**Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 8 January 2024 at Bradwell Village Hall, Church Road, Bradwell**

**Present:**

Cllr. Tony Dunn (Chair)

Cllr. Adam Deighton

Cllr. Craig Evans

Cllr. Lesley Kinder

Cllr. Michael Turner

**In attendance:**

Mrs Nicki Watkins, Clerk & RFO

Cllr. Playle, County Councillor, Witham Northern

Cllr. Walsh, District Councillor, Coggeshall Ward

Cllr. Abram, District Councillor, Coggeshall Ward

Two members of the public

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| **23-4/157** | **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**  The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and welcomed those present.  Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Lockey and Harding. |
| **23-4/158** | **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**  Cllrs. Turner and Kinder declared interests as members of the Village Hall Management Committee with respect to Agenda item 23-4/163, D-Day 80 Commemorations and item 23-4/164, Bradwell Dog Show 2024. Cllr. Kinder declared an interest as a resident of Rectory Meadow with respect to Agenda item 23-4/172. |
| **23-4/159** | **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE OF MUTUAL INTEREST**  No issues were raised by the residents attending the meeting. |
| **23-4/160** | **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**  Cllr. Playle reported on the following:   * Braintree District Council had set its precept at 2.99% with a further 2% being levied for Social Care. 2.99% was the maximum which could be applied for without a referendum. He noted that Essex County Council was legally obliged to have responsibility for areas such as Social Care and Children in Care and this would be the first year that ECC would have to take some funds from the 2.99% precept, as the Social Care allocation was not enough. He confirmed that Band D resulted in an additional £1.39 per week. * The Local Highways Panel was being reviewed with the aim of streamlining the functions. Ultimately the aim of the review was to “speed up” the services. * Cllr. Playle asked the Clerk whether the application for the Locality Fund had been processed. The Clerk advised she had resubmitted the form, removing the VAT element which the Parish Council would re-claim, and this was now being processed. She hoped this would be in the accounts by the end of the month. * In respect of the road repairs near Indaver Waste Management, Cllr. Playle was pushing for confirmation for a date for when the work would start and would report back accordingly. * Cllr. Playle reiterated that he would be happy to receive any suggestions or ideas from the Parish Council for improvements across the County, which could be considered.   Cllr. Playle left the meeting at 7.50 pm.  Cllrs. Walsh & Abram reported that:   * With reference to BDC’s budget, it was noted that the majority of the group had backed an amended motion for a more “community based” budget. * Cllr. Walsh was keen to know if the Bradwell area had suffered from any flooding issues caused by the recent wet weather, citing the area between the BP Garage and Wadud’s restaurant. Cllr. Dunn confirmed that this particular issue had been due to a leak, which now appeared to be repaired. Cllr. Deighton mentioned that Cut Edge Lane had been a particular issue, and it was noted that Cllr. Lockey was currently absent from the meeting due to having issues with excess water given his farm was in the floodplain. * Cllr. Walsh reported that three additional Planning Officers had been appointed to assist with processing planning applications. Cllr. Abrams noted that BDC were intending to update their planning application system to incorporate Google Maps links, which would identify where planning could take place. He was keen for the public to also have access to this function so they could view current and future planning. He observed that, with regard to the general landscape and environment in the area, planners and residents did not appear to have always complied with what was allowed. |
| **23-4/161** | **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2023 – RESOLUTION**  Members received and considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 December 2023 and resolved to approve them as a true record.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; All in favour**  The minutes were signed by the Chair. |
| **23-4/162** | **LINKS SOLAR FARM**  The Clerk reported that she had tried to contact Low Carbon a number of times since the last meeting to request a draft contract relating to the Community Fund, as well as to complain about the state of the verges and the amount of mud on the road. She had also called the helpline and left a message, registering a complaint that site vehicles were using Hollies Road to get to the site which was the incorrect route. This was despite Low Carbon giving their reassurance that this would not happen. The Clerk assumed the offices had closed for the holidays and said that, should she hear nothing in the next two weeks, she would contact Low Carbon’s Head Office.  Cllr. Dunn asked that the Clerk copy any complaints to the Planning Enforcement Officers, who had also given assurance to the Parish Council that there would be no site vehicles via that route.  Cllr. Deighton noted that the salt bin on Hollies Road appeared to be missing but would check and report back. |
| **23-4/163 &**  **23-4/164** | **D-DAY 80 COMMEMORATIONS AND BRADWELL DOG SHOW**  Cllr. Turner wanted to discuss both the D-Day 80-year celebrations and the Bradwell Dog Show together in his capacity as a member of the Village Hall Management Committee. He advised that the VHMC were due to meet by the end of January and, as mentioned at the last Parish Council meeting, it was likely that they would request a donation either for the D-Day celebrations or the dog show. As discussions were continuing, he was currently not in a position to request a donation.  The dog show had always attracted a good turn out and was planned to take place at the end of May this year. However, the concern was that the D-Day celebrations, a nationwide event on 6 June (a weekday and five days later than the dog show) might be less well attended. The VHMC had originally considered that the D-Day celebrations might be an event similar to the Jubilee and Coronation celebrations, i.e. a beacon lighting event, followed by a BBQ and/or fireworks on the field. However, at this stage it was difficult to plan for such an event as it had to be financially viable.  Cllr. Evans acknowledged that it was important to retain the dog show, but that he considered it to be a real shame for the village not to mark the D-Day celebrations. He suggested the VHMC might want to post a Facebook notice, seeking volunteers to assist with both the event and increasing the turnout. He also kindly offered to financially assist with the event, either funding the food for the BBQ or the fireworks.  Cllr. Abrams was aware that Parish Councils in Coggeshall, Feering and Kelvedon planned to mark the event, and said he would report back to the Clerk, as there might be an opportunity to share an event.  Cllr. Turner would report back to the Parish Council once the VHMC had met and once a decision had been made.  Cllrs. Walsh and Abrams left the meeting at 8.15pm |
| **23-4/165** | **BUDGET 2024/25**  Members had received the draft budget and precept request information for 2024/25 and agreed to consider each line of the proposed budget.  The Chair proposed to remove the Contingency of £500 given the healthy reserves.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Evans; All in favour.**    The Chair proposed to remove the Localism Fund of £500 as it was a historical payment no longer made by BDC.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Evans; All in favour.**  Members discussed the Precept request, and all agreed they would prefer not to request a precept higher than £12,000 (requested last year), with the aim of achieving a zero percent increase. The Clerk would update the budget spreadsheet, removing the Contingency and Localism Fund and apply £12,000 as a precept. She would report back to the Councillors whether this resulted in a percentage increase and, if required, hold an extraordinary meeting to resolve this point. |
| **23-4/166** | **FINANCIAL REPORTS**   1. **Members received and approved** the financial statements to 31 December 2023. The Clerk reported that since circulating the finance papers with the agenda, she had received an invoice from A & J Lighting for £208.80 with respect to the street light repairs at Church Road. She also recorded that Essex & Herts Air Ambulance had recorded their thanks for the kind donation made by the Parish Council in November. There were no queries.   **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; Cllr. All in favour.**   1. **Members approved** payments for December 2023. There were no queries.   **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Kinder; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/167** | **PLANNING MATTERS**  **New Applications**   1. **23/02940/FUL** -**:** **Bridge Hall Barn, Hollies Road, Bradwell, Essex CM77 8DZ**  Erection of stables, external store and associated landscaping.   **Comments by 9 January 2023**  Members discussed the application plan, and agreed to respond to BDC with the following response:  ***“The proposed stables, external store and associated landscaping are close to a Grade 2 listed building a folly. There is no assessment of the impact of this development on the Grade 2 listed building even though the building is shown on the plans it is the square box on the other side of the track. Policy 5 of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan is relevant here:***  ***Any proposal which could impact on a non-designated heritage asset should demonstrate how the significance of the asset has been acknowledged and addressed. The folly is a designated heritage asset, therefore, the listed buildings officer at BDC should consider whether development in close proximity to a Grade 2 listed building is appropriate. The local planning authority should advise on the information required.***  ***The applicant states that it is not known how foul sewage will be disposed of, yet stables are the homes of livestock which usually need to be washed down occasionally and which produce excrement (manure) the disposal of which should be detailed in this application.***  ***The applicant states that there are no plans for the storage and collection of waste / recyclable waste stables produce waste, so the application is deficient and should be rejected until these details are provided.***  ***The plans are silent on the use of the rooms provided to the right of the stables are these purely for storage of e.g. food for the livestock? The rooms have no windows so will require artificial illumination which is neither environmentally friendly nor sustainable.***  ***The ancillary buildings have no windows, again they will require artificial illumination which is neither environmentally friendly nor sustainable.***  ***There are no dimensions regarding the height of the barn, nevertheless, it looks too tall to be appropriate in the open countryside where single storey buildings (up to 4.8m) are more appropriate.***  ***The Parish Council notes that no people will be employed to help with running these stables.***  ***The Parish Council asks that the application be withdrawn and resubmitted so that the above points are addressed.”***  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/168** | **Bradwell Poor’s Land Charity**  The Chair explained that it was the responsibility of the Parish Council to appoint two Trustees to the Poor’s Land Charity for a four-year rolling period. He explained the Charity used income to distribute to deserving residents. Tom Speakman had been appointed in January 2023. Michael Keepence’s term was about to end, but he had indicated he would be content to continue with the role. Cllr. Evans supported this and it was agreed to appoint Michael Keepence for a further term.  **Proposed: Cllr. Evans; Seconded: Cllr. Dunn; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/169** | **PLAYING FIELD**   1. Cllr. Kinder there were no issues with the playing field. 2. The Clerk had been advised by Playquip that 12 February 2024 had been earmarked for the repairs. The Clerk noted that the repairs to the rubber safety matting (Option 2, £2520.00, exc. VAT – removal, cleaning and re-installation of tiles) had not been included in the in the original instructions to Playquip and, given she had not been in post at the time, she wanted to confirm that this had been discussed and agreed. Cllr. Dunn confirmed this to be the case. The Clerk would advise Playquip accordingly. She would also arrange with Cllr. Kinder to meet at the playing field prior to the repairs taking place to ensure her understanding of the work expected to be undertaken. 3. The Clerk had answered all follow-up requests from Braintree District Council and was still awaiting approval of S106 funds for the new rotadisk roundabout. |
| **23-4/170** | **FOOTPATHS**  Unfortunately, the Footpaths’ Officer had been unable to attend. However, she had advised the Clerk that she considered there appeared to be more litter on the footpaths and generally around the village and wondered if this had been the impact of having more contractors working on the highways, if so, could the Parish Council seek compensation. The Clerk had advised that it would be difficult to identify the culprits and unlikely they would admit to causing the litter. The Clerk had advised the Footpath’s Officer that two litter picks were planned in the village for 2024. |
| **23-4/171** | **LITTER PICK**  Cllr. Turner noted the litter pick in November had been less well attended that previously, possibly due to late notice or cold weather. The Amenity vehicle had been very well used. The Clerk suggested she liaise with BDC to earmark two dates in 2024 for a litter pick and the Amenity Vehicle. Cllrs agreed that the end of April and September might be suitable and would allow plenty of time to advertise the event and seek litter pick volunteers. The Clerk said it would be helpful to have a Councillor responsible for co-ordinating the event, including taking delivery of the litter pick equipment and completing the risk assessment. Cllr. Evans suggested adding the dates to the next Parish Council meeting and seeking a Councillor willing to assist.  **Proposed: Cllr. Evans; Seconded: Cllr. Turner; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/172** | **RECTORY MEADOW**  The Chair updated the Councillors on the next steps planned for the Friends of Rectory Meadow, and which was separate to the work of the Parish Council. |
| **23-4/173** | **INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT/FUTURE MEETING(S)**  The Chair reported, following an appraisal meeting, the Clerk had successfully met the conditions of her probation period.  The Clerk reported that she had provided BDC with updates to the Open Spaces Improvement Plan, reporting proposed repairs to the play equipment, installation of a new rotadisk roundabout and installation of two new salt bins.  In his absence, the Clerk read Cllr. Harding’s e-mail providing an update on the elements that he and Nigel Allsopp were working on:  ***“The drainage issue from the BP had been resolved in the medium term. Our drains had been badly damaged by unauthorised 3rd Party works and we have had to put in some bypasses. It is exacerbated by a water main leak that Anglian are still denying, but we have made safe and cleaned up so the risk of ice on the carriageway should be resolved.***  ***Outside the motorbike shop we still have water coming out of the carriageway, again ongoing discussion with Anglian. They have been out and fixed a leak, but we still think they have missed one. In the meantime, we have been in and pumped out the BT chamber it will just fill up again.***  ***The resurfacing/relining scheme should be going through imminently but might have to skip that short stretch until the water issue is resolved.***  ***We have an issue further up the hill where surface water is channelling out of Hollies Road and onto our carriageway. We are approaching Essex Highways on that front.”***  The Clerk reminded Councillors that two training events had been planned for Thursday 18 January 2024 and Thursday 1 Feb 2024. Councillors should be at the Village Hall at 6.50pm for a prompt start at 7pm.  Items for the Agenda:   1. D-Day 80 Commemorations/Dog show – request for grant/donation; 2. Use of social media to promote the work of Parish Council, monthly meetings and events. 3. Litter pick dates for 2024 |
| **23-4/174** | **NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  The next Parish Council meeting would take place on Monday 12 February 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell.  Items for inclusion in the Agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk no later than 12 noon, Friday 2 February 2024. The meeting closed at 9.10pm. |