

HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
held in High Easter Village Hall on Monday 6th February 2023

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

4 members of the public (all leaving after item 22/143 brought forward)

22/136 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – All in attendance.

22/137 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING

Cllr Neil Lodge declared a personal interest in agenda item 22.143.01, application UTT/23/0129/FUL as a member of the Uttlesford Housing board.

Cllr Robert Lodge declared a personal interest in agenda item 22.143.01, application UTT/23/0129/FUL as a director of Lodge Coaches whose business site borders the application site.

22/138 PUBLIC FORUM

Residents raised concerns and objections to application UTT/23/0129/FUL and asked for the parish councils support in objecting to the proposal. The key points raised were,

1. The existing property has been there for 70 years and is well established in the street scene, it being a mirror image of its neighbour.
2. Sub-division of the existing plot would result in a plot too small for the proposed property and will significantly reduce the parking provision for plot 16.
3. Flooding is an issue where the ditch used to run, and there were concerns the proposals suggest rainwater would flow into sewage when this is not permitted.
4. The west facing windows of 16 Gepps are bedrooms and will be 1.5m from the proposed building, completely blocking light.

In discussion Cllr Reeve confirmed Uttlesford are not singling out any one property, they have a responsibility to look at all their existing housing stock and land to identify if there are areas that can be built on. There is an urgent and significant need for local authority social rental properties and Uttlesford does not have land to build on. The ambition is by adding small numbers across the district, 50 new social rental properties could be delivered.

The meeting confirmed the new properties at Mounsdon Lodge are Housing Association properties and are affordable rather than social rents. Cllr Reeve noted the complaints by residents on the process and expressed his view that this is not how Uttlesford should behave towards its existing tenants, he will follow this up.

Cllr Reeve noted that the application would go to planning committee for decision as it is an Uttlesford application.

A resident commented on the state of the basketball hoop and offered to voluntarily carry out the repair. The parish council were very grateful for the offer which would avoid the need to use a third-party contractor.

Cllr Lodge proposed agenda item 22.143.01 application UTT/23/0129/FUL be brought forward, there were no objections.

22/143 PLANNING

22.143.01 – Applications

Application No	UTT/23/0129/FUL
Location	Land adjacent to 16 Gepps Close, The Street
Development	Erection of 1no. two bedroom dwelling with new access, vehicular parking and works

Signed
 Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

Cllr Sutton opened the discussion and commented that on paper it appears you can get a house on the plot, however, when you meet the requirements for parking etc it ends up being a house that has been fitted onto a site. The design is going to look odd compared to the adjacent property and it is outrageous to build against what is the only source of light to a habitable room of the adjacent property. Cllr Sutton concluded that in his view the plot is too small, the proposed house does not fit, and is not in keeping. This view was echoed by other Cllrs.

Cllrs made reference to the bungalow that was developed some years ago adjacent to number 1 Gepps Close and where similar views and concerns were expressed, this site was subsequently approved. However, this plot is larger and of a different shape to that proposed.

Cllr Reeve shared the views on the design, however reiterated the desperate need for social housing in the district.

Cllr Lodge was of the view the proposed access for both 16 Gepps Close and the new property would be hazardous. Cllr Lodge went on to comment on the potential parking issues which would see more cars parked on the highway in a location directly adjacent to Lodge Coaches entrance, this would make the movement of large vehicles more difficult without using the adjacent verge. The only way to limit on street parking would be with yellow lines.

In conclusion Cllr Sutton proposed the parish council objects to the application on policy GEN 2 including layout, design, impact on street scene and loss of light to the neighbouring property. And policy GEN 1 access with the potential to create dangerous off-street parking impacting highway safety, this was seconded by Cllr Davis, the vote was 6 in favour and 1 abstention.

4 members of the public leave the meeting.

22/139 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, Cllr Lodge proposed the minutes of 3rd January 2023 be accepted as a correct record this was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

22/140 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT – County and District Cllr Susan Barker sent apologies to the meeting due to commitments to attend other parish council meetings taking place this evening.

22/141 CLERK’S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE – Nothing to report.

22/142 CLLRS REPORTS

22.142.01 – Playground Inspection

Cllr Windley completed the playground inspection for the month and raised the sunken area in front of the gate to the play equipment. Cllrs discussed possible solutions and in conclusion Cllr Lodge proposed adding a rubber grass mat, noting that the area would need to be built up to accommodate, Cllr Lodge to investigate. Cllr Windley raised the need for signage confirming the area is managed by the parish council.

22.142.02 – Coronation Commemorative Event

A coronation committee comprising members of the village hall committee, church and parish council has met to consider plans for the parish to come together to commemorate. Plans are centred on a single day, Sunday 7th May with events suitable for all. Plans currently include a church service, car show, children’s games with tea/cake, and an informal evening at the village hall with food and music ending with fireworks. A flyer with details will be produced and delivered to every home in the parish by end of March.

22.142.03 – Other Reports

Cllr Davis confirmed that with no one stepping forward to co-ordinate the Shakespeare events, it was no longer possible for High Easter to host. If any residents are willing to take on this role please notify the clerk.

Cllr Reeve commented in objection to the decision by Essex County Council to introduce a booking system when visiting recycling centres. The Clerk was asked to write to the cabinet member for waste expressing the parish council’s disappointment over the lack of public consultation and objecting to the decision which the parish council sees as putting the parish at extra risk from fly tipping.

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

Cllr Boreham commented on the errors which still exist on the Uttlesford website in relation to bin collection days. Postcode CM3 1HU is incorrect, Clerk to report.

Cllr Reeve reported that he has met with Nathan Tiller, and they are developing a proposal for High Easter community energy.

Cllr Reeve commented on the number of parish councils who have given support in principle to the 20's plenty campaign.

Cllr Reeve commented on the apparent increase in HGVs using High Easter Road to access the ALD site. A suggestion of passing places along this stretch of road to avoid the damage to the banks was raised at the Uttlesford Highways Panel, however the view was the width of the road was not sufficient to allow this.

The meeting agreed to hold a parish litter pick on Saturday 25th March, meeting at 10am in the village hall car park. Clerk to advertise.

22/143 PLANNING

Continued

Application No	UTT/23/0012/LB
Location	Cock and Bell House, The Street
Development	Wall repairs to internal bathroom

Cllr Sutton proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

Application No	UTT/22/2858/LB
Location	Lower House Farm, The Street
Development	Conversion of existing barn into a single dwelling house with ancillary access, parking, landscaping and other associated works.

Cllrs noted this was a re-consultation. Cllr Sutton proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

22.143.02 – Decisions to report.

Application No	UTT/22/3074/HHF
Location	The Parsonage, High Easter Road
Development	Erection of 33 Photovoltaic solar panels on free standing rack in rear garden.
Decision	Conditional approval

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.
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application No	UTT/22/3168/FUL
Location	Land South of The Street High Easter
Development	Proposed change of use of land from agricultural to residential and the erection of 1 no. dwelling
Decision	Withdrawn

22.143.03 The Parish Council noted Uttlesford's decision not to accept the nomination of the Jubilee Wood as an asset of community value (ACV) 'as there is no data to evidence the local community that uses the ACV and therefore how it furthers social wellbeing and social interests.' The Clerk confirmed the application to register the allotments did not progress for similar reasons. The meeting agreed the loss of either asset was highly unlikely and given the low risk, no further action was proposed.

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

22/144 PLAYING FIELD

Cllr Lodge proposed the quote of £180 ex VAT from JCM Services to clear the ditch along the front of the playing field from litter be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Boreham with all in agreement. Cllrs noted the information supplied by a resident re newts in the ditch and the need to complete the work by mid-February, the contractor will be asked to meet this deadline.

22/145 GREEN WASTE SERVICE

Information was received from Uttlesford re the weekend green waste service between meetings, it gave insufficient time for a decision to be made other than by email. Cllr Sutton proposed the decision made via email to continue with a bi-weekly service at High Easter, starting on 18 February at an increased rate of £88.20 per hour (a 20% increase on last year) be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson with all in agreement. The clerk has written to Uttlesford requesting that in future information is provided before budget setting meetings and to allow the correct decision-making process.

22/146 TENDER REQUIREMENTS 2023

The Clerk was asked to contact Essex County Council for confirmation of the payment for verge cutting in 2023 and to request that after 10+ years of level funding that this is increased to reflect the rising costs. Once confirmed the parish council will issue a tender.

The meeting noted the playing field and Jubilee Wood contracts are not due for renewal this year.

22/147 PARISH COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE

No further updates on electric charging points, vehicle activated sign for The Street, or play area phase 2.

22/148 CODE OF CONDUCT UPDATE

The clerk had circulated the new Code of Conduct adopted by Uttlesford in November 2022, given the parish council has historically adopted the Uttlesford code and as no concerns were raised, Cllr Lodge proposed the parish council adopts the new Code of Conduct, this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

22/149 FINANCE

22.149.01 Following advice on local authority VAT and contributions from third parties towards works, Cllr Lodge proposed the grant to High Easter Village Hall Committee for the repairs to the village hall footpaths is increased from £2,000 to £2,430 this being the full cost of the works. This was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

22.149.02 – Cllr Reeve proposed a grant of £120 is made to the village hall committee for the purposes of running a first aid course for residents. This was seconded by Cllr Davis with all in agreement.

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

PAYMENT TO	VALUE
Allison Ward - Parish Clerk January 2023	£ 296.92

22/150 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – Nothing in addition.

22/151 DATE OF NEXT MEETING, Monday 6th March at 7.30pm in the village hall.

TIME AND CLOSE OF MEETING 9.15pm

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)