

Parish of Castle Hedingham Mrs Claire Waters (Parish Clerk) 25 Bayley Street, Castle Hedingham, Essex CO9 3DG 07845 056597 castlehedinghamparishclerk@gmail.com

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CASTLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON MONDAY 8th MARCH 2021 BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Bayes, Doe, Dover, Gransden, Jordan, Southgate, Toocaram, Veater, Westrop.

In the Chair: Cllr Southgate Clerk: Claire Waters

Also Present: Cllr H Johnson BDC. Cllr D Finch ECC to item 8

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Finch who will not be standing for re-election as Essex County Councillor. He has been a great help and support to the parish over many years and will be missed by all.

1.1 Co-option of Councillor for Vacant Position

RESOLVED: To ratify the decision to co-opt Mr Will Dover to the vacant seat on the Parish Council **Proposed**: Cllr Toocaram **Seconded**: Cllr Jordan Agreed unanimously The Chairman welcomed Cllr Dover whose range of skills and experience will be an asset to the Parish Council. Remote arrangements will be made for him to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office witnessed by the clerk and complete a Register of Interests

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 8th February 2021 were approved as a correct record of events and remote arrangements were made for them to be signed by the Chairman

Proposed: Cllr Jordan Seconded: Cllr Grandsen Agreed unanimously

2.1 Return to Face-to-Face meetings

The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 ends in May 2021 and so may require a return to face-to-face meetings. Cllr Finch confirmed that Robert Jenrick MP has the power to extend the regulations and has been asked by Cllr Finch to do so but has not yet replied. Councillors were given the National Association of Local Councils advice, which includes holding "hybrid meetings" with some attending in person and some remote video access. **Action**: To consider safe options and await a decision from Government. *Agenda item for April*

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Westrop declared an interest in a planning application at item 8, due to a work relationship with the applicant.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

None

5. PROGRESS CHECK

- **5.1 Cemetery update:** Newer graves have been levelled and turfed. Other graves will be levelled and seeded by Village Maintenance this spring. As part of the cemetery tidy up in advance of grass cutting resuming at the end of March, plastic flowers, wreaths and other items not permitted in the cemetery will be cleared from graves. Where possible these will be left to one side for collection. Notices will be prepared for the cemetery and village noticeboards reminding residents of the cemetery regulations. Plastic/fake flowers are not permitted as these do not biodegrade and quickly become litter. Other unauthorised items on graves can present a serious health & safety hazard to maintenance and grass cutting staff. No offence is intended to relatives and visitors but if the rules are not enforced for the whole cemetery the situation quickly gets out of hand.
- **5.2 Open Spaces Action Plan:** An email from the BDC officer had been forwarded to Councillors, explaining why Braintree District Council does not wish their land at New Park to be named in the Castle Hedingham entry for use as an open space. Instead they wish to record "land to be identified" on the basis that this gives flexibility and does not exclude the land owned by BDC if development occurs in future.

Action: The leader of Braintree District Council, Cllr Graham Butland, has still not responded to a letter from the Chairman asking for clarification of his offer of funding. This will be followed up

- **5.3 Woodyard, Station Road:** The Chairman updated Councillors on the actions taken to identify the owner of the property and to secure the site at Station Road, following damage to fences and trespass at the site. The police have been informed and asked to keep an eye on the location on their patrols
- **5.4 Tree and hedge clearance, Sudbury Road.** Concerns had been raised about large scale clearance of mature trees and hedges. This has been reported to Braintree District Council and then to the Forestry Commission who are investigating, as the area cleared is in excess of the legal amount allowed without a felling licence.

6. HIGHWAYS

- **6.1 Station Road pedestrian crossing:** Cllr Finch confirmed that the installation of a pedestrian crossing at Station Road near Hedingham School is being chased up.
- **6.2 Drainage issues:** Anglian Water work at Sudbury Hill and St James Street is underway. Other blocked drain issues including Queen Street and Station Road have been reported to Essex Highways
- **6.3 Retaining wall, Queen Street footpath:** This work was scheduled for March 2020 but has not been started. Cllr Finch agreed to chase this up with Essex Highways
- **6.4 Bollard request, Falcon Square:** Following damage for the second time by a delivery vehicle to a house in Falcon Square, the clerk has requested guidance from Essex Highways through Cllr Finch about possible installation of a protective bollard at the corner of Falcon Square and Castle Lane.

7. REPORTS

- 7.1 Police/PCSO/Neighbourhood Watch: A recent Police report will be forwarded to Councillors.
- **7.2** Essex CC report: Cllr D Finch ECC reported:
- National Grid Bramford to Twinstead Tee network upgrade: Cllr Finch and other Essex & Suffolk Councillors attended a meeting with National Grid last week. There may be plans to put cables underground in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but supersized pylons are planned for the rest of the route, including phase 2 which will eventually go as far as Rayleigh. He questioned why cables cannot be run under the sea from Ipswich to Southend and also raised this option at a meeting with Essex MPs. See also item 11
- **Laptop schemes** have given 5000 children in the county laptops for home schooling. An extensive testing programme is underway to enable children to return to school safely.
- Essex Climate Action Commission strategy is being prepared to enable Essex to be carbon neutral by 2030. The UK Government target is 2050
- **Beaulieu Park station**. £300million has been granted by UK Government to build a railway station outside Chelmsford serving new homes and linking with Witham, Braintree and Liverpool Street.
- **A120/A133 extension planned** together with a Rapid Transport System in the Colchester area to ease traffic congestion has been granted £90million funding
- **7.3 Braintree DC report:** Cllr Beavis apologised for absence due to a conflicting meeting at Sible Hedingham. Cllr Johnson reported:
- National Grid Bramford to Twinstead Tee network upgrade: he will be attending meetings about the proposals but is pleased to see there are no plans for a substation in Castle Hedingham.
- **Riverside Walk Sible Hedingham**. There are ongoing discussions with Sible Hedingham Parish Council and BDC planning officers. It now appears that the surfacing of the walk is not the responsibility of Bloor Homes, but there is funding available and the situation looks promising.
- **Kirby Hall Road, Four Winds:** Concerns have been raised about caravans being used as permanent accommodation, also noise disturbance from racing quad bikes. The clerk said that questions had been raised with BDC planning enforcement who had replied to say they would not accept any more reports without different evidence. The Chairman asked Cllr Johnson if he could raise this with BDC directly.
- Local Plan: Section 1 was adopted in February and it is now hoped that BDC can move on quickly with Section 2
- Crouch Green verges: Vehicles are continuing to damage the greensward at Crouch Green.
- **Verge Cutting:** No reply has been received from BDC about proposals to cut verges only once a year in autumn. The Parish Council has asked to be informed of the scheduled dates of any cut of the

protected verge at Edeys Lane so that volunteers can rake away cuttings promptly to protect rare plant species. Cllr Johnson will follow this up with the cabinet member involved.

8. PLANNING

Applications received

21/00422/FUL Erection of new barn to replace demolished barn following a fire

Milestone Barns Sudbury Road CO9 3AD

No objections

21/00155/HH Side Extension and Alterations to existing dwelling.

7 Park Vale Close CO9 3DS

No objections

Applications determined:

20/02003/FUL Subdivision of the site and creation of a new dwelling

The Coach House Rear Of 37 St James Street CO9 3EW

Application REFUSED

20/01676/HH & 20/01677/LBC Application for a dropped kerb to create new access following removal of existing low brick wall.

120 Nunnery Street CO9 3DR

Application *PERMITTED*

9. FINANCE

9.1 The monthly accounts were approved and payments agreed for authorisation. The bank reconciliation was checked and signed via email by Cllr Gransden.

Proposed: Cllr Veater Seconded: Cllr Toocaram Agreed unanimously

Mar-21	Payments in Month	Details	Amount
DD	Eon	Electricity New Park	£28.00
DD	Invoco (GOCARDLESS)	Portable telephone number	£1.39
B/P	E C Waters	Home as Office March	£75.00
B/P	E C Waters	Clerk Expenses Feb 8th to March 8th	£115.87
B/P	A&J Lighting	Monthly Charge	£11.40
B/P	M D Landscapes	Cemetery level graves and lay turf £	
B/P	Janitorial Direct Limited	Toilet Rolls and Disinfectant £	
B/P	Darkins Supply Stores	Village Maintenance & Public Toilets £63.60	

TOTAL in month £549.26

Mar-21	Receipts in Month	Details	Amount
	None		
		TOTAL in month	£0.00

Feb-21	Payments in Month	Details	Amount
DD	Eon	Electricity New Park	£31.23
DD	Bulb	Electricity Toilets	£18.36
DD	Invoco (GOCARDLESS)	Portable telephone number	£1.48
DD	B&CE Holdings	Peoples Pension	£67.80
B/P	Staff	Salaries	£1,531.70
B/P	E C Waters	Home as Office February	£75.00
B/P	E C Waters	Clerk Expenses Jan 11th to Feb 8th	£28.89
B/P	A&J Lighting	Monthly Charge	£11.40
B/P	Abacus Accountancy	Payroll Oct, Nov, Dec 2020 £43.	

TOTAL in month

£1,809.06

Feb-21	Receipts in Month	Details	Amount
04-Feb	Jones A & M	Purchase Grave plot 248	£484.00
09-Feb	BDC	Councillors Community Grant	£1,600.00
16-Feb	Moffat	Sponsorship Village Park seat	£750.00

TOTAL in month

£2,834.00

Accounts balances at 8th March 2021

Unity Trust Current account
Unity Trust Deposit account
Cambridge & Counties 95 day
£21,011.49
£10,466.77
£34,502.31
£65,980.57

The Cambridge & Counties Bank account balance increase reflects £950.01 interest earned in 2020.

10. CASTLE HEDINGHAM VILLAGE PARK

10.1 The minutes of the Village Park group meeting held via Zoom on 17th February 2021 were approved as a correct record of events

Proposed: Cllr Jordan Seconded: Cllr Toocaram Agreed unanimously

10.2 To note complaint from resident regarding clearance of ivy and brambles at Queen Street boundary. A small amount of ivy and bramble clearance at the boundary had been started but stopped at the request of the resident. The Village Park group will review the situation and try to find a compromise which meets the needs of all parties including residents, Parish Council responsibilities under the terms of the lease, environmental impact and plans to save established fruit trees along the boundary.

Action: Members of the Village Park group will look into options discussed.

10.3 Dog Fouling – to review the situation at the Village Park and identify actions needed. Our Village Maintenance operative inspects the park every morning, and a disappointing increase in dog fouling has been noticed. It is also an increasing problem in other central areas of the village, presumably because dog owners are not using surrounding footpaths due to cold and wet weather. Residents are reminded that anyone who fails to clear up after their dog in any location can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100. If the case goes to court this could cost the owner or person in charge of the animal up to £1,000. The law states that being unaware a dog has fouled or not having a suitable bag is not a reasonable excuse. A leaflet handed by volunteers to all dog walkers reminding them of their responsibilities was considered. **Action**: Village Maintenance will be asked to pick up all dog mess in the Village Park. The biodegradable paint spray will continue to be used for other village locations.

Action: The situation will be monitored with a view to deciding whether a leaflet hand out might be appropriate and effective. Agenda item for April meeting

10.4 CCTV signs – to review the security measures introduced and the need for signs at the location. Further problems with vandalism at the Public Toilets have not occurred. This will be kept under review.

10.5 To review progress and decide on further actions needed to progress the Village Park development. Cllr Jordan reported on a visit to an Incredible Edible project at Earls Colne, which started at the beginning of lockdown last year. This is part of an international scheme which started at Todmorden near Sheffield in 2008. The beauty of this project is it is proven to be effective and can start small and anyone can be involved as much or as little as they want. Their slogan is "If you eat, you're in". Full details can be found at https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk/ and a 13 minute Ted talk from one of the founders is shown here https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk/our-story/

11. NATIONAL GRID BRAMFORD TO TWINSTEAD TEE PROPOSALS

Further details had been received by the clerk about the revised network capability improvement proposals from National Grid https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/bramford-twinstead including 29km of new power lines, mostly overhead. In 2013 a new substation site was chosen in Butlers Wood, west of Twinstead out of three options which included two in Castle Hedingham. It has been confirmed by National Grid that the Twinstead substation location is being

pursued in the new proposals, and no further pylons are proposed in Castle Hedingham. See also ECC report and BDC report item 7.

12. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE

EALC: Micro Grant Communication & Technology Support Fund launch. Grants of up to £500 are available to help support grass roots organisations responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, who largely rely on volunteers to deliver their projects and have no infrastructure to support communications and technology.

EALC: Youth Engagement Conference 9.30am-2.30pm 28th April 2021 via Zoom, cost £50+VAT The attendance of at least one Councillor would be welcomed.

Action: The clerk will forward details of the conference to Cllr Dover who offered to attend.

13. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

• Agenda items for the April meeting to be notified to the clerk by 9am on Monday 5th April

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS: All meetings to be held via Video Conferencing until further notice

Monday 12th April 2021	7.30pm	Ordinary Parish Council	Zoom video conferencing
Monday 10th May 2021	7.30pm	Annual Parish Council	Location to be confirmed
May 2021	7.30pm	Annual Parish Assembly	Event to be confirmed

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

SIGNED (CHAIRMAN)

DATE