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Minutes of the Meeting of the Brentwood Borough Parish Councils Association held on Monday 13th. March 2023 at 7.30pm at Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council office

PRESENT: Paul Jeater (Chairman, Ingatestone & Fryerning PC), Brent Smith (Stondon Massey PC), Roger Keeble (Blackmore, Hook End & Wyatts Green PC), Caroline Fuller (Doddinghurst PC), Peter Davey (NALC/EALC & Ingatestone & Fryerning PC), Kim Harding (West Horndon PC), Hugh Gorton (Kelvedon Hatch PC), Tuz Loizou (Kelvedon Hatch PC) and Kevin B. Money as BBPCA Association Clerk/Treasurer

1. Welcome from the Chairman. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Apologies for absence were received from Jane Winter (Ingatestone & Fryerning), Chrissy Gelderbloem (Navestock PC), Richard North (Kelvedon Hatch), Alan Kingsford (Herongate and Ingrave PC), Sue Clapham (Blackmore PC), Debbie Dicker (Doddinghurst)

3. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of BBPCA on 1st. December 2022. **All Agreed**

4. To receive reports:

a) **Finance report.**

1) To receive an update on the Barclays Bank

The Clerk informed the meeting that after numerous attempts to gain the bank statement from Barclays Bank he failed. Therefore, he was unable to give an up-to-date position of BBPCA finances

2) To agree March Clerk payment of £84.85p. **All Agreed** but as no BBPCA bank signatories were present at the meeting the cheque for £84.85p could not be signed.

The Clerk to liaise with Debbie Dicker / Sue Clapham (Blackmore PC) to arrange for Bank statements to be sent to the Clerk, new cheque book and to arrange for Barclays Internet Banking to be set up. Who are authorised to sign the cheque/s

Cllr P. Davey proposed to change banking arrangements from Barclays Bank to Unity Trust Bank. Cllr P. Jeater seconded. **All Agreed.** The Clerk informed the meeting that a cost of £18 per quarter is charged. The Clerk to submit the application form to UTB with

b) **Local Highways Panel report** – Cllr Hugh Gorton

Cllr Hugh Gorton informed the meeting that Brentwood LHP report for BBPCA

- The LHP met on 15th. December
- Non-essential expenditure is now on-hold so the remaining £173,000 cannot be allocated

Cllr Hugh Gorton emailed Cllr Lee Scott ECC Member and Portfolio Holder for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport and his replies are below

- Q. Does Essex Highways have a regular programme for cleaning bollards? If so, how frequently should they be cleaned? - **We do not have a regular cleaning service, the service is not funded to deliver this activity.**
- Q. Does Essex Highways regularly inspect islands and bollards for damage? Or do you rely on problems being reported by members of the public? - **All publicly maintained roads and footpaths throughout Essex are inspected in their entirety on a routine basis. This will include all highway assets. The frequency of these inspections is dependent on the classification of the road in question, for example, local roads are inspected annually and priority routes are inspected more frequently on a monthly or quarterly basis due to the important function they perform within the highway network.**

Signed

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The Highway Inspectors will also perform ad hoc inspections of particular issues in response to reports made by members of the public.

- Q. Could Essex Highways consider installing a more robust design of reflective bollard? - The service does proactively look for improvements to the design of traffic islands, and now provide non-illuminated rebound passive safe bollards where possible. Sites are upgraded when funding allows.
- Q. Could the edges of traffic islands be painted with white reflective paint so that they can be seen even if the bollards are missing? - There are no plans to undertake this suggestion at this time.

In regards to your reports I can confirm that an Inspector has been asked to attend to assess. Please be assured that the appropriate action will be taken in accordance with our [Maintenance Strategy](#).

c) **EALC / NALC report** – Cllr Peter Davey

Cllr Peter Davey supplied his report prior to the meeting. It read:

EALC REPORT

I attended the following meetings in the last quarter as an example of how I represent the Town and Parish Council Sector here in Essex and also at the National level:

1st December NALC Finance / 6th December NALC National Assembly / 7th December Rural Crime Forum / 8th December Colchester Stadium / 12th December NALC Leadership CVC / 12th December NALC Management Board / 13th December EALC CEO Appraisal / 20th December Safer Essex 4th January MSE Community Assembly Steering Group / 9th January NALC leadership CVC / 10th January NALC Management Board / 17th January JPAG / 17th January National Network LGBT / 19th January EALC Personnel Committee / 19th January EALC Finance Committee / 20th January ECC EALC SLA / 24th January NALC Leadership CVC / 25th January ECC ICS Strategy Documents - Essex HWB / 2nd February EALC Executive / 2nd February CEO Chair meeting / 7th February Little Waltham Accreditation / 13th February NALC Management Board / 13th February Great Notley Parish Council Accreditation / 3rd March NALC Civility and Respect Conference London / 5th March ECC Chair Civic Service Chelmsford Cathedral / 7th March ECC Climate Commission / 8th March High Sheriff Awards Hylands House / 9th March EALC Personnel Meeting Gt Dunmow / 10th March The Essex Rural Partnership, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst and Essex Police are launching the new Essex Rural Crime Strategy 2023 – 2026 at Layer Marney Tower, Colchester C05 9US
These meetings are in addition to Parish Council Meetings

EALC Annual General meeting -2023

I am pleased to write to you today and invite member councils and partners to attend the 79th Annual General Meeting of the Essex Association of Local Councils. We are excited to announce that the **2023 AGM** will be held in the Colchester District, in the Layer Suite at [Colchester Stadium](#) on **Thursday 21st September 2023**.

New Format E Letter

We are getting in touch with you to share the news that we are moving over to a new email platform to send out our e-bulletins and announcements. We are now going to be using [Mail Chimp](#). The decision to use Mail Chimp has come through analysis of the current email service we provide to our members, including up-to-date GDPR procedures. We, as a County Association, have a duty to make sure that your information is handled in the correct way. To read our most recent privacy policy, please click [HERE](#). With Mail Chimp, we will be able to create a fresh new look for our e-bulletins, making it easier to navigate, a printable version and the options for readers to subscribe themselves. This includes News, Police, Fire & Crime and Job Vacancies. **Please note, if you are a Clerk you will automatically get signed up to receive all e-bulletins as part of our membership with us.** The link for new sign-ups is: <http://eepurl.com/idX6zz>

Establishing a new Parish Council - Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC) Shadow Council

The EALC is shadowing the creation of this new Parish Council following the request below to our CEO, Charlene Slade:

“As a shadow Council we have been tasked with setting up the new Parish Council however we currently have no budget or identified officer capacity to support with the task. I would therefore be grateful for the opportunity to talk with you about your experiences of establishing councils and welcome your input in terms of the legal requirements as to what needs to be in place for a council so in this case when the CGC council comes into being on the 1st April, at which point shadow councillors become councillors until the election in May. Any help you can give would be gratefully appreciated as we have our next meeting Thursday evening. I have already mentioned that we will need to ensure budget to allow the council to become members of the EALC”.

Signed

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Devolution

Nathan Rowland, ECC Stakeholder Engagement Manager and Lucy Whiteman, Director of Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities at the ECC will be meeting with EALC representatives to be fully briefed on the thinking and strategic direction of the County of Essex in the devolution process. In the meantime, I have provided some useful links for you:

The NALC/LGA [One Community: A guide to effective partnership working between principal and local councils](#)

LGA's, [Local service delivery and place-shaping: A framework to support parish and town councils](#)

some more specifics on devolution are in our [Parliamentary Briefing on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#)

Local Council Award Scheme

Congratulations to the latest local councils for being accredited under the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS). LCAS celebrates the best of local councils, helps them develop their potential, and recognises that they are well-run and meet the required standards. The latest councils accredited at the Quality Gold level are Haydon Wick Parish Council, Wiltshire, Hawthorn Parish Council, County Durham and Malton Town Council, North Yorkshire. [The Quality level has been awarded to Tolleshunt D'Arcy Parish Council, Essex and Great Notley Parish Council, Essex](#). And at the Foundation level are Eynsham Parish Council, Oxfordshire, Meopham Parish Council, Kent, Selling Parish Council, Kent, Market Rasen Town Council, Lincolnshire and [Little Waltham Parish Council, Essex](#). Well done to everyone involved! You can find out more about [the scheme and how to apply on the NALC website](#).

NALC REPORT

Update on the sale of our offices in London

I have been part of this initiative since 2016 and I am pleased to let you know that we are reaching the closing stages of the sale of 109, Great Russell Street in London which is being sold above the current balance sheet valuation. Alternative office space is being identified to accommodate our staff in London.

Updated guidance on the pre-election period

The Local Government Association has updated its guidance on publicity during the pre-election period for the local elections on 4 May. Our updated briefing L01-23 contains a link to the guidance and can be found in the [member's area of the NALC website](#) in the briefings section under council business, law and procedure (login required).

Civility and Respect

I am delighted to announce that [1,000 local \(parish and town\) councils have now signed up](#) for the Civility and Respect Pledge. Launched just six months ago as part of our [Civility and Respect Project](#), the Pledge demonstrates that councils are committed to standing up to poor behaviour and driving through positive changes that support civil and respectful conduct. And the more councils that sign the Pledge, the more impact it will have in lobbying the government to re-visit its response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards. Can I urge all councils yet to [sign the Pledge](#) to do so.

New suite of e-learning on civility and respect

The Civility and Respect Project has also [launched a new suite of e-learning courses](#) for local councils. We recognise that webinars and training courses only sometimes suit the busy schedules of local councils. Yet e-learning allows councils to respond quickly to learners' needs, with flexibility and without having to organise physical training with fixed dates and times. The new courses are on standards in public life, respectful and positive social media for councils and councillors, leadership in challenging situations, and personal resilience.

Civility and Respect Project

NALC, county associations, the Society of Local Clerks, and One Voice Wales, who oversee the Our [Civility and Respect Project](#), met on 14 February 2023. They received an update on the various project streams and discussed how to continue to support the work over the next year. Notably, 25 MPs have signed the [Early Day Motion](#), and nearly 1,000 local councils have [signed the pledge](#). If you haven't done so already, please consider doing so!

NALC's Chair in Parliament - Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

In his recent [open letter](#), NALC's chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, stressed how "it remains vital that we all act as advocates for parish power and the good we can do, especially to Members of Parliament, principal authorities, and other agencies". Keith was doing just this in Parliament this week where he met with Baroness Hayman of Ullcock, shadow spokesperson for **Levelling Up, Housing, Communities and**

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Local Government about the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and then separately with Clive Betts MP, chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee. Common issues covered included ensuring the role of local councils was better understood and not overlooked, remote meetings, stronger sanctions in the standards regime, and the creation of new local councils.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill continues its passage through Parliament next week with its Second Reading in the House of Lords. Ahead of this debate, NALC's president, Baroness Scott of Needham Market, hosted a well-attended Peers briefing this week where we could highlight NALC's key issues, implications for local councils, and areas of concern. You can read more in our [parliamentary briefing](#).

NALC online event on social isolation and loneliness

The latest NALC online event – Social isolation and loneliness from the local council perspective – took place on 22 February, hosted by our policy officer, Jessica Lancod-Frost. Our brilliant panel of speakers, including Robin Hewings, programme director at Campaign to End Loneliness, Monica Boulton, community connections lead at the National Academy for Social Prescribing, and Vanessa Lowe, town clerk for Alcester Town Council, set out the impact social isolation and loneliness can have and how local councils can help improve the wellbeing of those who are socially isolated or lonely, including identifying local need, providing social activities and playing an active part in the social prescribing system. You can still [book your places at our upcoming online events](#) on tackling the housing crisis the local way with custom and self-build homes, and what local councils can do about emergency planning.

Fortnightly meeting with county officers

This week's meeting between NALC and county officers included a webinar delivered by our HR partners Worknest. This ran through the considerations on post-Covid working arrangements, as well as general advice on how to approach requests from staff to variations in existing working hours and location. There will be further webinars throughout the year on a variety of HR topics to help support county associations in their work.

New NALC cost-of-living support webpage

Our new [cost-of-living support webpage](#) was launched this week to help local (parish and town) councils support their communities through the cost-of-living crisis. The webpage provides valuable resources, practical advice, and examples of local councils demonstrating good practices to support their community.

DCMS Coronation website

The Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) recently launched a [Coronation website](#) which includes information for getting involved, a toolkit including templates and a Coronation playlist, and a form for submitting events. DCMS will upload social media materials to the Coronation website from 6 March 2023. The toolkit page currently has links to the Coronation Emblem guidelines, recipes, and a playlist, but it will have more from the beginning of March, including any official images. You can find all this information on NALC's dedicated [Coronation webpage](#).

Top 10 communications tips for local councils

NALC's communications and community engagement partners, [Breakthrough Communications](#), have published their [top 10 tips for local \(parish and town\) council communications](#) in 2023. Discover strategies and tactics to make your council's communications more effective over the coming year!

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

We've urged the House of Lords to make essential changes to the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#) to ensure local (parish and town) councils can play their part. Our president, Baroness Scott of Needham Market, put forward a package of amendments for peers to consider. They include provision for councils to hold remote meetings, suspension of councillors who breach the code of conduct and direct access to government funding and grants. We also sent supporting information in our [briefing](#) to one hundred critical contacts in the House of Lords, urging them to support the amendments.

National Network – Climate Emergency

NALC's [National Network: Climate Emergency](#) held its first meeting of the year on 14 February 2023. The network was honoured to host Dr Paul Behrens of the University of Leiden as a guest speaker. He stressed that the rapid changes we see as a consequence of climate change will only accelerate and that we do not overestimate our resilience to them. He highlighted the savings that could be made by pushing towards net zero earlier and shared with members effective ways to engage with people on the issue of climate change. After a brief Q&A with Dr Behrens, members discussed NALC's Policy Committee's inquiries into mandatory training, the importance of the Community Energy Scheme, the need to devolve funding to the parish level, and the challenge parishes face when developing relationships with local activists and community power groups. Andrew Maliphant also updated his work

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with the net zero forum on which he represented NALC and hosted an additional informal session after the network meeting with members who wished to discuss matters not included in the formal agenda. The next meeting for the network will take place in May.

5. Parish Council reports

Dunton Hill Garden village is still going ahead – See AGM minutes (West Horndon)

Regular meetings with Planning authority and applicant

Build timeline according to the developer is about 19 years

West Horndon railway station to remain and no new station will be built

East Horndon business park being developed

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Blackmore PC planning application being discussed shortly. 40 new houses being built with S106 monies being earmarked

£500 from EALC for a “warm hub” which the PC matched

10 volunteers waiting to be trained to undertake Speedwatch duties

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Stondon Massey PC

Speedwatch is being run weekly. Liaising with Blackmore and Doddinghurst.

Working with Kelvedon Hatch on a footpath issue

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Doddinghurst PC

Massive problems with Barclays Bank and thinking of changing banks.

Bus service with ECC until 2024 and is a lifeline for residents

Deputy Clerk has left but a replacement has been found and starts shortly.

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Kelvedon Hatch PC

Footpath issue between Kelvedon Hatch to Stondon Massey

Working with Ramblers & Stondon Massey PC to resolve the issue

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Ingatestone PC

A large pick up in girls football in the area

Looking to develop part of the cemetery as a burial ground

6. Information Sharing – an opportunity for Councils to ask questions and share their experiences

- a) Vandalism by a small but effective group of youths which is seriously impacting the Doddinghurst community

The village hall is being vandalised by youths aged 14

Becoming a nuisance and a window was unlocked and damage to the hall and kitchen

The caretaker and volunteers have been threatened.

Village Hall have employed a security company to patrol a couple of times per week

Police have been notified and their response was to remove the youth shelters

A few Councils have had a similar experience with vandalism.

- b) Essex CC introduction of online booking system for recycling centres

In response to numerous complaints about the booking system Cllr M. Buckley response was that

I am pleased to confirm that the booking system for small vehicles is live and residents have already made over 1,350 bookings for the two week period starting 13 March. I am also pleased to confirm that the test of ‘same day’ bookings went smoothly at Rayleigh Recycling Centre and was well received by customers and staff alike. Therefore, the extended trial will go live with customers able to make a booking up to 1 hour in advance. We have also been able to further increase visit capacity at Rayleigh Recycling Centre and to extend same day bookings to the ‘large vehicle’ trial at our nine van-friendly sites.

As you would expect, we are engaging regularly with our operational teams to ensure staff are supported and continuing our programme of resident facing communications focusing on providing residents with information on how to make a booking. In addition to on-site banners and flyers, some of the communications activities include:

- *eNewsletter articles issued from Love Essex and Your Essex*

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- *Print newspaper adverts that are supplemented online versions – running in February and March, titles such as Basildon Echo, Saffron Walden Reporter, Roundabout Rochford, The Edge, Local Ad.*
- *Digital – social media posts and paid adverts across a range of channels (Facebook, Twitter, NextDoor) –*
- *Animation on ‘how to book’ published - <https://youtu.be/l68JovCt0lw>. This summary is intended to attract attention and encourage residents to find out more, and will be supplemented with more detailed ‘how to book’ video content for those residents who need more information.*
- *Press Release due for publication w/c 6 March*

Communications assets and timelines have been shared with communications colleagues in District, Borough and City councils so that they can be quickly and easily deployed in local communications. The same communications pack has been provided to the EALC for cascade to Town and Parish Councils. Contact Centre teams in District, Borough and City councils have also been briefed and provided with guidance.

In late March / early April, the communications focus will move to reinforcing the ‘how to book’ messaging and to include short, digital testimonial content on residents’ experience of the booking process.

7. 2023 meeting dates 12.06.23: 11.09.23: 11.12.23

8. Date of next meeting – Thursday 12th. June 2023 at 7.30pm at Ingatestone Parish Council offices

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.30pm and thanked everyone for attending