

**HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**held in High Easter Village Hall on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023**

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

3 members of the public (1 leaving during agenda item 22/124 and 2 leaving after item 22/129 brought forward)

**22/122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – All in attendance.

**22/123 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING**

Cllr Robert Lodge declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3320/FUL as the applicant of the application. And a personal interest in agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3426/FUL as close friends of the applicants.

Cllr Paul Sutton declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3320/FUL as the agent for the application.

Cllr Nigel Boreham declared a personal prejudicial interest in agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3320/FUL as a close friend of the applicant.

Cllr Jo Windley declared a personal prejudicial interest in agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3320/FUL due to connections to the applicant's business.

Cllr Andrea Davis, Cllr Neil Reeve and Cllr Janet Robinson declared personal interests in agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3320/FUL as friends and parish council colleagues of the applicant.

Cllr Lodge requested a dispensation to speak in the public forum. The reason being to respond to any questions or points raised relating to application UTT/22/3320/FUL. Cllr Reeve supported this request citing this is the practice at Uttlesford planning committee, this was seconded by Cllr Davis with all in agreement.

**22/124 PUBLIC FORUM**

The village hall committee requested support from the parish council to help with reducing issues of rubbish being placed in the wrong village hall bins, which on some occasions results in them not being emptied by Uttlesford. The parish council confirmed the village hall committee could move the waste bin closest to the play area to the southeast corner of the village hall. In response to the request to relocate the main bins to a new storage area on the north side of the hall, the parish council confirmed the land identified is in the ownership of the village hall and not parish council and therefore no permission is necessary from this meeting, Clerk to forward the land registry document.

The parish council was asked to consider clearing the litter from the ditch that runs along the full length of the playing field adjacent to the highway. It was noted accessing the ditch is difficult given the vegetation and steep banks, the clerk was asked to obtain a quote for the work which will be brought to the February meeting for decision.

*1 resident leaves the meeting.*

Cllr Lodge confirmed there was no requirement to exercise the dispensation given the two members of the public in attendance are the current tenants of the unit and would be able to respond to any Cllrs questions.

*Cllr Boreham, Cllr Lodge, Cllr Sutton, and Cllr Windley leave the meeting.*

*Cllr Davis proposed that Cllr Reeve take the chair, having accepted this was seconded by Cllr Robinson.*

Signed  
 Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

The tenants of the unit subject to the planning application were in attendance and stated the main objections from residents appear to be directed to their trading practices, in their view these are untrue and elaborated and disappointing considering they have been trading in the village for 20 years. The comments suggest the current tenants are unsocial, drive unroadworthy, unsilenced vehicles through the village, and come and go at all times of day and night. The tenants concluded, ‘we assume there are other agendas and are aggrieved that people are pulling us into their reasons for objection to the application’.

*Cllr Reeve closed the public forum and proposed to bring forward agenda item 22.129.01 application UTT/22/3320/FUL, there were no objections.*

## **22/129 PLANNING**

### 22.129.01 – Applications

Application No	UTT/22/3320/FUL
Location	The Garage, The Street, High Easter
Development	Section 73A Retrospective application for light industrial use of Unit 2, independent of use in connection with existing bus/coach garage.

Cllr Davis noted the response from the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) and the proposed conditions should the application be approved; it was noted the site currently has no operating conditions. Cllr Reeve referenced the comments in the public forum and responses from residents and added that the tenant is immaterial in the consideration, this application seeks permission for a unit, that already has light industrial use, to be used by third parties and not solely the primary business.

Cllr Reeve proposed no objection with a request that the conditions suggested by the EHO in relation to hours of work, no equipment to be used outside the unit, and shutters to be kept down whenever reasonable, be considered if recommend by officers for approval. This was seconded by Cllr Davis with all in agreement.

*2 members of the public leave the meeting, all Cllrs return to the meeting and Cllr Lodge resumes the chair.*

**22/125 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**, Cllr Lodge proposed the minutes be accepted as a correct record this was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

**22/126 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT** – No report.

## **22/127 CLERK’S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE**

The parish council has received a claim notification form for a personal injury claim against the parish council for injuries incurred by a member of the public when they came off their bicycle on School Lane on the approach to the sewage works. This has been passed via the parish council insurance company to a liability adviser for the necessary assessment to be carried out. No further updates will be provided in the minutes until conclusion.

Uttlesford has notified parish councils that it has adopted a new Code of Conduct as from 6 October 2022. The parish council has historically adopted the same code of conduct as Uttlesford, this will be added to the February agenda for consideration.

Information on forthcoming District and parish council elections in May 2023 has been received. To note this will be the first elections where voting ID will be required for in person voting.

Uttlesford confirmed there was insufficient support from town and parish councils to continue to centrally fund the Highway Ranger service, after Essex County Council withdraw funding. This service will now cease at the end of March 2023 and works to paint fingerposts, clean signs and clear signage vegetation will need to be sourced and funded locally.

## **22/128 CLLRS REPORTS**

22.128.01 – The Clerk completed the playground inspection for the month and there is nothing new to report.

Signed  
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

22.128.02 – The parish council to co-ordinate meeting of village groups (village hall committee, church) to agree parish coronation celebrations. First meeting Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January.

22.128.03 – Cllr Boreham noted recent diversions as a result of road closures, diverted vehicles onto untreated roads which is particularly dangerous in icy conditions.

## **22/129 PLANNING**

*Continued*

22.129.01 – Applications

Application No	UTT/22/3426/FUL
Location	Punchbowl, The Street, High Easter
Development	Proposed removal of existing annexe leisure suite and the erection of 1 no. dwelling with associated landscaping and operational development.

Cllrs considered that the application is outside development limits with no justification as to why development is required and that the shared access to the proposed dwelling is in the conservation area.

In conclusion, Cllr Reeve proposed the parish council objects to this application as the design and scale of the proposed detached dwelling is not in-keeping with the character of the surrounding area and that a new dwelling would affect the character, appearance, setting and historic value of the designated heritage assets which border the site. This was seconded by Cllr Davis; the vote was 6 in favour and 1 abstain.

22.129.02 – Decisions to report - None.

22.129.03 - Uttlesford is updating the information on parish settlements as part of the Local Plan process, responses are required by 16 January. The Clerk has prepared a response, Cllr Sutton to review before submission.

## **22/130 OVER'S EVENTS**

Cllr Lodge declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as the director of the company providing the facility for the seated exercise class. Cllr Lodge took no part in the discussion and decision.

The Clerk confirmed c.14 people had signed up to the class and a grant of £1,250 had been confirmed by Uttlesford which would cover the cost of the tutor and assistant for the 12 week class. The parish council had been unsuccessful in its application for a 'winter warming grant. To be able to run the class a further £750 is required to cover the energy costs for the venue (to note there is no hire cost from the venue) and to cover the cost of providing a soup lunch after the event, the soup would be made by volunteers.

Cllr Reeve proposed the parish council gives a grant of up to £750 and that this is part funded from the funds held by the parish council for 'over's work'/ This was seconded by Cllr Robinson, the vote was 6 in favour with Cllr Lodge not taking part.

## **22/131 PARISH COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE**

22.131.01 – Playing field, the parish council noted the request from a resident to replace the damaged basketball hoop. Cllr Lodge proposed both the board and hoop be replaced, this was seconded by Cllr Windley with all in agreement. The Clerk will seek quotes for the works.

22.131.02 – Other projects, given the decision by Essex County Council to withdraw funding for the Highway Rangers, the Clerk was asked to obtain a quote for repairing and painting the white finger post outside The Elms. No further updates on electric charging points, vehicle activated sign for The Street, or play area phase 2.

## **22/132 PRECEPT 2023/24**

22.132.01 – The Clerk presented the accounts to end of December 2022, there are no concerns or significant unplanned expenditure. The closing cash position as at end of December 2022 is £33,831.

Signed  
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

22.132.02 – The Clerk prepared a draft budget which was considered and discussed by Cllrs. In conclusion Cllr Reeve proposed the precept for 2023/24 be set at £21,000 which will show as a 4.9% increase on the parish council portion of residents council tax invoices. The justification for the increase is the higher costs to maintain services. This was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

### **22/133 FINANCE**

22.133.01 The Clerk is currently paid in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) pay scale. A pay award has been agreed by NALC and the Society of Clerks which is back dated to 1 April 2022. Cllr Reeve proposed the clerk's salary is increased in light of this agreement including a pay adjustment to be effective from 1 April 2022, this was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

22.133.02 Cllr Lodge proposed the following payments for authorisation, this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

<i>PAYMENT TO</i>	<i>VALUE</i>
Allison Ward - Parish Clerk December 2022 inc back pay	£ 504.92

**22/134 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING** – As noted in the minutes, Code of Conduct, and village hall ditch clearance.

**22/135 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**, Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm in the village hall.

**TIME AND CLOSE OF MEETING 9.10pm**