



HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL

HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING held in the High Easter Village Hall on Tuesday 8th May 2018

1. CHAIRMAN's WELCOME, Cllr Robert Lodge opened the meeting and welcomed residents to the Annual Village Meeting. In attendance were all 7 members of the Parish Council, 9 members of the public, County and District Cllr Susan Barker, District Cllr Howard Ryles (Takeley ward and a resident of High Easter) and the Parish Clerk.
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – George and Jane Boden.
3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING held on Tuesday 2nd May 2017 were proposed as a correct record by Neil Reeve and seconded by Nigel Boreham with all in agreement; the chairman signed the minutes. There were no matters arising.
4. COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT

Cllr Barker began by confirming she continues to write a regular report in the Parish News to keep residents updated on local government.

At Essex County Council, Cllr Barker is now the Cabinet Member for Customer and Corporate which covers a range of services including libraries, registration service and major contracts. Cllr Barker commented on the growing issues with the state of the highways and confirmed there will be an increase in the budget allocated to highways as well as investment in country parks.

At District Council level, Uttlesford is looking to go to final consultation on the regulation 19 Local Plan in June and following that it is hoped the Plan will be ready to go to the Inspector later in the year. The July cabinet meeting will be looking to increase fines for fly tipping and litter; a big thank you to all those villages, like High Easter who help by arranging community litter picks. Cllr Barker went on to remind the meeting that there are grant opportunities available via the Local Communities fund, this is an opportunity for Parish Councils to apply for funding and other parishes have done so for a local handyman. Cllr Barker also reminded the meeting that the Stansted Community Trust has funding available for local organisations.

Residents were invited to ask Cllr Barker any questions,

1. Is it possible to clear litter from the A120, the scale of the rubbish sets a very poor impression of our area? In responding Cllr Barker sympathised with the situation and confirmed the A120 is not managed by Essex Highways but by the Highways Agency. Clearing it up isn't solving the problem, it's important to catch people dropping litter and to prosecute them, as well as educating the next generation. Cllr Barker reiterated the importance of residents reporting any incidents with evidence so that the appropriate action can be taken.
2. Cllr Barker was asked for a progress report on the 40mph speed limit beyond Boreham Court. The Parish Council has been advised a TRO is due to be issued, however this will not extend as far as Stagden Cross as per the Parish Councils request. Cllr Barker asked the Clerk to forward the paperwork.
3. Cllr Barker was asked for her view on the Stansted Airport planning application to increase passenger numbers and whether she made a personal comment. Cllr Barker in her response suggested there was no increase in the number of flights the airport has permission for, it is about moving more passengers on routes, e.g. bigger aircraft. There

were differing views about this statement and comments that the Local Plan and the airport application should not be considered in isolation giving their impact on local infrastructure. Cllr Barker concluded that Uttlesford will delay the decision meeting if there is still points to clarify or information missing as it is important the Cllrs are fully informed.

4. A resident commented on the lack of repair to the pot holes at the side of the road, and the poor standard of the road repairs generally.

5. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT – Cllr Robert Lodge

Firstly, thank you for attending tonight's meeting. I will start my report as I usually do with a thank you to all my fellow Councillors for giving up their time to attend our monthly meetings and for the many other jobs outside meetings that they do.

A special thank you to Andrea and Neil for their work and attending meetings with regard to Stansted Airport issues.

Looking back over the year, Stansted Airport seems to have been on virtually every agenda regarding flight path concerns or expansion concerns and I expect this will continue for some time to come. As a Parish Council we have done our best to support residents, reading pages of documents, responding to consultations, contacting and meeting with various parties and providing residents with information to make their own responses. Thank you to you all for your support and please continue to report noise disturbance.

The Rural Housing Scheme project is making progress, although much slower than we would have liked. During the year and following a formal tender process the Parish Council appointed Hastoe as its housing provider partner. They have independently carried out a survey of possible sites and in March Uttlesford finally commented on the suitability of each. The next stage of the process requires Hastoe to meet with the landowners to discuss availability and cost. We understand the delays and lack of information on the location of the sites has caused some frustration, but I hope you can understand that we are guided in the process and releasing the locations without speaking to landowners would not be appropriate. We hope to see some progress very soon.

A solution to the Post Office is also making slow progress. The new Post Office model only permits a counter service in a suitable retail outlet and unfortunately there are no suitable outlets in High Easter. An alternative offer is a mobile service provided by a local post master. The Parish Council has found a local post master willing to provide the service. The current delay is lack of available equipment and we continue to chase the Post Office.

After many months, the village finally has a defibrillator machine which is mounted on the wall at the Snug and has been required on one occasion so far. We all hope it is not something that will be needed but is reassuring to know the facility is there.

There seems to have been more houses on the market this last year than previous years, it is sad to see some of those residents who have given support to the village and village events over the years moving on but we wish them well. This unfortunately included our resident Vicar Dub Gannon as he and his family reluctantly returned to Australia. The amalgamation of the church parishes into a new group of 10 means it is unlikely the new vicar will reside in High Easter, although it is good to hear that the church is making progress and two potential candidates will be interviewed at the end of the month.

Verge cutting contracts have been issued to Jamie Perry once again and he should be making his first cut in the next week. A new contractor has been maintaining the playing field and the Jubilee Meadow which is now becoming established and growing well, thank you to Neil for the addition of fruit trees.

A lot of work behind the scenes has been, and is still going on, with District Councillor Howard Ryles to try to get fibre broadband to every house in the village. The parameters are continually changing making the process challenging and frustrating, but we are hopeful that we will be able to coordinate the best solution for all residents and make significant progress in the coming year.

Finally, we should put on record a very big thank you to our Parish Clerk Allison who does an amazing job and keeps us on the right path during meetings and works tirelessly for the good of the Parish outside of our meetings.

6. Parish Council Financial Statement 2017/18 – The Clerk

The Accounts for the year ending March 2018 show an income of £20.0k, expenditure £13.7k giving a surplus of £6.3k. The yearly income is distorted as a result of the inclusion of two years' verge cutting payments from ECC, excluding

this, income would be £16.2k and the annual surplus would have been £2.5k. Apart from the purchase of the defibrillator, there has been no other significant expenditure and costs have largely been on services.

The value of fixed assets owned by the Parish Council has been amended this year to £51.2k to reflect purchase of the defibrillator, there have been no disposal of assets.

7. Report from High Easter Village Hall Committee – Gordon Robinson

A small team of people continue to voluntarily work to maintain and run the village hall for the benefit of village groups and the local community. Thank you to Parish Council for their continued support to the village hall committee, to Jane Boden for gardening and Brian Hockley for the donations from the Easter Egg hunt.

There were over 300 events/bookings during the last year which take their toll on the floor and there are plans to repair this in the next year. Other projects for the coming year include upgrading the boiler and hot water system, refurbishment of the ladies' toilets which is delayed until July/August, the replacement of the double doors at the rear of the hall and the creation of a partition in the store room to support the pre-school with the use of their outside space.

We have lots of events planned for the coming year to support village hall fundraising, including bar opening, Shakespeare evening, comedy night. We hope you can join us!

8. PARISHONERS QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The Chairman asked for a vote of thanks to be recorded to John Ward for cleaning the play equipment and carry out maintenance work to the play frame posts.

The Chairman confirmed the Parish Council are planning a village event to commemorate the 100th anniversary of World War 1.

District Cllr Howard Ryles then updated the meeting on the current broadband situation. Cllr Ryles confirmed a quote of £43k had been received from BT which covered 140 properties, a £30k schools grant is currently available which would leave a £13k balance to be funded by residents. This quote didn't cover all properties in the parish and so a further request has been made asking BT to requote, it is expected this will add at least £30k to the total cost. Cllr Ryles confirmed he attended a meeting a few weeks ago when Gigaclear, who have now confirmed they will be including some of the properties in High Easter in their rollout, previous information stated they would not cover High Easter. In comparing the maps 40 of the 180 properties we have asked BT to quote for are covered by Gigaclear which changes things again; we have asked Gigaclear to quote to provide fibre to the whole parish. There is a further difference in the offers with BT delivering to the home, but Gigaclear are only delivering to the perimeter of the property. There are voucher schemes to assist both businesses and residents with the cost of the project. At this stage there is no confirmed plan from County Broadband. Further information will be shared once it is available.

County and District Cllr Susan Barker leaves the meeting.

A resident commented on the increase in the volume of litter along the roads towards Maidens.

A resident asked about the situation re highway warning signs to stop delivery vans going onto the Essex Way. It was confirmed there is no solution from Essex Highways and the only option would be for the Parish Council to purchase themselves.

A resident commented that the Post office has a responsibility to provide a service and asked what is happening in terms of providing the equipment. The Parish Council responded to confirm it continues to liaise with the Post Office to reach a conclusion.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting – Tuesday 7th May 2019 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed

Cllr Robert Lodge – Chairman High Easter Parish Council