**Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 14 October 2024 at Bradwell Village Hall, Church Road, Bradwell**

**Present:**

Cllr. Tony Dunn (Chair)

Cllr. Glenn Lockey (Vice-Chair)

Cllr. Adam Deighton

Cllr. Antony Harding

Cllr. Lesley Kinder

Cllr. Michael Turner

**In attendance:**

Mrs. Nicki Watkins, Clerk & RFO

Cllr. Walsh, District Councillor, Coggeshall Ward

Cllr. Abram, District Councillor, Coggeshall Ward

Four members of the public were in attendance

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| **24-5/146** | **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**  The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and welcomed those present. Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr. Evans. |
| **24-5/147** | **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**  Members of the Council are subject to the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 (The Revised Code), adopted at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 13 May 2024. Appendix B requires Councillors to register and disclose pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. There were no declarations of interest. |
| **24-5/148** | **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE OF MUTUAL INTEREST**  A member of the public had contacted the Clerk to report her concerns over the state of Hollies Road, particularly the potholes. Whilst she noted that the area adjoining the A120 had improved, the potholes were opening due to the volume of traffic. She noted there was a large one near to Cllr. Deighton’s property and two “huge” ones near to another resident. She went on to report that further up the edge of the road appeared to be breaking away, again most likely due to the many large vehicles that regularly use the route, even though there was a weight restriction in place. Unfortunately, she had been unable to obtain their registration plates to report them. The Clerk suggested that a representative from Essex County Highways be invited to the next Parish Council meeting to discuss this and other highways concerns.  **ACTION - Clerk** |
| **24-5/149** | **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**   1. Cllr. Playle was unable to attend the meeting. 2. Cllrs. Walsh and Abram reported the following:  * **Local Plan Review** – the timetable had been reviewed and Councils now had until the end of 2026 to revise the Braintree District Plan to 2041. It was now expected there would be an increase in the requirements for new housing of around 1,000 new homes per annum. However, this would be spread across the district. The key stages would enable a broader consideration of “Scoping and Issues” i.e. consultation with Parishes and communities in early 2025. He noted that the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) had been put back in the Draft Local Plan. Cllr. Dunn confirmed that the Parish Council had been pleased to note this and had commented to that effect (see 24-5/155). Cllr. Walsh continued by saying it was expected the proposed sites identified in the Call for Sites exercise would also be considered by the end of this year. Not all the sites put forward would be approved and it was likely that this would start first with towns and “Key Service Villages.” He said a more “sensibly spread out” set of Local Plan meetings along with extra consultation with local communities had been agreed. This had been “robustly requested” by local Parish Councils, community groups, as well as by him and Cllr. James Abbott as Independent & Green representatives on BDC’s Local Plan Committee. Cllr. Walsh agreed to Cllr. Lockey’s request for the Parish Council to see the revised timetable of the Local Plan and would forward this when it was available. * **A120 speed reduction consultation** – Cllr. Walsh had received a set of maps showing where the new speed limits were proposed or might be placed along the A120, including where most accidents occur, and he offered to share these maps with the Parish Council if they had not already received these. The Clerk noted that (as per agenda item 24-5/160), Cllr. Dunn had responded to the consultation on behalf of the Parish Council, with reference to requesting a 30mph speed limit through Bradwell and reducing the speed limit to 40mph past Kings Lane, given it was an accident hotspot and following the recent spate of accidents there (one of which may have been fatal). The Parish Council’s response had been made available to residents via the Parish Council website and Facebook page (***The Clerk has subsequently requested a copy of the maps to share with Councillors and residents).*** * **Councillor Community Grants**: Cllrs. Walsh and Abram reminded the Parish Council that Councillors had provision to award Councillor Community Grants, and they would welcome proposals from established local groups, including the Parish Council, if they required support for a discrete aspect of a project within the parish. The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had agreed at the last meeting to apply for two grants to contribute towards two new salt bins and a replacement bench. She had spoken to Braintree District Council who advised her to contact Cllr. Walsh for advice and copies of the grant forms. Cllr. Walsh would forward these for completion. |
| **24-5/150** | **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2024**  Councillors received and considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 September 2024 and resolved to approve them as a true record.  The minutes were signed by the Chair.  **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; All in favour, RESOLVED.** |
| **24-5/151** | **FINANCIAL REPORTS**   1. Councillors received and approved the financial statements to 30 September 2024. There were no queries.   **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded Cllr. Kinder; All in favour, RESOLVED.**   1. Councillors approvedpayments for September 2024. There were no queries.  **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded Cllr. Harding; All in favour, RESOLVED.**   The Clerk reported that, despite chasing SSE several times this year, there had been no invoices issued since May 2024, which had been paid and was for the unmetered lighting supplied until end February 2024. She had sent a further e-mail that day requesting an up-to-date invoice and would keep Councillors informed. She confirmed that the Parish Council had made provision for the unmetered lighting in the 2024/25 budget. |
| **24-5/152** | **AGAR 2023/24**  The Clerk explained that, as the Parish Council’s income exceeded £25k in the last budget year, there had been a requirement for a full audit of the accounts to be undertaken. This was standard practice for all Parish/Town councils. The accounts had been prepared and presented to both the internal and external auditors (PKF Littlejohn), within the required timeline. The external auditor had raised questions on the variances between the 22/23 and 23/24 budget years, and on figures which had been mis-recorded the previous year. These had been fully answered and there were no further outstanding questions. The Clerk had expected to receive the Certificate of Completion by 30 September for publication on the website and notice boards.  On 29 September, she had received an e-mail from the external auditors advising that they had been “unable to complete the review within the statutory timeframe” therefore an interim report had been issued and the Certificate of Completion would be sent once the review had been completed.  To comply with statutory legislation, the Clerk was required to post the Notice of Audit, Right for the Public to Inspect the Accounts and External Auditors Interim Report by 30 September 2024. The Clerk confirmed that these documents had been posted on 29 September.  She wanted to record her disappointment and frustration with the external auditors’ failure to meet the deadline, given the amount of work undertaken to ensure they received the appropriate papers in time, as well as answering any questions within the timeline required. She had suggested to the EALC that it might be helpful for clerks to be able to feedback on this year’s audit and suggested that PKF Littlejohn might want to consider waiving or reducing their fee this year.  She advised it would be likely an external audit would be required again next year, and therefore the cost of the fees would have to be included when considering the 2025/26 budget**.** |
| **24-5/153** | **PLANNING MATTERS**  **New Applications/Variances:**   1. **24/02067/LBC: - Park Farmhouse Church Road Bradwell Essex CM77 8EP**   Replacement of external render around the exposed beams at the front of the property and isolated repairs to exposed beams. Comments by 24 October 2024  The Parish Council had no objections to the proposals and wished to record that it was pleased and very supportive of the remedial work proposed.  **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded Cllr. Harding; All in favour, RESOLVED.**  **ACTION - Clerk**  **Applications determined:**   * + 1. **23/02940/FUL: - Bridge Hall Barn, Hollies Road, Bradwell, Essex CM77 8DZ**   Erection of stables, external store, and associated landscaping. **Permission Granted**  **Appeals received/determined: None advised.** |
| **24-5/154** | **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFRESH**  Cllr. Dunn reported that he had received questionnaires from 87 households out of the 250 households where questionnaires had been hand delivered.  The overall response rate to date was 36%, compared to 44% received in 2016 when the Neighbourhood Plan had first been compiled. However, 10 households had returned blank forms, so the valid response rate was 31.5%.  He had undertaken a substantial piece of analysis of the questionnaires and had prepared a report of his **interim** **findings**, outlining the significant differences between the two years submissions. The analysis focused on the following headings: **Demographics, Education, Healthcare - GPs, Healthcare – Hospitals, Housing, Law & Order, Communications, Employment, Environment, Pavement & Lighting, Community, Recreation & Leisure, Village Hall, Transport, Church, Vision (welcome changes, changes, and rationale to resist the changes) and Young People**.  A copy of the final report will be available for residents to read on the Parish Council website in due course and in the December parish newsletter.  He noted some actions had been identified for the Parish Council with regards to a request for a parish Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, concerns regarding specific footpaths (including the footpath down to the Playing Field), the faulty lights at the junction with The Street. He asked the Clerk to invite the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and a representative from National and Essex Highways to a future Parish Council meeting.  **Councillors unanimously agreed to extend the deadline for completing the questionnaires to 1 November 2024**. The Clerk would put a reminder to encourage residents who had not yet completed them on the Parish Council website, Facebook page and the parish newsletter.  Cllr. Turner asked the Clerk to record thanks to Cllr. Dunn on behalf of the Parish Council and the residents of the parish for all his hard work and time given on leading this exercise, including compiling the questionnaires, co-ordinating the distribution of the packs and undertaking an excellent piece of analysis. |
| **24-5/155** | **BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN – DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT DOCUMENT**  At the September meeting (24-5/129 ii) the Parish Council was asked to comment on the 35-page document produced by BDC and to provide their comments to the Clerk. As the timetable had now been revised and further consultation would be undertaken with Parish Councils, the Clerk had submitted the following response on 1 October: “Now the Issues and Options stage of consultation has been put back into the timetable for the Local Plan Review, the Parish Council is content with the SCI paper.” |
| **24-5/156** | **GRANTS/FUNDING 2024/25**  As discussed with Cllr. Walsh earlier (24-5/149 ii), the Parish Council had agreed to apply for the Councillors’ Community Grant to contribute towards purchasing two new salt bins and a bench. She would complete the forms and advise Councillors if the grants were approved prior to making the purchase. She advised Councillors that Glasdon (who provided the salt bins) would give the Parish Council a 5% discount if they purchased the bench from them at the same times as the salt bins.  Once the three quotes for improvements to the path to the playing field were received and presented to the Parish Council for consideration and approval, she would make the application for the Locality Fund to contribute towards the cost of this.  **ACTION - Clerk** |
| **24-5/157** | **POTENTIAL OPEN SPACES IMPROVEMENT PLAN**  The Clerk had received the annual request from BDC for items to be removed, updated or included in the 2025 version of the POSI Plan. Several improvements made to the playing field which were previously listed could now be removed, including installation of a new roundabout.  Councillors and the Clerk suggested the following for inclusion/consideration: improvements to the footpaths leading to the playing field, two new salt bins for the village at the recycling bank and Hollies Road), improvement to the bench along Church Lane, a new bench by the Church to enable residents to enjoy the wild-flower area and flower planters by the Village Hall.  The Parish Council had until 25 January 2025 to respond, and it was agreed to carry this forward to enable further consideration. |
| **24-5/158** | **PLAYING FIELD**   1. Cllr. Kinder reported an increase in the amount of dog fouling on the playing field. She and Ann Bedford continued to clear this up, even placing litter bags by the dog litter bins, however these had been taken and there had been no improvement. The Clerk would report this to BDC to see if there was anything they could suggest or assist with given this was an offence and would also put a reminder of the offences for dog fouling in the next parish newsletter.   **ACTION - Clerk**     1. At the last meeting (24-5/131) the Parish Council had agreed to apply for the Locality Grant to fund improvements to the pathway leading to the Playing Field to ensure it was more accessible. The Clerk and Cllr. Evans were awaiting quotes, and it was agreed this item would be carried forward to the November meeting. |
| **24-5/159** | **FOOTPATHS**  The Footpaths’ Officer reported there were only a couple of items to report on and that the current condition of the footpaths was not too bad. She would be following up on Bradwell 53 by the Quarry and noted that work to the bridge over the quarry road appeared to have been completed. She did note that she felt uncomfortable walking along the Essex Way, given the increase in activity in the layby by the Church. Cllr. Dunn had been made aware of this and would reference this under agenda item 24-5/167. She added that she considered one cut per year to the hedges and foliage did not appear to be enough.  Cllr. Turner had been made aware that damage had been done to the handrails of the bridge by Cressing (Bradwell 33). The Footpaths’ Officer agreed to raise this with the Public Rights Of Way Officer for them to establish whether this was a criminal matter and decide if they wanted to take this further.  The Clerk noted that, at the last meeting (24-5/132), Cllr. Evans reported the footpaths near the Old School House and the one along Blackwater Mill near to the bridge were very overgrown. The Clerk had subsequently reported this to Bradwell Estates requesting these be cut back as they were on their land. Cllr. Kinder confirmed these had not been cut back so the Clerk agreed to follow up on this matter.  **ACTION – Clerk** |
| **24-5/160** | **NATIONAL HIGHWAYS PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION ALONG A120 FROM BRAINTREE TO MARKS KEY**  At the September meeting (24-5/139), Cllr. Dunn was given delegated authority to respond to the National Highways consultation on behalf of the Parish Council. Key points from his response highlighted that, whilst the Parish Council fully supported the proposals to improve road safety, this should not compromise the need to fund a new A120. The Parish Council was supportive of restricting the speed limit to 30 mph through the Bradwell section of the A120 and highlighted the failure to acknowledge the notoriously dangerous Kings Lane junction, requesting a reduction in the speed limit to 40 mph at this point. It was also requested that the White Gates Scheme be re-considered as part of the consultation, and which was previously proposed as a Safety Scheme for the Village.  A full copy of the Parish Council’s response can be viewed on the Parish Council website and a copy will also be submitted to the parish newsletter. |
| **24-5/161** | **LINKS SOLAR FARM**  The Clerk received an e-mail on 30 October confirming that the Community Benefit Deed had been finalised and ready to be e-signed (as agreed at the August meeting, **Minute ref. 24-25/118**, the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk would electronically sign the Community Benefit Deed). The Parish Council had yet to receive this document.  The Parish Council was pleased the learn that Low Carbon had confirmed they would fully reimburse the Parish Council of the legal fees incurred with Birketts when seeking legal advice in relation to the Community Benefit Deed. The Clerk had therefore issued an invoice for £1,040.00 and confirmed the Parish Council would be able to reclaim £208.00 VAT at the end of March.  Cllr. Deighton asked whether a date had been provided for when the panels would be energised and noted that there had not appeared to have been much activity at the Solar Farm of late. The Clerk confirmed that work had been postponed whilst the archaeological dig was undertaken, and Councillors had been provided with a report of what had been found. She would contact Low Carbon to chase the Community Benefit Deed and ask for confirmation of dates when the panels would be energised and when the first payment could be expected.  **ACTION – Clerk** |
| **24-5/162** | **CCTV/FLY-TIPPING IN BRADWELL VILLAGE**  It was noted there had been further fly-tipping at both the recycling bank and Keepers Lane, again this appeared to be domestic waste. Cllr. Turner had reported both incidents via the BDC site, and the Clerk had also report this directly to the Street Scene Team who were arranging for the installation of CCTV. She added that the signage would soon be installed advising that CCTV would be operating in the area.  Cllr. Lockey reported that he had spoken to Callum Scrips from Scrips Farm, who had generously and very kindly supplied a wooden pole free of charge to enable the CCTV to be installed. He confirmed that the pole would be installed by the end of the week ready for the camera to be suitably placed.  The Parish Council wanted to express its thanks and gratitude to both Cllr. Lockey and Mr Scrips, which would hopefully assist BDC with identifying any perpetrators and stop the fly-tipping. |
| **24-5/163** | **BRADWELL BUS SHELTERS**  As part of the Essex-wide Bus Shelter contract briefing, Parish Councils were invited to consider whether there were any requirements for new/replacement bus shelters. Cllr. Harding had kindly offered to take this forward and had proposed a new bus shelter for the bus stop along the A120 opposite Wadud’s, given the number of residents (including school children) who use the bus stop to get transport to school, college and travelling to Colchester. Councillors unanimously agreed.  **Proposed: Cllr. Harding; Seconded Cllr. Lockey; All in favour, RESOLVED.**  The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council owned two bus stops in the parish, one by The Street past Wadud’s towards Braintree, the other by the BP Garage along Coggeshall Road, and it was therefore the Parish Council’s responsibility for their maintenance. Cllr. Harding noted that the glass was broken on the shelter by the BP Garage. Cllr. Lockey said he would inspect the shelter and measure the area for the Clerk to obtain a quote for reinforced replacement Perspex. |
| **24-5/164** | **AUTUMN LITTER PICK**  The Parish Council held its Autum Litter pick on 14 September, which had been attended by five Parish Councillors and six residents. The amenity vehicle had also been made available for residents to use, free of charge, for two hours. Many thanks to those who gave their own time to support this!  The Clerk explained that, to continue receiving the Street Cleaning Grant (currently £401.29), the Parish Council was required to undertake certain incentives such as litter picks, reporting of fly-tipping/graffiti etc. She suggested the Parish Council continue with the litter picks and hold a Spring and Autumn litter pick in 2025, suggesting **12 April** and **13 September,** respectively.  **Proposed: Cllr. Deighton; Seconded Cllr. Turner; All in favour, RESOLVED.** |
| **24-5/165** | **ESSEX & HERTS AIR AMBULANCE**  The Clerk had received a letter from the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Team requesting the Parish Council consider a donation, which she had forwarded to Councillors. She reminded them that last year Councillors had agreed to authorise a one-off donation of £100.00 (under S.137) and for future requests to be considered on a case-by-case basis.  Members considered, and unanimously agreed that, given the number of accidents the air ambulance had attended during the year and that there was a place for it to land in the parish, it would make a one-off donation of £100.00 this year.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded Cllr. Lockey; All in favour, RESOLVED.** |
| **24-5/166** | **RECTORY MEADOW**  The Chair updated Councillors on the Friends of Rectory Meadow Ltd, which was **separate to the work of the Parish Council.** This relates to a dispute between the residents of Residents of Rectory Meadow and a claimed Right of Way for Motor Vehicles to access Land South of Coggeshall Road via Rectory Meadow, leading to High Court action which is being defended by residents of Rectory Meadow on behalf of the Village. |
| **24-5/167** | **INFORMATION EXCHANGE & AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**  Cllr. Dunn was made aware that the layby by the church, Cut Hedge Lane, and Sheepcotes Lane (known as the dogging lane) had seen an increase in activity. BDC had recently introduced a **Public Service Protection Order (PSPO)** in the town centre. PSPOs “give powers to local councils (under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) to help deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area that is detrimental impact on the local community’s quality of life. They introduce restrictions on activities in an area which apply to everyone. They are designed to ensure the law-abiding majority can use and enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour.” He said that the Parish Council would investigate whether a PSPO could be applied to these areas to assist with the increasing problem and would add this to the next agenda.  Cllr. Turner had made Councillors aware of an incident he and his son had been involved in at the **haul road** which very nearly resulted in a serious accident. He reminded Councillors that this was not the first time there had been a near-miss at this spot and considered it only a matter of time before a fatality occurred. Whilst he had raised this with the Enforcement Officer at Essex County Council, he considered this worthy of a discussion and requested to add this to a future agenda. The Clerk suggested she invite PC James Draper to the next Parish Council meeting to discuss this, as well as other locals concerns and that she would add this as an agenda item. Cllr. Dunn also suggested that Cllr. Turner raises these concerns at an IWMF Liaison Committee meeting, given he was a member.  With regards to **Village Infrastructure**, Cllr. Harding had contacted Cllr. Playle concerning the cracked road along Links Road, which was breaking up and was now a dangerous hazard for cyclists. Cllr. Turner noted that the road at Sheepcotes Lane had similar issues. As he had not heard back from Cllr. Playle, Cllr. Harding would follow up with him on this, as well as the issue of potholes in general and the progress made over the last three years.  **Future agenda items**:   * Invite National Highways, Essex Highways, PC James Draper, and Clive Stewart (Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator) * Bus Shelters * POSI * PSPO * Haul Road |
| **Cllrs. Walsh and Abram left the meeting at 9.25pm** | |
| **24-5/168** | **NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**   1. The next **Parish Meeting** will be held on **Monday 11 November 2024** at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell 2. Items for inclusion in the November agenda to be sent to the Clerk no later than 12 noon on **Friday 1 November 2024.**   The meeting closed at **9.30pm** |