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Minutes of the Meeting of the Brentwood Borough Parish Councils Association held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup>.  
 June 2023 at 7.30pm at Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council office

**PRESENT:** Paul Jeater (Chairman, Ingatestone & Fryerning PC), Brent Smith (Stondon Massey PC), Peter Davey and Jane Winter (Ingatestone PC), Alan Kingsford and Graham Hyams both (Herongate & Ingrave PC), Debbie Dicker and Caroline Fuller both (Doddinghurst PC), Susan Clapham and Terry Lockhart (Blackmore, HE & WG PC), Luz Loizou Kelvedon Hatch PC), Kim Harding (West Horndon PC), Chrissy Gelderbloem (Navestock PC) and Kevin B. Money as BBPCA Association Clerk/Treasurer

1. **Welcome from the Chairman.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting especially The Mayor of Brentwood Borough Council
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Roger Keeble (Blackmore, Hook End & Wyatts Green PC), Hugh Gorton
3. **To approve the Minutes** of the last meeting of BBPCA on 13<sup>th</sup>. March 2023. **All Agreed**

**4. The Mayor of Brentwood, Cllr Gareth Barrett**

Cllr Gareth Barrett described to members the role of the mayor at BBC  
 Brentwood Borough Council structure has changed significantly with the new administration  
 Housing Health and community committee  
 New ambitions for the committee  
 Civic roles and events – Brentwood list focused on Brentwood and Shenfield  
 Civic awards in April '24  
 4 new Alderman of Brentwood this year  
 Council asset portfolio – Borough Council owned portfolio was not run properly  
 Events for the Mayor to attend  
 BBC Budget for 2023/2024 was set by previous administration with a starting deficit of £250,000  
 P. Davey requests that the mayor attends as many PC meetings as he can

The mayor then took questions from the members present which included

- Planning issues were raised
- Employment being undertaken to increase by BBC planning department
- The use of play equipment owned by BBC

Email Gareth Barrett to get the below to another meeting

Chair of Housing committee : Planning officer at BBC : Parish Liaison Officer at BBC

**5. To receive reports:**

a) **Finance report.**

1) To receive an update on the Barclays Bank

Councillors noted the Bank statement to 31<sup>st</sup>. May 2023

2) To agree March and June Clerk payment of £169.70p. **All Agreed**

3) To sign the Unity Trust Application form and provide Proof of Identity documents

Councillors D. Dicker, P. Jeater and B. Smith signed the Unity Trust Bank application form. The Clerk to email UTB submission form and supporting documents from Cllr B. Smith

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

Cllr Hugh Gorton supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read:

The Local Highways Panel has not met since December so there is nothing to report as such. Prior to that the previous meeting was 7th July last year. Cllr Lesley Wagland had said that the Panel would be

Signed

*PJeater*

5<sup>th</sup>. October 2023

meeting in May or June but so far no meeting has been scheduled. This is very concerning. At the moment Brentwood seems to be without a working Local Highways Panel. Looking at the Essex Highways website I note that the Basildon and Chelmsford LHPs are continuing to meet quarterly so Brentwood seems to be the exception.

On a more positive note I have seen an improvement with bollards and traffic island maintenance in the Borough. Several damaged or dirty reflective bollards have replaced or cleaned and at least one traffic island has had both bollards and the lamp standard replaced. Whether my email to Cllr Lee Scott on behalf of the BBPCA had any part in this I wouldn't like to say.

I agreed with Peter Davey to put the recording and reporting of damaged and defective bollards and traffic islands on a more systematic basis. I would survey the major roads in the Borough and record defects on a spreadsheet and report them to Essex Highways. With a hectic local election campaign and finding my feet as a newly elected borough councillor I'm afraid I haven't started the survey yet. I hoping to start it this weekend, either by reinstating my old dashcam and capturing images on the move or by getting on my bike and stopping to take photos at each location. Clearly, if other members can send me photos of defective or missing bollards or other damage to traffic islands, together with the location and an EH report reference (if applicable), I would very much appreciate that.

Finally, I give my apologies for next Monday's meeting – I will be at Mountnessing Village Council meeting where Darryl and I will be presenting the scheme for a 30mph speed limit and traffic calming measures (mini-roundabouts) on the southern section of the Roman Road from the bridge over the A12 at Ingatestone to slip road at the Mountnessing end.

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Subsequent to my report earlier it appears that the Brentwood Parishes are not going to have any representation on the Brentwood LHP!

The LHP will consist of just the four county councillors for the Borough with no representation by borough councillors either. I expect major opposition to this move

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Email from Cllr Lesley Wagland

Chair of Brentwood Local Highway Panel, Councillor for Brentwood Rural Division, Essex County Council

As chair of Essex County Council's Local Highways Panel covering the Brentwood Borough area ("the Panel"), I am writing to advise you of changes to the membership and voting of the Panel. In light of the new ECC approach and guidance as to the composition and remit of Local Highway Panels, the membership and voting of the Panel will be confined to the Essex County Council Members only.

This decision is with immediate effect and means that Brentwood Borough Council is no longer invited to appoint Borough Councillors to the Panel. The Panel will also not include a Parish Councillor representative.

I understand that this is largely consistent with the position taken in respect of the LHP for the Rochford District area and so you will have already seen this type of change adopted by the chair in that case.

It was agreed that Jane Winter and Hugh Gorton would be asked to draft a response from BBPCA so that a letter from BBPCA would be compiled then be sent to Cllr L. Wagland opposing the changes in light of the reorganisation of the Highways Panel. This letter would then be signed by the Chair of BBPCA

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

**EALC**

Please see the EALC News Bulletins covering all the EALC initiatives since the last BBPCA meeting. We have also completed the upgrade of our Training and Conference facility at Great Dunmow :

<https://ealc.gov.uk/training-2023/AV Project Complete>

EALC AGM will be held at Colchester Football Club on 21<sup>st</sup>. September 2023

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**NALC**

Update since the last meeting of the BBPCA

Certificate in Local Council Administration operations (CILCA)

On 5 June 2023, Anders Hanson and Lisa Etchell from NALC's member services team attended the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) operations meeting. This quarterly meeting brings together NALC, SLCC, One Voice Wales and county officer representatives to discuss the day-to-day

Signed

*Pfeater*

5<sup>th</sup>. October 2023

operations of CiLCA. This meeting looked at student feedback, the costs of taking part, the work of CiLCA trainers and promoting progression to the Community Governance qualification.

NALC and SLCC to co-host an online event on the Community Ownership Fund I was delighted this week to announce that we are working with our colleagues in the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) on an online event on 13 June 2023 for Councillors and clerks on the Community Ownership Fund. This follows the recent and very welcome announcement that the fund has been extended to allow applications from parish, town and community councils in England and Wales. With the next bidding round now open, this FREE event for Councillors and clerks offers attendees a valuable opportunity to find out more about the fund and understand the application process comprehensively. Speakers from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Locality will cover the steps in framing successful applications and provide critical insights into what the fund looks for in projects. A dedicated Q&A segment will allow attendees to seek clarification and receive tailored guidance. NALC and SLCC have long advocated for direct access to government funding which is why both organisations are strongly urging councils to make full use of this new funding opportunity.

A new online event on making the planning system work for local councils

This week we also launched another online event on making the planning system work for local (parish and town) councils that takes place on 22 November 2023. Planning is undoubtedly one of the most significant issues affecting our communities. At this event, our expert speakers will share their knowledge of the challenges and opportunities of planning in local councils. And they will discuss approaches for improving community engagement, promoting sustainable development, and ensuring a fair and transparent planning process. Register your place today and visit our website to learn more about our other online events.

Your chance to send NALC your council's planning case studies!

We are asking local councils to submit case studies for a new publication as part of the work we are doing on the big theme of housing and planning. This follows our previous work on health and well-being, climate change and young people. As part of this process, we're developing a dedicated webpage which will include information, resources and a case study publication with examples of what local councils do, from neighbourhood planning and housing allocations to creating planning committees and appealing planning decisions. You can submit a short case study by completing a simple form by 27 June 2023.

NALC's online event on fighting climate change

We delivered our online event on fighting climate change with local council action this week. The sold-out event on 24 May 2023 discussed how stakeholders interested in rural sustainability could work with communities and featured case studies from local (parish and town) councils on what they did locally in the fight against climate change. Our expert panel featured Megan Blyth, local and community empowerment project manager at the Centre for Sustainable Energy, who said, "We think that parish and town councils can be a massive force for change". Culvin Milmer, visitor services manager and business development officer at Swanage Town Council, added, "We need to ensure that Swanage is the most sustainable place it can be as a tourist location". And Cllr Richard Neale of Draughton Parish Council stated his council "declared a climate emergency in 2021 and voted to help decarbonise the National Grid". During the extensive Q&A, it was good to hear suggestions for where councils require further support such as leadership and professional advice from principal councils, access to loan capital, gathering data to share with the government on the impact of work by local councils to reduce energy, guidance and help with retrofitting listed buildings, and sharing documents such as climate action plans. I also want to thank Katherine Brown from NALC's partners, Blachere Illumination, for hosting the event.

A new online event on engaging with local communities through digital engagement

Staying on the theme of events, we've launched a new online event on engaging with local communities through digital engagement which will take place on 27 September 2023. With the growing influence of the digital world, it's more important than ever that local councils make it as easy as possible for people to engage with them and be flexible enough to meet the needs of their communities. This event will teach councils about effective digital engagement strategies and how to use digital tools and platforms to connect with residents. We also have plenty of other events throughout the year, so please check out our website to learn more about them.

Please complete our remote meetings online survey!

I would be grateful if Councillors and clerks from our local councils could complete a short online survey about local council meetings and the use of virtual meeting technology. This is being carried out in parallel with LGA's own survey of principal councils. The results will help NALC's campaign for legislative

change to allow councils the flexibility to use virtual meeting technologies for council meetings, understand how councils might use virtual meeting technologies if they were permitted to do so and assess the potential benefits and challenges of in-person, virtual and hybrid council meetings. The survey should be quick and take around 5 minutes to complete. I would be grateful if you could complete the online form by 8 June 2023, please also only complete the survey once – thank you for your help.

Cost-of-living survey by the Rural Services Network

This week the Rural Services Network (RSN) published the results of its Rural Cost of Living Survey. The survey showed that more than 75% of respondents say their financial situation has worsened over the last year — [read the entire report](#). The RSN is the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice.

First White Ribbon steering group meeting

We held our first White Ribbon steering group meeting on 15 May 2023. The meeting outlined the proposal, endorsed by NALC's Management Board, Policy Committee and women councillors network, discussed the development of the three-year action plan, and other activities to help support the initiative, such as connecting it to the Civility and Respect Project. Through the action plan, NALC aims to raise awareness, engage men and boys in violence prevention, and share relevant resources and information on tackling violence against women and girls. We plan to keep the momentum by holding monthly meetings, and the group agreed to aim for accreditation by White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2023. You can learn more about the White Ribbon UK Charity on their website.

Fortnightly meeting with county officers

This week's meeting between NALC and county officers saw a presentation from Chris Borg and Fflur Jones from our policy and communication team about this year's post-local elections research. It was an opportunity for county officers to have input into our surveys and how we develop future surveys. There was also a discussion on the outcomes of the elections, the impact these have had on county associations, and handling vacancies. The meeting also highlighted the newly updated *The Good Councillor's guide to employment*, which is available to members for free in the member's area of our website or contact your county association to order a print copy.

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NALC National Network: Super councils

A look at the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities \(DLUHC\) publication of parish precept levels in 2024](#) was top of the agenda for our [super councils' network](#) meeting on 16 May 2023. Ahead of the next set of published data, the network discussed the increased devolution of services to local (parish and town) councils and the challenges in raising the precept to match those new responsibilities. The network heard updates on the Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA) amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, where the network fed back on their council's and councillor's experiences, our [Star Council Awards](#), and our [study tour at Newport Pagnell Town Council](#) in June 2023. The next meeting takes place on 21 September 2023 and will discuss the potential needs of super councils from associate membership of the Local Government Information Unit.

NALC meets the Liberal Democrat spokesperson for levelling up and local government

An important element of our advocacy and sector promotion is developing relationships with parliamentarians, political parties and think tanks. As part of our engagement programme, our chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, met with Helen Morgan MP, the Liberal Democrat spokesperson for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Local Government, this week. Keith briefed Helen on the work of NALC, county associations and local councils, highlighting key issues facing the sector, such as civility and respect, funding, remote meetings and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

NALC meeting with the Forestry Commission

Trees are close to the heart of councils, councillors, communities and NALC. Many of you are already doing much to encourage local tree planting, as you can see from [our work with the](#)

Woodland Trust. I was pleased to join Keith at the meeting with the Forestry Commission's chief executive officer Richard Stanford, to highlight the sector's role. Richard outlined the importance of trees, carbon capture, mental health and local economies. He also set out the challenge we face to plant sufficient trees especially given the threats they face from pests, including deer and grey squirrels. We discussed how we can work together to promote planting more trees, and we will keep you informed of developments.

Local Government Association cost-of-living webinar

Fflur Jones and Daisy Petrow from our policy and communication team attended a Local Government Association (LGA) cost-of-living webinar on 12 May 2023. The speakers included public health practitioners, senior policy development officers, and other professionals across the local government sphere. They spoke about their experience dealing with the cost-of-living crisis and shared good practices strategies from across the sector. Elaine Morgan of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) shared some helpful information on what the GMCA has done to support its residents. They have developed a Greater Manchester Helping Hands website, a cost-of-living dashboard to collect data on various topics like housing, homelessness and health, and have supported creating and running warm spaces. We have more information on our dedicated cost-of-living webpage, which we regularly update with resources, case studies and other useful information, such as our update this week on holding a Climate Action Day to reduce your council's reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

Could you be the next Chair of the Improvement and Development Board?

We are looking for an independent chair with a passion for local democracy who can lead in supporting the work of national bodies in the sector, providing a fresh perspective and constructive challenge. The Improvement and Development Board's members include NALC, county associations, DLUHC, LGA and the Society of Local Council Clerks. It's an opportunity to drive change within the most local tier of local government at a pivotal moment for the sector. If this sounds like you or someone you know, find out more about the role on our website.

Fortnightly meeting with county officers

Last week, the government confirmed it would allow applications from local councils to the Community Ownership Fund for the first time. NALC has lobbied hard on this issue, and I am delighted the government has listened. We've also had some good media coverage – this story was picked up by LocalGov and Room 151, which included quotes from our chair, Cllr Keith Stevens. For the latest news like this and to keep up-to-date with all other NALC news, I'd encourage all local councillors, councillors, clerks and council staff to sign up for our mailing list and follow us on social media.

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Community Ownership Fund open to local councils

As many of you know, we have been lobbying the government to extend the Community Ownership Fund's eligibility to local (parish and town) councils. So, I'm delighted to confirm today that the government has listened, and the fund has now been extended to allow applications from local councils for the first time. The fund is a government programme with £150m over four years run by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to help communities take ownership of assets at risk of closure across the UK. You can read more in our news story and the government's statement.

The latest meeting of NALC and SLCC

NALC and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) have issued a joint statement following the leadership meeting on 27 April 2023 between our chair, Cllr Keith Stevens and the SLCC chair, Adam Keppel-Green. The statement emphasises the importance of joint working and mutual support between organisations at all levels to support the sector. Working well together has delivered much, including progressing the Civility and Respect Project and setting up the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointment. The statement also stresses the importance of encouraging local (parish and town) councils, councillors, and clerks to promote membership in each organisation. I want to urge councillors to support their clerk's membership of the SLCC and clerks to support their councillor's membership of NALC and their local

county association.

Power to Change report on high streets and community business

A new report on [Community-powered high streets](#) by Power to Change makes a case for community business as essential to solving high street decline. Our head of policy and communications, Justin Griggs, [was at the report's launch](#) in Westminster on 10 May 2023, where speakers from Power to Change and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities gave their reactions to the report and its three recommendations of a National Community-Led High Streets Programme, central and local government creating the conditions for more alternative ownership, and a targeted empty property premium on business rates for long-term vacant properties. If you still need to, remember to check out [The Good Councillor's guide to community business](#), which we developed with the Plunkett Foundation. It is available to members for free in the member's area of our website.

New 2023 edition of The Good Councillor's guide to employment

We've published the new 2023 edition of The Good Councillor's guide to employment, which is essential reading for all councillors. I'm pleased to inform you the updates to this popular resource reflect recent employment law and best practice changes. The publication provides advice and information on crucial employment areas for councillors to improve their employees' work and benefit their communities. With so many local councils holding elections this year, there is an excellent opportunity to support new and returning councillors in their roles by providing them with resources such as this guide and our suite of other Good Councillor's guides on topics ranging from finance and transparency to cyber security to neighbourhood planning. Member councils can access the guide for FREE on our website, and printed copies can be purchased from your local county association.

National Network: Climate emergency

A review of NALC's response to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework was among the key issues considered by NALC's National Network: Climate Emergency on 4 May 2023. The network reflected on the next steps in strengthening neighbourhood plans and the need to consider flash flooding in any local response. Andrew Maliphant, a project manager at The Community Works, provided an update on the government's place-based approach to net zero. The meeting also suggested that NALC develop a template for terms of reference on climate change to include non-councillors in the discussions, which would help with resourcing and implementing a climate change action plan. The network next meets on 27 July 2023, and you can learn more about the network and how to join on our website.

Star Council Awards are back for 2023!

I'm thrilled about the return of our Star Council Awards! These awards play an important role in recognising the local (parish and town) council sector's positive impact on communities across England. We want the awards to be even bigger and better than before. This year, there are five award categories: Council, Councillor, Young Councillor, County Association and Clerk of the Year. These categories have been carefully selected to recognise excellence in different areas of local council operations and highlight the varied contributions made by councils. The nomination period ends on 28 July 2023.

We want more nominations to provide even more opportunities for councils, councillors, county associations and clerks to shine. Raising the awards' profile is essential for our sector to help lobby the government for the changes we want. To do that, we've created a communication pack to help you share information on the awards.

29 November 2023. Save the date. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in the House of Lords and will be presented with their awards. Let's make it a day to remember! I also want to thank our award sponsors, BHIB Councils Insurance, Blachere Illumination, Breakthrough Communications, CCLA, Cloudy IT and DCK Accounting Solutions.

NALC urges the government not to over-extend development rights

This week, NALC urged the government to refrain from opening the floodgates with permitted development rights. In our response to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities consultation on permitted development rights, we strongly argued to the government that policies on permitted development rights should be the prerogative of local authorities in their local plans or neighbourhood planning groups and that permitted development rights should play a minimal role in the planning system because every location is unique.

Local Council Award Scheme

A couple of updates on the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) — this week, [we announced the latest LCAS results](#). LCAS celebrates the successes of the best local councils and provides a framework to support all local councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential. Congratulations to all

Signed

*Pfeater*

5<sup>th</sup>. October 2023

councils accredited under the scheme's latest phase. I encourage those considering accreditation to [learn more and start your journey today](#).

Jo Cox Civility Commission call for submissions

In both local and national governments, abuse and intimidation of elected representatives and violence towards them are among the biggest threats to our democracy in the UK. Worryingly, seven in ten councillors reported experiencing abuse or intimidation in the last year. Our [Civility and Respect Project](#) was established to improve behaviour in the sector and is making good progress in providing a wide range of support and resources to help councils. The Jo Cox Foundation has now launched the [Jo Cox Civility Commission](#) to drive change in British democracy by working to find implementable solutions to make life safer for political representatives and candidates for office. The commission aims to raise awareness of the detrimental impact on individuals, democracy and society of the current levels of abuse and intimidation in political life. Phase one of the commission is taking place until the summer of 2023 to gather evidence and solutions from experts and those with lived experience about addressing abuse and intimidation. A [call for submissions](#) is open to sharing your perspective and ideas, which I strongly encourage everyone involved in the sector to respond to.

NALC 109 sale

I am delighted to report that we've completed the 109 Great Russell Street sale. It's been NALC headquarters for the last 30 years! We're moving into our new offices on 1 May 2023. There will be no changes to our email addresses or telephone numbers, but you can continue to write to our current address until the end of April. I want to thank NALC staff, councillors, county associations and clerks for their support, and we look forward to a bigger and brighter future in our new headquarters.

## 6. Parish Council reports

Dunton Hill village still going ahead

East Horndon Business Park renamed as London Brentwood Commercial Park

2 units have been built to date and remain largely unlet

West Horndon Industrial Estate – earmarked for 550-600 Homes

New owners are proposing to keep the area as an industrial estate

New roundabout installed A127/A128 interchange

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Blackmore uses zoom for their planning meetings

Blackmore are not notified of any appeals being submitted

The ongoing discussions with BBC and Blackmore PC relating to concurrent functions and double taxation issues would be taken up with the Mayor. This was after the Mayor felt that as he hadn't actually seen this, he felt it hadn't reached members for a decision and had perhaps been a decision made at Officer level. The Mayor offered to pursue this on behalf of the PC's if Blackmore Clerk got the information across to him.

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Navestock – Fly-tipping has 40% of the problem in the Borough

Illegal development and retrospective applications are increasing

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Herongate & Ingrave have no great problems but had a brilliant Coronation Day

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Doddinghurst has a massive problem with anti-social behaviour. Offenders were caught.

Police did not attend their Coronation Day

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Stondon Massey – 4 incidents of fly-tipping in the last month.

Footpath issue and is working with Kelvedon Hatch PC

Speedwatch – 4 different areas being undertaken

Speed signs are hopefully being put up in the village

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Mountnessing Village Council.

Traffic flows and safety on the Roman Road / A12 slip south through Ingatestone and Mountnessing.

Mountnessing VC fully support highways improvements on this section of Roman Road over it's full length. We believe, that along with the main section of Roman road to the northwest of the village improvements are necessary to ensure safety and that the speed limits should be re-examined with central 30 mph zones emplaced.

Other road improvements such as mini roundabouts on the southern section and the full implementation of my requested schemes at the Thoby Lane to Church Road crossing including the imposition of a 30 mph zone which would allow for the implementation of Zebra rather than the much more expensive Pelican crossings.

As Vice Chair of the LHP until 2021 I made several applications for road safety improvements on Roman Road, these now seem to have vanished into the ether.

Background:

At pre-application discussions concerning the development of the Ingatestone Garden centre I was present and part, both for Mountnessing and Ingatestone & Fryerning.

On 16<sup>th</sup>. January 2018 Mountnessing objected to the development and included requests that if it went ahead, provisions for Highway safety improvements must be included.

On 17<sup>th</sup>. January 2018 Ingatestone objected in very much the same terms.

The proposed improvements included mini roundabouts, speed restrictions and cycle lane improvements. These were discussed with both the planners and the developer at previous pre-application meetings.

ECC highways consultation on these improvements disagreed and we could not force a section 106 agreement. Nevertheless, BBC refused the development. However, Redrow the developer applied to the Inspectorate and successfully appealed the decision.

At the time I was chair of Planning at BBC and I sat through the whole week of the appeal and made statements on the lack of road safety improvements and requested s106 monies to make such improvements. These were refused by the Inspector. Somewhere the Inspectorate holds the recording of the appeal, but I have not been allowed to get hold of it, one wonders why?

Furthermore, when the Hallmark scheme came to outline permission at BBC Planning I requested a mini roundabout and /or a Zebra Crossing with associated 30 mph limit at the junction with the original Ingatestone By-pass (The Hallmark site is on this remainder). That too was considered unnecessary and ignored.

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Kelvedon Hatch planning is main problem

2 meetings with the local Police

7. **Information Sharing** – an opportunity for Councils to ask questions and share their experiences
8. **2023 meeting dates** 05.10.23: 11.12.23
9. **Date of next meeting – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>. October 2023 at 7pm at Brentwood district Council offices**

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.40pm and thanked everyone for attending