

**HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**held via Zoom on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

Present: Cllrs Nigel Boreham, Andrea Davis, Robert Lodge (chair), Neil Reeve, Paul Sutton, Jo Windley, and the Clerk Allison Ward

County and District Cllr Susan Baker (leaving after agenda item 20/148)

2 Zoom connections during the meeting from members of the public

20/144 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None

20/145 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING – None

20/146 PUBLIC FORUM

A short discussion took place on the historic flooding at Brickford Bridge after heavy rainfall which is the result of various watercourses converging. The Parish Council hopes to organise a volunteer working party in the Spring to clear the main watercourse through the parish of obstructions, whilst this will not resolve the historic flooding points it should improve the situation. Cllrs commented that the ditches have been dug out around Lower House Farm and raised concerns that the exit point from the ditches now goes straight onto the highway rather than entering the roadside ditch.

Residents are asked to be mindful of the poor state of some footpaths, bridleways and byways following the heavy rain especially where they pass through private land, assistance in minimising surface damage is appreciated.

20/147 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING of 4 January 2021 and the extraordinary meeting of 25 January 2021 were approved by the Parish Council as a correct record. They will be signed by the Chairman of this meeting at the earliest opportunity.

20/148 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT

Uttlesford is looking to increase Council tax by the maximum of £5 per band D property. This equates to 3.6%. Essex County Council has not increased Council Tax but are looking to increase the Social Care precept by 1.5%.

There was a further discussion on flooding. Cllr Barker confirmed most ordinary watercourses, (streams, drains, open ditches, culverts etc) are not owned by Essex Highways, and are the responsibility of the adjacent landowner to maintain under riparian ownership. See this link for further details <https://flood.essex.gov.uk/media/1289/essex-county-council-ordinary-watercourse-maintenance-guide.pdf>. Cllr Lodge confirmed some landowners have been digging out ditches and the Parish Council is grateful for their efforts. Whilst the Parish Council accepts Essex priority is homes that are flooding, some highway flooding is extremely dangerous and needs addressing. The Parish Council would appreciate support from Essex Highways to enforce action where landowners are reluctant to do works.

The Clerk confirmed discussion during the month with Cllr Barker re the unplanned closure of the B184 and vehicles ignoring the official detour. This has resulted in significant damage to the verges and ditches through High Roding, Poplar Road and School Lane and through to Aythorpe Roding. The meeting was of the view placing the road closure signs north of Rands Road would have avoided the damage.

Cllr Barker reminded the meeting there are further Covid grants available to businesses and details are on the Uttlesford website, if you affected by the current situation please consider applying.

20/149 CLERK'S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE

The defibrillator had been 'used' although East of England ambulance confirmed they had not issued the code for access. New electrodes were purchased, but the device still failed to activate. It has been returned to the manufacturer for further investigation and they agreed to provide a replacement under warranty. Due to supply issues and to avoid any further delays the agent who supplied the original device has replaced with a device of the same age.

Signed  
 Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

North Essex Parking Partnerships have introduced weekly surgeries, the clerk has requested a slot for assistance with pavement parking along The Street where a small minority of vehicles are being parked in such a way as to totally obstruct the pavement.

Footpath 11 obstructions reported to Essex Highways reference 2696051. The PRow officer has been in contact to confirm that the trees blocking the footpath will be removed by Essex Highways if the adjoining landowners do not remove before end of January.

The PRow officer has written to the Parish Council with an update on bridleway 19 as it leaves the road south of Stagden Cross. The surface and drainage are in a poor state and the situation only improves once you reach the woodland down the hill. This stretch has been put forward for a capital scheme to improve the conditions, which if successful could be achieved in 2022, the adjoining landowners are aware of these plans.

In accordance with Highways Act 1980 section 119, official notice of the diversion order for footpath 16 at Crippings Farm (diversion around the farmyard rather than through it) has been received and any comments are required by 11 February, this has been notified previously in the earlier stages and no concerns raised.

## 20/150 COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Wicksteed completed the annual inspection this month, their report is considered until agenda item 20.153.01.

Cllr Lodge added to the earlier discussions on flooding and confirmed the Parish Council is taking action at School Lane where the highway flooding can be reduced. Cllr Lodge and the Clerk met with the Essex Arboricultural Consultant who has agreed to remove the willow trees which will improve the flow. Once this is completed the Parish Council will fund a contractor to dig out the ditch and rebuild the bank.

Cllr Windley asked for a note of thanks to be recorded on behalf of the residents at Bishops Green for the Parish Councils support in holding an additional meeting to discuss the Bishops Green planning application in January, Cllr Lodge noted the benefit of having the agent present to respond to resident's questions.

Cllrs raised the disruption caused by Gigaclear works for fibre broadband and the Clerk confirmed most of the works including along The Street are being funded by Gigaclear as part of their commercial plans, i.e., not funded by Superfast Essex. This is necessary to enable the grant funded Gigaclear plans for The Rodings to be commercially viable, i.e., an extension of their network to non-funded areas such as High Easter, (to note County Broadband also commercially funded a small part of the infrastructure in High Easter). In the long term this will give some residents in High Easter the benefit of obtaining a service from two different suppliers. Essex Highways cannot refuse utility companies road closure orders for works.

## 20/151 PLANNING

### 20.151.01 – Applications

Application No	UTT/20/3457/HHF
Location	Beards Cottage Acreland Green, The Street
Development	Conversion of half of existing double garage into home office and shower room

Cllr Sutton proposed no objection to this application, this was seconded by Cllr Davis with all in agreement.

Application No	UTT/21/0048/HHF & UTT/21/0049/LB
Location	Chapel House, The Street
Development	Proposed single storey rear extension

Cllr Sutton commented on the concerns made by the conservation re a gable porch and agreed with the suggestion of a lean-to porch being more appropriate.

*Cllr Lodge suspended the meeting to allow the applicant to comment.*

The resident confirmed their need for the porch. The design is similar to the adjoining property; however, they were happy with the conservation officers advice and would arrange for amended drawings to be submitted.

*The meeting resumed*

Cllr Sutton proposed that the Parish Council makes a comment in response that having spoken to the applicant they understand revised drawings are being prepared and assume that the Parish Council will be reconsulted, this was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

Application No	UTT/21/0158/FUL
Location	Homely, The Street
Development	Section 73A Retrospective application for the demolition of existing property and proposed erection of new dwelling

The meeting noted that the issues raised previously by the Parish Council and reasons for refusal by Uttlesford remain, none appear to have been addressed in this new application. The meeting noted the applicant had appealed Uttlesford's decision to refuse application UTT/20/1937/FUL, the formal process will begin once a planning inspector is appointed.

Cllr Sutton proposed that the Parish Council maintains its objection the primary issues being the scale and design of the proposed dwelling in comparison to the original dwelling, and its position forward on the site which results in reduced and inadequate parking and compromises highway safety. This was seconded by Cllr Davis with all in agreement.

Cllr Davis went on to propose that the application is called to planning committee for consideration if officers are mindful to approve the application, this was seconded by Cllr Windley with all in agreement. The reasons for this request are as for the objection.

*1 resident leaves the meeting*

20.151.02 – Decisions

Application No	UTT/20/3064/HHF
Location	6 Boreham Court
Development	Proposed single storey White UPVC Conservatory to the rear of the property
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application No	UTT/20/2772/FUL
Location	Lawn Hall Farm Hall Chase
Development	Proposed Straw Barn (Phase 1)
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application No	UTT/20/2773/FUL
Location	Lawn Hall Farm Hall Chase
Development	Proposed Straw Barn (Phase 2)
Decision	Conditional Approval

20.151.03 – Following correspondence with Uttlesford on the Local Heritage list, Cllrs considered Article 4 directives which are usually attached to a property to for example, protect the design of roof tiles or windows on unlisted buildings. Cllrs were of the view an Article 4 directive would not have made any difference to the demolition of Homely, and the building should be protected because it was in the conservation area. The meeting agreed not to pursue Article 4 directives at this stage. Advice received from Heritage England on the demolition of buildings in a conservation area has been forwarded to Uttlesford for comment.

20.151.04 –Uttlesford has opened its 'Call for Sites' which provides the opportunity for developers, landowners, and other interested parties to put forward sites within Uttlesford that they believe are suitable for development for homes, employment, or other uses. Further details including application forms can be viewed at this link <https://uttlesford-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/event/35905> The deadline for submitting responses is 5pm on 21st April 2021.

## 20/152 FLOODING

In addition to the conversations during the meeting, Cllr Lodge confirmed he had been in discussion with the landowner and land agent at the Parsonage Fishing lakes. Previous works at the site had diverted a pipe which had become blocked and was contributing to the volume of water building on the highway in front of Parsonage Barns. The work to clear this has now been completed and this should reduce the water pooling on the highway.

*1 resident leaves the meeting*

## 20/153 PLAYING FIELD AND JUBILEE MEADOW

20.153.01 – The annual playground inspection has been completed and the report circulated to the Parish Council, there are no high or medium/high risks which require immediate attention. The meeting noted the 5 medium risks, two of which are new; bucket swing mounted too low and the bench not secured to the ground in the play area. The Clerk has contacted Creative Play re the bucket swing, and they have confirmed they will adjust the height to within the British Standard at no cost.

20.153.02 – The initial plans for the skate park were shared with the young people who confirmed the proposed equipment was difficult to use and suggested some alternatives. These have been shared with suppliers and costings are pending.

20.153.03 – Cllrs noted that some of the trees planted in 2013 in the Jubilee Meadow are still small and there is also a lot of black thorn bushes. Cllr Windley will contact the tree officer at Uttlesford to see if there are any trees available for planting. An assessment of the Jubilee Meadow will be carried forward to the next meeting/

## 20/154 TENDERS 2021

Cllr Lodge proposed a tender is issued for the verge cutting for 2021 assuming Essex County Council issue a contract to the Parish Council for the works, Clerk to confirm.

The contracts for cutting the playing field and for the maintenance of the Jubilee Meadow are two-year contracts issued in 2020.

## 20/155 LITTER PICK

Current guidance advises against 'organised' litter picks during the national lockdown, although individuals are still encouraged to do litter picking if it is safe to do so as part of their daily exercise. The Parish Council agreed to defer a decision on the spring litter pick until the next meeting when it is hoped government guidance will be updated.

## 20/156 FINANCE

The following cheques were raised between meetings to avoid delays in payment, they were proposed retrospectively for payment by Cllr Davis, seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

PAYMENT TO	VALUE
Jane Kelsey – Grant for Christmas Food Boxes (note 1)	£ 517.00
Andrew Deptford – New electrodes for the defib inc VAT	£ 97.14

Note 1 – with reference to minute 20.136.02, the payment is reduced from £550 to £517 as some items in the boxes did not meet the grant criteria, the final grant received was £467.

The following cheque was proposed for payment by Cllr Boreham and seconded by Cllr Davis with all in agreement.

PAYMENT TO	VALUE
Allison Ward - Parish Clerk Jan 2021 inc Zoom subscription for month	£ 280.63

20/157 ITEMS CARRIED FORWARD FOR NEXT MEETING – Litter pick, tree planting and Jubilee Wood.

20/158 DATE OF NEXT MEETING scheduled for Monday 1 March 2021 at 7.30pm, the meeting will be via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed  
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)