as this was something I was not confident in doing.

The Committee subsequently met, and the first step was agreed as the setting up of a community bank account. Sadly, Barclays, our only local banking company managed to make the process excessively drawn out and the process took a very long time. Design of the sign would be left to a later date, to be done by public consultation, and finalised into a proof form by the sign makers.

It was also decided that the Committee would in the first instance look to local business for the serious funding, and that any grant application should be left until later as this might well require proof of funds raised locally (match funding).

The other main issue was deciding where the sign was to go. After much discussion, the intention was to place the sign on the Bennet Junction of Manor Road and Hall Road.

The Parish Council investigated the ownership of the land with my assistance, and on finding it to be unregistered, the Parish Council made the decision to investigate adopting the land, especially in light of the fact the Parish Council has maintained the grass on the junction for many years. The process of communication with the land registry was drawn out, by necessity of waiting on Parish Council meetings to determine action, and the fact that at least one set of paperwork went astray within the Land Registry and had to be resent.

Rather late in these proceedings Cllr Hall advised that she thought the land belonged to Essex County Council, and verified this through a contact in Essex Highways. It further transpired that under their rules a Bennet Junction could only have one sign on it. (Something found to be very inconsistent, other junctions in the area having multiple signages). This late input meant that a huge waste of effort had occurred, however we were able to determine that in principle, Essex County Council would not be against the use of the verge opposite.

It was also determined that the funding required for the sign would run in all probability to £3500 (as of 2018), and that this was not a fixed sum, given the choices of sign type, mounting etc., and of course inflation. The process of sign design would also require a non-refundable deposit with the sign maker. It is very likely that by the time any sign is decided upon, the maker of the Asheldham Sign will have completely retired, he is currently winding down his business.

18-19/171.DENGIE VILLAGE SIGN PROJECT – cont'd

During 2018, having established the rough costs involved, I grew concerned that given the small pool of local business that donates to parish projects, and the fact that the next stage of works at the Village Hall was getting closer to happening, there would be a conflict of interest, I expressed this to the Parish Council, and given the difficulty in getting the Village Sign Committee to meet, I asked the matter to be dropped from the Agenda of Parish Council Meetings, future reports to being made as and when there was something to report.

At various points in 2018 Cllrs have suggested taking control of the project, and have had to be repeatedly reminded that the project is NOT a Parish Council one, but a residents project, with the presence of a Cllr on committee to act as liaison to the Parish Council. As such, the Parish Council is not directly involved.

Cllr Fluker has intimated that several local residents have asked him about the sign, and asked that a report be made. I have asked several times for details of the residents, and asked as to why he did not see fit to refer their enquiry direct to me. The response has been evasive and flippant, not in the manner one would expect from a fellow Councillor and District Councillor.

It is possible that those originally involved might wish to revise their involvement, and if other residents are asking about the sign, they may be interested in taking the matter up. Without knowing who they are, I cannot follow this up.

Cllr Fluker has also drawn a direct parallel between the village sign project and the matter of a defibrillator. I can only respond that these matters are vastly different in nature, no comparison exists.

Cllr. Fluker has mentioned having procured an oak post for a sign, long before my involvement, and is minuted as very keen to have a sign, yet up until 2016 has never chosen to pursue the matter, choosing to sit on the side lines. Bearing in mind this is not a Parish Council Project, but a residents project, would Cllr Fluker care to take over 7 years after the idea of village signs came about?

Andrew J Snowdon. 28/02/2019



Following the reading of this report, members felt that the detailed history of events was not really the update on exactly where this project is, that was hoped for.

It was therefore decided that the Clerk find out who the Chair of the Dengie Village Sign Committee is and write to them requesting exactly where this project is and if they have any idea when they will be able to deliver the Dengie Village Sign.

Also to ascertain that, if, the committee were experiencing problems moving the project along as fast as they would like, because of work and day to day life commitments that the

Parish Council would offer to take over the project as it is understood that circumstances change and arranging meetings can be difficult.

18-19/172.SECOND PUBLIC FORUM

It was mentioned by Mr. Turner that there is a Village Sign Association that may be able to help. No other comments were made.

18-19/173. CORRESPONDENCE – No decisions can be made under this heading

There was no additional correspondence other than that has already been circulated via email during the course of the month.

18-19/174.EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Clerk reiterated that the next meeting of the Dengie Hundred Group of Parish Councils will be held on 20th March in Southminster... John Anderson who is Chairman to Southminster Parish Council is now the newly appointed Chairman of the DHGPC.

18-19/175.INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

An opportunity for members to raise any items they wish to be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

No further items other than what had already been identified during the course of the meeting.

18-19/176.DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to be held Monday 1st April 2019 at 7 p.m.

The meeting finished at 9.00 pm and Cllr Fluker thanked everyone for attending.