**Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 8.00pm on Monday 13 May 2024 at Bradwell Village Hall, Church Road, Bradwell**

**Present:**

Cllr. Tony Dunn (Chair)

Cllr. Adam Deighton

Cllr. Antony Harding

Cllr. Lesley Kinder

Cllr. Glenn Lockey

Cllr. Michael Turner

**In attendance:**

Mrs. Nicki Watkins, Clerk & RFO

Cllr. Walsh, District Councillor, Coggeshall Ward

Cllr. Abram, District Councillor, Coggeshall Ward

Footpaths’ Officer

Three members of the public

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| **24-5/042** | **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**  The Chair declared the meeting open at 8.00pm and welcomed those present.  Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Evans. |
| **24-5/043** | **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**  Cllr. Harding had declared a non-pecuniary interest in the review of the grass cutting contract, agenda item 24-5/054. |
| **24-5/044** | **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE OF MUTUAL INTEREST**  Three members of the public attended the meeting.  A member of the public raised her concerns regarding the impact of speeding along the village stretch of the A120. She had spoken to the PCs in attendance at the Annual Parish Assembly meeting and had been made aware that it was Essex Police she needed to liaise with, which she would do. |
| **24-5/045** | **COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**  Cllr. Playle was unable to attend.  **Cllr. Walsh** reported the following:   * Developments/S106 Funds – in response to a councillor’s previous question, Cllr. Walsh confirmed there was nothing to state that developers’ contributions had to be spent on contributing to an extra school/doctor’s surgery/specific infrastructure requirement. Braintree District Council (BDC) agreed this was a real issue and this point needed to be kept under review. Cllr. Walsh would take this up with the Chair of the District Planning Committee to see if this could be reassessed. He noted that the £150k had been earmarked from the developments in Coggeshall which would be used to expand the surgery. * Developments across the area – in addition to lots of development across the area, some 250,00 new houses, County Cllr. Paul Thorogood had advised of proposals to widen the A12 with no indication of how this would be funded. Likewise, there were proposals to develop the A120, and the potential impact of the Minerals Plan. * Minerals Plan – there had been 5,000 comments in response to the proposals. Essex County Council would hold a further period of consultation once these had been considered and undertake further consultation, although it was expected that the site list would be shorter. * Blackwater Flood Alleviation Scheme – Coggeshall Residents Against the Quarry (CRAQ) had requested to see the historical agreements outlining the custodianship of some of the land. * Pylon consultation – the statutory consultation was underway regarding the proposed pylons between Surrex to Rivenhall and everyone was invited to comment. * Planning Officer at BDC – BDC were still looking to fill the last Planning Officer role. * External Audits for Councils – some external audits had shown that some councils were having real financial problems. There was no suggestion that BDC was in any difficulty. Their last audit was in 2019. * Cllrs. Walsh and Abram remained opposed to the Green Bin Tax. * Cllr. Walsh reminded Councillors that they could apply for the District Councillors Grant to cover good causes and community projects. This year there was £1,250 which could be allocated across three parishes.   Cllr. Lockey referred to the S106 funds and asked Cllr. Walsh to explore whether there was any flexibility to how the funds could be used for other outdoor projects to benefit the village. Historically it appeared that the Parish Council could only use S106 funds for improvements to the playing field, which it had done, however realistically there was nothing further which could be improved. For example, could the funds contribute to making the pathway safer, installing flower planters across the village or a new bench? Cllr. Walsh agreed to explore this issue.  **Cllr. Abram** suggested that the Parish Council might want to consider appointing a Councillor to attend one of the Landscaping for Planning meetings, to contribute to discussions regarding the planting of saplings.  Cllr. Dunn pointed out that whilst BDC’s Local Plan had decided there was a food emergency, it would be more prudent to plant fruit trees rather than saplings, which were typically left to perish. This was something that the Parish Council was proud to say that it had included in its Neighbourhood Plan, which would be considered again during the Neighbourhood Plan refresh being undertaken later in the year. Cllr. Walsh advised that BDC would be producing a policy on new Neighbourhood Plans by June 2025. |
| **24-5/046** | **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 APRIL 2024 – RESOLUTION**  Councillors received and considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8 April 2024 and resolved to approve them as a true record.  The minutes were signed by the Chair.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton All in favour, RESOLVED.** |
| **24-5/047** | **FINANCIAL REPORTS**   1. Councillors received and approved the financial statements to 30 April 2024. There were no queries.   **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded Cllr. Dunn; All in favour, RESOLVED.**   1. Councillors approvedpayments for April 2024. There were no queries.  **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded Cllr. Dunn; All in favour, RESOLVED.**   The Clerk advised Councillors that, since issuing the agenda, she had received a further invoice for payment from EH Countryside. This was for the sum of £451.20, for the third cut of the grass at the playing field and church. EH Countryside had advised the Clerk that, due to the wet weather, it had been necessary to undertake an extra cut in April. The Clerk had requested that he make the May cut earlier in the month so that the field was prepared for the Village Hall dog show, which had taken place on 11 May. Councillors approved the payment. As Cllr. Harding had declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grass cutting contract, he abstained from the discussion and decision-making process.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded Cllr. Lockey; All in favour, RESOLVED.** |
| **24-5/048** | **RENEWAL OF EALC & NALC AFFILIATION 2024/25**  The Clerk advised Councillors that Clerks valued the services provided by both NALC and the EALC, which she had personally used, and recommended the Parish Council renew their affiliation to these bodies for the year.    **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded: Cllr. Turner; All in favour, RESOLVED.** |
| **24-5/049** | **RENEWAL OF PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE**  The Clerk had advised that, as the Parish Council insurance with Clear Councils was due for renewal on 31 May 2024, she had obtained three quotes from Parish Council insurance providers for both an annual and a three-year policy. Quotes received were as follows:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Provider** | **1-year policy** | **3-year policy** | | Clear Councils (formerly BHIB) | **£333.98** (inc. premium tax & admin fee) | **£319.88** (inc. premium tax & admin fee) | | Zurich | **£786.11** | **£739.41** | | Gallagher (formerly Came & Co) | Withdrew from the quote process as were unable to improve on Clear Council’s renewal offer (minimum premium was at least £730+ Including IPT and fee (Both single year and 3 year LTU) | |   Councillors unanimously agreed to continue with their current provider, Clear Councils Insurance. As the policy required renewing before the next Parish Council meeting, the Clerk would prepare a cheque for £319.88 for signature at the end of the meeting.  **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded: Cllr. Dunn; All in favour, RESOLVED.**  The Clerk would contact Clear Councils to renew the insurance for the next three years.  **ACTION - CLERK** |
| **24-5/050** | **PLANNING MATTERS**  **For information:**   1. 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** |
| **24-5/051** | **PLAYING FIELD**   1. Cllr. Kinder confirmed there was nothing to report other than she had received positive feedback on the new roundabout. 2. Cllr. Deighton confirmed that the table-tennis tabletop had now been returned, along with both bases. He had undertaken the required repairs, and the table was now ready for installation. Cllr. Turner confirmed that the concrete bases where the table would be placed, were currently sectioned off to the public for health and safety reasons until the table was re-installed. Cllrs. Deighton and Turner agreed to install this during the coming weekend, weather permitting. Cllr. Kinder reminded councillors that the goal posts still required painting, which might be feasible now the weather had improved. The Clerk noted that a RoSPA inspection was due to take place during May. 3. The Clerk confirmed she had received a response from Strutt & Parker regarding potential improvements to the path, to make access easier. Strutt & Parker considered it the responsibility of the Parish Council as tenant to undertake any improvements and that, as the Trustees already donated £500 per annum towards maintenance of the playing field, they were not prepared to contribute further.   They had considered the request for the Parish Council to put a path along the side of the allotment but felt that would not be feasible. However, they would be content for the Parish Council to place a bollard at the top of the path to prevent vehicles from being able to access the playing field from the top of the path. They would also grant permission for the Parish Council to put up signs warning against the use of electric scooters/bikes on the land.  Councillors discussed the options for making improvements to the path. It was agreed that Cllr. Kinder would speak to the Allotment Society to discuss the practicalities of placing a bollard or a swing gate at the top of the path and she would report back at the June meeting. Once the Parish Council had decided what to do, they would consider whether they could apply for a District Councillor’s Grant and/or any other grant to assist with the funding.  **ACTION – CLLR. KINDER** |
| **24-5/052** | **FOOTPATHS**  The Footpaths’ Officer reported that she had been liaising with Carrie Bennett, the Public Rights of Way Officer, and reported several issues with regards to the footpaths. She was particularly concerned about, and had reported, the steps along the Essex Way where the framework appeared to have been removed to make a tree house and what looked to be a skate-ramp. Ms Bennett was going to report back once she had spoken with her colleagues to see what could be done.  The Footpaths’ Officer had also reported concerns about overhanging brambles and branches but had been advised that there was little which could be done as they were not on the mowing schedule.  She considered that most of the issues appeared to be on quarry land, so it was disappointing that the quarry had not been able to organise a meeting. The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted Patrick Wigg again to see if this had progressed, but advised that it had not, and so suggested she ask if Mr Wigg would like to attend a future Parish Council meeting.  Cllr. Lockey noted that the Essex Footpaths team had gone through the Essex Way to cut the back the verges but that EH Countryside had had to re-cut them to get closer to the fields. He asked the Footpaths’ Officer to suggest the PROW liaise with the farmer to avoid this in the future.  There continued to be concerns that lorries to the solar farm were still using Sheepcoates Lane, which was contrary to what Beverley Rodbard-Hedderwick (Low Carbon) had said at the last meeting. The Chair requested the Clerk contact the Planning Enforcement Officer to make them aware and see what can be done.  **ACTION - CLERK** |
| **24-5/053** | **LINKS SOLAR FARM**  The Clerk reported the Community Benefit Deed relating to the solar farm needed to be signed by the Parish Council. Although she had obtained two quotes which had been presented at the last meeting, she continued to wait for Beverley Rodbard-Hedderwick to confirm a) whether Low Carbon would reimburse the Parish Council of any legal costs incurred; and b) the name of the solicitors Low Carbon intended to use.  The Chair reminded Councillors that the deed required signing ahead of the solar farm being energised and proposed that the Parish Council move forward and use one of the solicitors identified by the Clerk.  The Clerk reminded Councillors of the quotes: Firm A had quoted £780-£1,040 plus VAT, and Firm B had quoted a maximum of £2,000 plus VAT. For this they would include providing legal advice to ensure that the deed:   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.   The Chair proposed that the Parish Council used Firm A, which was Birketts LLP. This was unanimously agreed by all Councillors. The Clerk would contact Birketts to instruct them to act on the Parish Council’s behalf. She would also contact Low Carbon again.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Lockey; All in favour, RESOLVED** (Cllr. Turner did not take part in the decision-making part of the discussion due to a family member employed at Birketts).  **ACTION - CLERK** |
| **24-5/054** | **GROUND MAINTENANCE TO PLAYING FIELD & HOLY TRINITY CHURCH** As Cllr. Harding had declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grass cutting contract, the Chair agreed to move this item to the end of the meeting so that Cllr. Harding could leave the room. |
| **24-5/055** | **VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE**   Cllr. Harding reported there had been little progress with the potholes across the village. He had now been given another contact so would try to escalate what potholes could get repaired and report back at the next meeting.  The Clerk had reported the potholes at the recycling centre and asked if these had been repaired. Cllr. Harding said they appeared to have been filled with bricks, so was unsure whether this was BDC’s attempts or whether it was part of the fly-tipping that had been left.  He advised that Links Road would be closed for seven days from 27 May for UKPN. |
| **24-5/056** | **FLY-TIPPING IN BRADWELL VILLAGE** Cllr. Turner reported that fly-tipping had occurred several times throughout the village during the last month, particularly at the recycling centre. This appeared to be a combination of both household and builders/landscaper’s waste. He had reported these incidents, as had some residents, and BDC had been swift at removing the rubbish, but he felt it was time to consider what methods could be used to stop this from continuing, whether it be signs referring to hefty fines for fly-tipping or CCTV.  Cllr. Walsh advised Councillors that Coggeshall had experienced a similar problem and had installed CCTV. He agreed to report back to the Parish Council as to how they went about this and what was involved for the Parish Council to consider. In the meantime, the Clerk would speak to BDC to see what they could do.  **Cllrs. Walsh and Abram left the meeting at 9.05pm**  **ACTION - CLERK** |
| **24-5/057** | **FUNDING OF THE DIFIBRILATOR** Cllr. Turner reminded Councillors that the Parish Council had brought the defibrillator as a community benefit and that the Village Hall had agreed to mount it on the wall at the front of the hall and undertake inspections. He confirmed this was now on the list of “available defibrillators” and the Village Hall would arrange some training sessions on how to use it. However, he noted that batteries and pads were expensive and requested whether the Parish Council would be prepared to pay for replacements to ensure it remained safe to use and on the list of available defibrillators. The Chair and Councillors considered this to be a reasonable request and unanimously agreed.  **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; All in favour, RESOLVED**. (Cllrs. Turner and Kinder did not take part in the decision-making part of the discussion). |
| **24-5/058** | **ESSEX VILLAGE OF THE YEAR** The RCCE was running the Essex Village of the Year and Rural Community Awards. To apply, Parish Council’s were invited to complete the required form with no more than five hundred words, describing the activities, events, and organisation that their village undertook and how this contributed and benefited village life. Nominations were expected by 3 June, with winners being announced on 3 July.  The Chair reminded Councillors that the village had previously won this competition. Councillors discussed what community events the village ran, along with the benefit of entering. Whilst it was considered a worthwhile event to enter, they also considered it too late to submit a considered application in time for the deadline. The Clerk suggested she add this to the January or February agenda in 2025, to enable Councillors time to prepare a considered application for 2025.  **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded: Cllr. Dunn; All in favour, RESOLVED** |
| **24-5/059** | **KING CHARLES III PORTRAIT**  The Clerk advised Councillors that Parish Councils had been allowed to apply for a free, framed portrait of King Charles III, to celebrate his ascension to the throne. Although the Parish Council had no public building, they used the Village Hall to conduct all its official business, and the Clerk suggested the Parish Council might like to “gift” this to the Village Hall. Cllrs. Turner and Kinder agreed this would be a welcome addition to the hall’s display.  **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; All in favour, RESOLVED** |
| **24-5/060** | **STISTED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REGULATION 14**  The Parish Council had been made aware of the Stisted Neighbourhood Plan review and were able to comment. The Chair reported that he had already commented independently. The Councillors discussed the merits of commenting as a Parish Council and agreed to decline to comment.  The Chair reminded Councillors that the Parish Council would also be undertaking its own Neighbourhood Plan refresh, which would be added to an agenda at a later date.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Lockey; All in favour, RESOLVED** |
| **24-5/061** | **INFORMATION EXCHANGE & AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**   * Action Plan for fly-tipping in the village * Neighbourhood Plan refresh * Parish Magazine |
| **24-5/062** | **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. A leaflet had been distributed across the village and this leaflet had also appeared in the latest copy of the parish magazine, detailing how and where contributions could be made. |
|  | **Cllr. Harding left the meeting at 9.20pm.** |
| **24-5/054** | **GROUND MAINTENANCE TO PLAYING FIELD & HOLY TRINITY CHURCH** The Clerk advised that the ground maintenance contract with EH Countryside, was due for review before 19 June 2024. She reminded Councillors that the contract stated: “subject to satisfactory performance of both parties, this may be extended for a further two years to 18 June 2026”.  Councillors discussed and considered the service and performance of the contractor and resolved to renew the contract for a further two years until June 2026, and on the proviso that an annual performance review would be undertaken with the contractor by Cllr. Lockey.  The Clerk would advise EH Countryside and prepare a new contract for signature.  **ACTION - CLERK** |
| **24-5/063** | **NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**   1. The next **Annual Parish Assembly** meeting will be held on **Monday 12 May 2025**, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell 2. The next **Annual Parish Council** meeting will be held on **Monday 12 May 2025**, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell 3. The next monthly **Parish Council** meeting will be held on **Monday 10 June 2024**, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell 4. Items for inclusion in the June agenda to be sent to the Clerk no later than **12 noon on Friday 31 May 2024.**   **The meeting closed at 9.34pm.** |