

**HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**held in High Easter Village Hall on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Present: Cllrs Nigel Boreham, Wendy Colgrave, Robert Lodge (chair), Lucy O'Connor, Neil Reeve, Paul Sutton, and the Clerk Allison Ward

County and District Cllr Susan Barker (arrives during 23/104, leaving after 23/106)

12 residents (majority leaving during 23/109)

**23/102 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Received from Cllr Janet Robinson (personal commitments). The apologies were accepted by the meeting.

**23/103 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING**

Cllr Boreham declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 23.109.01 application UTT/23/2534/PAQ3 as the applicant.

Cllr Colgrave declared a personal prejudicial interest in agenda item 23.109.01 application UTT/23/2534/PAQ3 as a close friend of the applicant.

Cllr Lodge declared a personal prejudicial interest in agenda item 23.109.01 application UTT/23/2534/PAQ3 as a close friend of the applicant, and a business associate.

Cllr Neil Reeve declared a personal interest as an Uttlesford District Councillor for Hatfield Broad Oak and the Hallingburys ward, a member of the Uttlesford Local Plan leadership group and a member of the Uttlesford Cabinet.

**23/104 PUBLIC FORUM**

A trustee of the village hall committee (VHC) updated the meeting on plans for solar panels on the south facing roof of the village hall. Current estimates range from £11k, to £26k for full coverage. Uttlesford has a zero carbon communities grant and the VHC are working on an application by end November with decisions in early 2024 and funds available for use from March 2024. The Uttlesford application form asks whether the Town/Parish Council can contribute any funding to the project. Cllr Lodge asked if match funding was required, this is not prescribed, however applications over £5k suggest additional support would be welcome, the VHC would be looking to fund 20-25% of cost with the balance from grants.

*Cllr Reeve declared a personal interest as the chair of the Uttlesford panel who will decide the grant allocations.*

The parish council indicated their full support of the project and suggested the VHC submit a grant application to the parish council.

Residents noted the appeal for Maidens Barn later in the agenda and commented that the situation remains the same including the impact on neighbouring properties.

*As members of the public wished to comment on application UTT/23/2534/PAQ3, Cllr Boreham chose to leave the meeting.*

Most residents in attendance wished to share views against the proposal to develop the agricultural barns adjacent to Quoins into 5 dwellings. The key points raised were,

1. The applicant has addressed the points raised by Uttlesford which prevented permitted development on an earlier almost identical application and reduced the garden space and provided marked parking bays. Nothing else has been amended, a further barn which was previously submitted for development to commercial use, would if permitted overlook domestic properties.

Signed  
 Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

2. There is insufficient parking and no roadside parking.
3. Existing agricultural buildings are not of a basis to convert to dwellings; at least one is collapsing, others have no sides, there is the view these would constitute rebuilding which is not permissible under permitted development, reference 'Hibbitt' principle.
4. Residents were of the view the barns were not in agricultural use in March 2013 and at that time were used for storage, this could prevent them from being converted under permitted development.

*1 resident arrives*

5. Concerns with utility supplies to the site, in particular how water supply would be provided.
6. Not opposed to site being developed, however of the view what is proposed is not workable, would prefer to see smaller number (1 or 2) dwellings with sufficient amenity space.

*County and District Cllr Susan Barker arrives*

7. Impact on narrow road, dangerous with numerous bends.
8. Impact on the character of the area, the proposed development is 'ugly' and conversion would not be in a sympathetic style when compared to other properties in the surrounding area.

*1 resident leaves*

District Cllr Barker added that she had made an enquiry and a 'prior notification of change of use of agricultural building' cannot be called in to committee for a decision. Such applications are decided by officers and there are very strict criteria, the perception is conversion of agricultural buildings receives a lot of leeway in planning.

Cllr Reeve and Cllr Sutton advised residents on the criteria for determining this type of application, in conclusion residents were advised to bring to the attention of the officers their concerns in their personal responses.

**23/105 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**, Cllr Lodge proposed the minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 as circulated be accepted as a correct record this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

*Cllr Boreham returns to the meeting.*

#### **23/106 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT**

County and District Cllr Barker reported as follows,

1. The new street lights should be turned down within the next few weeks to reduce the brightness and be timed to go off at night as before. If any residents have issues with lights outside windows shields may be available, please notify Cllr Barker.
2. A public consultation is open on the Essex recycle centres booking system. Residents can take waste to adjoining district sites including Bishops Stortford where no booking system is in operation. Cllr Reeve noted that Uttlesford was in the minority in objecting to the booking system, other districts are supportive as it reduces queueing which was impacting local roads.
3. Uttlesford Local Plan consultation is now live on the Uttlesford website, there are a few teething problems with access and search facilities which are being resolved. To note, High Easter is designated as a larger village and as such it is proposed to add 100 new homes in the parish. Do not think the local plan does not affect you, it does please consider responding.
4. The ongoing correspondence over damage to verges at Rands Road and School Lane because of closures on the B184 continues with Affinity Water.

*County and District Cllr Barker leaves the meeting.*

#### **23/107 CLERK'S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE**

Following replacement of the street lighting by Essex County Council, correspondence from residents concerned with the brightness of the replacement LED lights and the lack of timers was forwarded to County Cllr Barker.

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Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

Numerous exchanges of messages with County Cllr Susan Barker, Kemi Badenoch MP and neighbouring parish councils on the severe damage to verges and ditches through Rands Road and School Lane following the unplanned road closure of the B184 in mid-October. Correspondence is ongoing re repairs and future signage.

The Essex County Council consultation and survey response on a proposal to retain a booking process permanently for all vehicles at their 21 recycling centres can be viewed at this link [www.essex.gov.uk/recyclingcentrebookings](http://www.essex.gov.uk/recyclingcentrebookings) closing date is 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

Uttlesford Community Safety Partnership invited parish councils to attend an informal drop in coffee morning on 6th November at Stansted Mountfitchet Fire Station, re Community Speed Watches.

Fly tipping of a sofa at the junction of byway 104 and 105 was reported to Uttlesford in late October.

Uttlesford confirmed the playing field, village hall and allotments have all been removed from the list of Assets of Community Value, this is in line with parish council expectations.

RideLondon 2024 will take place on Sunday 26th May, RideLondon have written to the parish council offering to attend a meeting to outline proposals to support activities in the area, hear suggestions for overall improvements and further develop the Local Access Plans (LAPs) for residents and businesses. The Clerk to invite attendance at a future meeting.

## 23/108 CLLRS REPORTS

### 23.108.01 – Playground Inspection

Cllr Colgrave reported and noted a weed growing under the ‘witches’ hat’ (to check exact location and ensure no damage to surface) and that the gate to the play area needs oiling, Cllr O’Connor agreed to attend to both. It was further suggested that the parish council should obtain a quote for enclosing the swings, clerk to obtain as part of play area development planning,

### 23.108.02 – Other Reports

Cllr Boreham noted the encroaching vegetation across School Lane at the sewage works, Clerk to contact Thames Water who are responsible under riparian ownership.

The footpath in front of the cellar entrance at Cock and Bell House is cracking and in poor condition, Clerk to report to Essex Highways.

Plans were discussed for the act of remembrance at the war memorial, Clerk to contact relevant parties.

## 23/109 PLANNING

### 23.109.01 – New Applications

*Cllrs Boreham, Colgrave and Lodge leave the meeting. The vice-chair Cllr Sutton takes the chair*

Application	UTT/23/2534/PAQ3
Location	Agricultural Buildings South of Quoins, Onslow Green
Development	Prior Notification of change of use of agricultural building to 5 no. dwellings

Cllr Sutton began the discussion by setting out the matters that are considered for this type of application, in addition to the requirement that the buildings were in agricultural use at March 2013.

1. Transport and highways impact of the development.
2. Noise impacts of the development.
3. Flooding risks.
4. Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use.
5. Design or external appearance of the building.

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Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

The meeting noted the points raised in the public forum, and additional residents concern re the appearance of the proposed development. In response to the later comment, Cllrs were of the view the applicants must deal with what they have and are restricted with windows and door openings, they cannot for example add a porch.

In conclusion Cllr Reeve proposed the parish council makes the following observations.

1. Seek evidence the site was in agricultural use at March 2013.
2. Concerns the proposals go beyond Class Q requirements. The evidence submitted suggests the condition of the current barn structures will require works that signify a rebuild rather than a conversion.
3. Impact on protected lane and protected verges in close proximity to the site.
4. The design is very basic and no attempt appears to have been made to reflect the character of the nearby traditional properties nor the surrounding area.
5. Limited utilities in location and potential impact of development on neighbouring supplies.

This was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

Cllr Reeve thanked the residents for attending.

*9 residents leave the meeting.*

*Cllrs Boreham, Colgrave and Lodge rejoin the meeting. Cllr Lodge resumes the chair*

Application	UTT/23/2565/CLE
Location	Malyons, Poplar Road
Development	Lawful development for the existing use of the buildings and land for commercial livery and breeding, operational development of stables, horse walker and extension to menage

This application is for a certificate of lawfulness, Cllr Lodge proposed no comment on this application, this was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

Application	UTT/23/2578/HHF & UTT/23/2579/LB
Location	Heyrons, The Street
Development	Section 73A Retrospective application for alterations to approved scheme under UTT/0658/86 (extension to master bedroom wing and demolition of garage structure)

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

Application	UTT/23/2596/LB
Location	Little Birds, Bishops Green
Development	Proposed free standing mezzanine level and stairs within south bay of barn

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

#### 23.109.02 – Decisions

Application	UTT/23/2161/HHF
Location	Ramseys, High Easter Road
Development	Erection of a domestic store to serve existing dwelling.
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application	UTT/23/1696/HHF
Location	Buttles, Stagden Cross Road
Development	Remodel of internal layout and construction of a double storey rear extension. replacement of existing window to new and compliant specifications and re-render to external finish.
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application	UTT/23/1745/CLE
Location	Tarr Potts, Slough Road
Development	Certificate of lawfulness for existing gates, fence and western access
Decision	Approved

### 23.109.03 - Appeal Maidens Barn

The Planning Inspector has notified of the start of the written appeal for application UTT/21/0313/FUL, Maidens Barn, 'Section 73A Retrospective application for the erection of two side extensions to former barn and installation of a bio-mass boiler for disposal of wood'. Deadline for withdrawal of comments or additional comments is 28th November.

*Cllr Colgrave declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in this agenda item as a previous personal objector to applications relating to the site.*

Cllr Colgrave proposed that given nothing has changed the original objection submitted by the parish council still stands and should not be withdrawn, this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

Cllr Sutton noted Uttlesford's reason for refusing this application was because the site is 'being used for purposes falling within Use Class B2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 without the benefit of planning permission.' And went on to propose the parish council writes to the inspector with additional observations about the scale of the operation and machinery in use (reference the applicant's business website). This was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

*The remaining 2 residents leave the meeting*

### 23.109.04 - The Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation

The meeting noted the start of the consultation with a deadline for responses by 15<sup>th</sup> December.

High Easter is designated a 'larger village' and as such is allocated 100 non-strategic new homes in the draft plan. Cllrs raised the following initial concerns,

1. Incorrect to designate High Easter a 'larger village' with a primary school 'nearby'. There are some clear challenges in the scoring system.
2. Larger villages are allocated 100 new dwellings if there were suitable sites with sufficient housing allocation put forward in the call for sites. The only sites put forward in High Easter were both 'land at Lawn Hall Farm' which is the in the far north of the parish. It is c.6 miles from the centre of High Easter where the basic facilities and services are located, occupants would be unlikely to use the parish services and the sites are unsustainable in terms of access and other local amenities.

The meeting agreed to hold a drop-in session for residents on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November between 5pm and 7pm in the village hall to share information with residents, answer questions and encourage responses to the consultation.

## **23/110 CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING**

Cllr Colgrave attended the Code of Conduct training run by Uttlesford in July for town and parish councillors and had previously circulated a paper on key matters to Cllrs. The meeting considered the paper and discussed some matters in more detail.

Cllr Colgrave proposed that each Cllr (and the clerk) sets up a parish council specific email account, Cllr O'Connor has already set up an account and will circulate in order that all Cllrs can adopt the same format, Cllrs are required to action their own account set up.

## **23/111 PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT**

Parish Council risk assessment assesses the risks that it faces and allows it to satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. The meeting agreed Cllrs Colgrave and O'Connor would meet with the Clerk to discuss before presenting to the parish council for approval.

## **23/112 PLAYING FIELD**

Further to minute 23/97, October meeting, Cllr Lodge proposed the meeting retrospectively accepts the quote for £550 to cut the perimeter playing field hedges, and a further quote of £650 to cut back the dividing hedge between

Signed  
Robert Lodge (Chairman Parish Council)

the playing field and Jubilee Meadow, which had not been cut for some years. This was seconded by Cllr Boreham with all in agreement.

### **23/113 VILLAGE HALL SOLAR PANELS**

Further to the discussion at agenda item 23/104, the parish council confirmed its full support to the project.

### **23/114 PARISH PROJECTS UPDATES**

23.114.01 - Christmas Lunch is being organised by the parish council for the Monday Muster group on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December and a limited number of spaces will be extended to residents up to a maximum of 30 people. Cllr Colgrave and the clerk to manage the organisation of the event.

23.114.02 – Cllrs noted recent correspondence on purchasing a bleed kit in addition to the defibrillators. The clerk confirmed a bleed kit will not fit in the existing defibrillator unit and Cllrs suggested any new parish defibrillators should be capable of accommodating both. The clerk confirmed responses were pending on where to place defibrillators and this will be carried forward to the next meeting.

23.114.03 – No further progress on other projects.

### **23/115 FINANCE**

23.115.01 The clerk confirmed online banking with the cooperative bank has successfully been set up, Cllrs Lodge, Robinson and Sutton have authorisation access, and the Clerk has read only access. The first online payments (dual authorisation is required) will be made for this month's transactions. Further work is ongoing to update the bank mandate and to set up a savings account.

23.115.02 Cllr Lodge proposed a grant of £300 is made to Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust, this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

23.115.03 Cllr Lodge proposed the following payments are approved for payment, this was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

<b><i>PAYMENT TO</i></b>	<b><i>VALUE</i></b>
Allison Ward – Parish Clerk October 2023	£ 296.92
JCM Services – Verge Cutting 3 <sup>rd</sup> cut	£ 1,525.82
Paul Brown – Annual grass cutting playing field	£ 1,725.00
JCM Services – Hedge cutting playing field	£ 660.00
JCM Services – Jubilee Meadow 3 <sup>rd</sup> cut	£ 204.00

23.115.04 The Uttlesford coronation grant (£1,100) and the VAT refund from 2022/23 (£2,235.58) have been received in October 2023.

### **23/116 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Response to Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan consultation.

**23/117 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**, Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm in the village hall.

**TIME AND CLOSE OF MEETING** 10.15pm