

## Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish Council

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

**Present:**

Cllr. Tony Dunn (Chair)  
 Cllr. Adam Deighton  
 Cllr. Craig Evans  
 Cllr. Antony Harding  
 Cllr. Michael Turner

**In attendance:**

Mrs. Nicki Watkins, Clerk & RFO  
 Mr. Nigel Allsopp, National Highways Route Manager  
 Ms. Tammy Kneill, Highways Inspector for the A120,  
 Ms. Beverley Rodbard-Hedderwick, Stakeholder Manager for Links Solar Farm  
 Footpaths' Officer  
 Six members of the public

**24-25/001 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 Kinder. Cllr. Dunn also noted apologies from Cllrs. Playle, Walsh and Abram.

**24-25/002 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Cllr. Harding declared a non-pecuniary interest with respect to agenda item **24-5/008**, the grass cutting contract as it was undertaken by a family member.  
 Cllr. Turner declared a non-pecuniary interest with respect to agenda item **24-5/015**, review of the Links Solar Farm Community Benefit Deed, as a family member worked at Birkett's Solicitors.  
 Cllrs. Dunn declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item **24-5/017**, as Trustee of the Friends of Rectory Meadow Ltd, which is independent from the work of the Parish Council.  
 Cllr. Evans declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item **24-5/017**, as Trustee of the Friends of Rectory Meadow Ltd, which is independent from the work of the Parish Council.

**24-25/003 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE OF MUTUAL INTEREST**

Six members of the public attended the meeting.

**24-25/004 NATIONAL HIGHWAYS**

Nigel Allsopp, National Highways Route Manager in Essex introduced Tammy Kneill, Highways Inspector for the A120, and asked if there were any questions.

- A member of the public asked when the first cut of the verges would take place as the one by the bottom of Hollies Road was very high and impacting the sightline. Ms Kneill said this was scheduled for 8 May, however she would try to bring this forward as she was aware it was already high.
- Cllr. Dunn asked for an update on the white gates which were previously agreed to be installed at the bottom of The Street as part of a safety scheme within the Neighbourhood Plan, and which appeared to have been shelved. Mr Allsopp acknowledged the agreement but advised that funding was unavailable until the next financial year, 2025/26. Cllr. Evans recalled that, previously, the Parish Council had offered to fund the installation of the gates but had been refused. He was interested to know if this was still the case. Mr Allsopp recalled this but could not remember why and agreed to

explore whether this would be possible and would confirm with the Clerk. He noted that type of installation would not be cheap.

- Mr Allsopp referred to the work being undertaken by Openreach along the A120 and advised that this was almost complete. A member of the public reported that there was a drain/grill along the A120 by Chaldecote which was incredibly noisy as traffic passed over it and requested this be looked at. Ms Kneill was aware of this and would endeavour to get this resolved. The Clerk had received a similar complaint from a resident regarding another noisy drain on the A120, opposite Wadud's Restaurant. Ms Kneill confirmed that temporary repairs would begin on this later this week.
- Mr Allsopp reported that, whilst the leak by The Street had now stopped, there continued to be a leak by the BP garage. National Highways had channelled a verge by the BP garage to assist with dispersing some of the surplus water, however they continued to be in dispute with Anglian Water as to who was responsible for the leak. National Highways had sent a sample of water to be tested, which had shown a high level of chlorine, equal to that of tap water, suggesting the water belonged to Anglian Water. He would keep the Parish Council advised of any further developments.
- A resident noted the terrible condition of the road at the bottom of Hollies Road. Mr Allsopp thought this was the responsibility of Essex Highways given the boundary stopped at the "Give Way" sign but would investigate whether this was the case and report back.
- Mr Allsopp advised that there would be "nine full weekend closures" on the A12 from Stanway to Marks Tey which might impact the traffic travelling along the A120.

#### 24-25/005 LINKS SOLAR FARM

Beverley Rodbard-Hedderwick, Stakeholder Manager for Links Solar Farm provided an update on the following:

- The internal roads were now complete.
- 98% of the fencing was installed.
- CCTV poles were installed.
- The piling was currently on hold due to archaeological interest. Work could only commence once the inspection had taken place and inspectors were satisfied that any areas of interest could be preserved/excavated.
- Installation of the modules was due to commence this week.

Going forward:

- Two cranes would be arriving at the end of April via Long Green at Cressing. If this was closed, they would be re-directed through Polecat Lane.
- Low Carbon was meeting with Essex Highways on 28 April to discuss the next steps of the project.
- Wheel washing was taking place on the days it was not raining.
- The Road Sweeper would sweep the roads at 4pm each day.
- Modules would be energised in segments by mid-May, at which point Low Carbon would be liaising with the energy provider.

She then answered several questions both from the Parish Council and members of the public. These included:

- Damage to the roads – She acknowledged there had been damage to the roads and would be liaising with Essex Highways with regards to how this could be rectified.
- Use of local roads to access the Solar Farm – she confirmed that lorries should not be using local roads and encouraged residents to provide details of the registration numbers so that Low Carbon could follow up with any concerns. Cllr. Turner felt this should not be the responsibility of the residents. For example, a corner of his land had been damaged by a vehicle passing through, however it would have been impossible for him to have obtained a registration number of the vehicle as he wasn't there at the time it occurred. He said a system should be in place whereby, whoever accepts delivery of items, should record the registration number, and ensure that the correct roads were being used. Ms Rodbard-Hedderwick accepted this point and would report back on this.
- The condition of the roads since work had begun the amount of mud, the ditches that had been filled in and the road sweeper that residents had never seen - Ms Rodbard-Hedderwick had seen the state of the roads for herself and acknowledged that this had not been helped by the particularly wet weather.

She confirmed that Low Carbon would take responsibility for clearing the ditches and reinstating the verges. She would follow-up on concerns regarding the road sweeper to ensure that sweeping took place along the full length of the road.

- Working hours – She was aware of the residents’ complaints with regards to noise of the piling work and reported that the Planning Officer had also been to visit the site. Whilst the piling work was currently suspended, she confirmed that working hours were 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays.
- Energising of modules – Low Carbon would be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the modules from day one of energising, and during their 40-year life span.
- Landscaping and the bank of soil getting bigger by field three – a selection of trees, shrubs and bushes would be planted around October and November, which would mean that, over time, the farm would not be seen from the road. She would check the bank of soil and the landscaping plans, but she expected this to be flattened and made good when landscaping takes place.

The Chair noted that the Parish Council had been reviewing the draft Community Benefit Deed and that he had been advised by his solicitor that it was standard practice for a developer to reimburse the cost of any legal advice. He asked whether Low Carbon would be prepared to reimburse the Parish Council. Ms Rodbard-Hedderwick acknowledged the importance for the Parish Council to obtain legal advice when considering the deed and said that she would confirm whether Low Carbon would reimburse any costs and advise the Clerk accordingly. She would also confirm details of the solicitors they would use.

The Chair thanked Ms Rodbard-Hedderwick for her time attending the meeting.

#### 24-25/006 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Playle was unable to attend due to a prior work commitment and had sent his apologies. He asked the Clerk to remind residents that the deadline for responses to the Minerals Plan Review closed on 9 April 2024.

#### 24-5/007

Cllr. Walsh was unable to attend the meeting and had sent his apologies. Cllr. Abram was also unable to attend.

#### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2024 – RESOLUTION

Councillors received and considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 March 2024 and resolved to approve them as a true record.

**Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Harding All in favour, RESOLVED.**

The minutes were signed by the Chair.

#### 24-5/008

#### FINANCIAL REPORTS

i. Councillors received and approved the financial statements to 31 March 2024. There were no queries.  
**Proposed: Cllr. Deighton; Seconded Cllr. Dunn; All in favour, RESOLVED.**

ii. Councillors approved payments for March 2024. There were no queries.

**Proposed: Cllr. Deighton; Seconded Cllr. Harding; All in favour, RESOLVED.**

iii. The Clerk advised Councillors that, since issuing the agenda, she had received an invoice for payment from EH Countryside for the sum of £480.00. This was for the pruning of fruit trees on the playing field and hedge trimming at the church. She asked Councillors to consider approving this payment. As Cllr. Harding had declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grass cutting contract, he abstained from the decision-making process.

**Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded Cllr. Turner; All in favour, RESOLVED.**

iv. The Clerk advised Councillors that she had experienced several problems with the SSE, the unmetered power supply provider, in relation to irregular invoices being received and late payment notices being

issued. She had spent an hour in discussion with SSE to resolve the issue. As a result, the balance had now been cleared and SSE had issued an apology letter, however the Clerk requested that Councillors consider agreeing to pay future invoices via direct debit to mitigate further problems. Cllr. Evans suggested the Clerk try to secure a discount prior to moving to direct debit.

**Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded Cllr. Evans; All in favour, RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Clerk**

**24-5/009**

**RCCE MEMBERSHIP**

The RCCE had reviewed its membership renewal dates, moving them from 1 July to 1 April. As a result, it was offering a reduced price to members who had previously renewed from July. Given the Parish Council fell into this category, the Clerk asked Councillors to consider whether they wanted to renew its membership at a cost of £44.10 (£36.75 plus VAT). Cllr. Dunn reminded Councillors the Parish Council would be refreshing its Neighbourhood Plan later in the year and that previously, the RCCE had provided very useful information and assistance in this area. Councillors agreed to renew the membership.

**Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Evans; All in favour, RESOLVED.**

**24-5/010**

**MINERALS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The deadline for submitting responses would close on 9 April. Cllr. Dunn had submitted the Parish Council's response to both the Minerals Local Plan and the Minerals Local Plan Parish Sites ahead of the first deadline. He advised that Essex County Council was required to comment against each individual response, whether they intended to change the plan, and noted that each of ECC's comments would be in the public domain.

**24-5/011**

**PLANNING MATTERS**

i. **New Applications: There were no new applications.**

ii. **Applications determined:**

ESS/39/23/BTE/08/01, Land at Rivenhall Airfield, Coggeshall Road, Braintree, CO5 9DF

Notification of planned abnormal load arriving on 15 March 2024 via Woodhouse Lane to the IWMF site.

Notification as required by condition 8 of ESS/39/23/BTE. ESS/39/23/BTE is planning permission for an Integrated Waste Management Facility.

**GRANTED**

iii. **Appeals received/determined: None advised.**

**24-5/012**

**IWMF LIAISON MEETING**

The Chair had attended the IWMF liaison meeting on 13 March and reported on the following:

- Nick Unsworth had presented his proposals to increase the monitoring of the air quality, which would cost in the region of £90k. Whilst there was an overall positive response to monitoring the air quality, it was unsure how this project would be funded, and members made clear they did not want to use the Community Fund. The Chair advised Councillors that BDC already monitor air quality and ECC publish the air quality statistics so there appeared to be little appetite for the project. He referred to the air quality readers already installed on The Street and by Mill View along the A120 and noted that BCD were already required to act should the readings rise above the required standard. A presentation of the quality of the readings would be made at the next IWMF Liaison Meeting.
- Work on Woodhouse Farm was not progressing due to the bats in hibernation and would not commence until a license was obtained, at which point refurbishment of the workshop and high barn would start.
- Work had commenced on the Bailey Bridge upgrade, which would be followed by the turbine delivery and boiler erection in June.
- Plans were still on track to handover the site in May 2026.
- Indaver would be holding an open day on the May Bank holiday (27 May) so that members of the public could go along and see what work was taking place.

**24-5/013**

**PLAYING FIELD**

i. Cllr. Kinder reported there were no issues with the playing field.

ii. The Clerk confirmed that all the repairs to the equipment had now been completed and the new rotadisk roundabout had been installed. However, she had been made aware by Councillors, that during installation, Playquip had removed the table tennis top having been instructed to leave it in situ. Cllr. Turner had spoken to Playquip who confirmed they still had this, although as it was in their skip, its condition was unknown. The Clerk was asked to contact Playquip to request photographs so that the condition of the tabletop could be assessed as to whether it was salvageable and whether it should be returned. All Councillors considered that Playquip should make amends for removing the tabletop, given that the base had been prepared and a new top had been sourced. Cllr. Evans was concerned that the exposed concrete base might potentially be a health and safety hazard and Councillors agreed to cordon off the area until there was further information. The Clerk advised that RoSPA would be undertaking a playing field inspection in May.

**ACTION: Clerk**

iii. The Clerk had previously reported and sent photographs of the poor condition of the walkway leading to the field to Strutt & Parker, advising that, in its current state, it was inaccessible to those with mobility issues, wheelchairs or mobility scooters. She had also advised that residents had reported someone using a motorised scooter on the field. Strutt & Parker responded that the landlord had granted permission for the Parish Council to provide signs warning against the use of electric vehicles/scooters on the land. With regards to maintenance of the path, Strutt & Parker considered that, given the path was used solely for the access to the playing field, it was the responsibility of the Parish Council, as tenant, to undertake any improvements. The Clerk had subsequently asked Strutt & Parker whether the landlord would consider making a financial contribution to enable the Parish Council to make the playing field accessible to all. To date she had not received a response and agreed to follow up on this.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**24-5/014 FOOTPATHS**

The Footpaths Officer reported that there appeared to be a recently formed BMX track/playfield which was situated by the entrance to the quarry and the slip road. This included, what appeared to be, a ramp and other obstacles. She was unsure whether this had received permission to be there. The Chair confirmed that there had been no permission given and asked her to report this to the Public Right of Way Officer. The Clerk had received no further information from Patrick Wigg with regards the Bradwell Quarry Liaison Meeting and agreed to follow up on this.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**24-5/015 LINKS SOLAR FARM**

The Clerk had contacted several local solicitors with regards to the draft Community Benefit Deed between the Parish Council and Low Carbon, and seeking legal advice to ensure that it:

1. was fit for purpose;
2. accurately reflected the agreement reached between the Developer and the Parish Council in respect of the payment of the Annual Community Benefit Contribution (to the extent to which such any agreement has been reached); and
3. did not represent an unreasonable risk to the Parish Council, its assets and/or reputation.

To date, only two firms would undertake the work and had provided quotes. Given that Ms Rodbard-Hedderwick would be contacting the Clerk to confirm whether Low Carbon would reimburse the Parish Council of their legal costs in reviewing the proposed deed, Councillors unanimously agreed to carry this item forward to the May meeting when further information would be available, including details of Low Carbon’s solicitors.

**24-5/016 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Clerk confirmed that PC James Draper, the Dementia Society, and the Bradwell Village Hall Management Committee would attend and present at the Annual Parish Meeting on 13 May. The Chair would also present slides on the proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan Refresh, which was scheduled to take place later this year.

**24-5/017 FRIENDS OF RECTORY MEADOW**

The Chair updated Councillors on the next steps planned for the Friends of Rectory Meadow Ltd, and which was separate to the work of the Parish Council. He said that a leaflet would shortly be delivered to residents explaining what was happening with the proposed planning application and appeal, how this could affect the village and what would happen should the group win or lose their appeal.

**24-5/018 VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Cllr. Harding reported that:

- following on from Mr Allsop’s update on Hollies Road, the drain still required inspection by Essex Highways as he had been unable to get through to them. He would continue to try to contact them.
- There were no submitted traffic orders for the next three weeks.
- With regards to the little island at Five Ash Lane and Keepers Lane, this was still being reviewed to try to protect it.
- It was noted that there were a lot of potholes at the recycling centre. As Essex Highways rented that area, it was their responsibility to ensure these were repaired. The Clerk was asked to contact BDC to report the potholes and request their repair.

The Chair reported there was no further update on the Parish Magazine, following the Parish Council’s feedback.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Spring Litter Pick would take place on Saturday 13 April, which she would publicise again on the village Facebook page. Cllr. Evans kindly offered to take delivery of the litter pick equipment. The Clerk would liaise with Cllrs. Deighton and Turner to provide information on the risk assessment and the volunteers list.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**24-5/019 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT/FUTURE MEETING(S)**

Items for the next Agenda:

- i. Defibrillator located at the Village Hall
- ii. Bradwell recycling centre – issue with fly-tipping and dumping of rubbish.
- iii. NALC/EALC – Consider renewing subscription.
- iv. King’s Portrait
- v. Essex Village of the Year

**23-4/020 NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Parish Council meeting would take place on Monday 13 May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell. This would follow the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting, which would start at 7pm.

Items for inclusion in the agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk no later than 12 noon Friday 3 May 2024.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.