

HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
held in High Easter Village Hall on Monday 4th December 2023

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

County and District Cllr Susan Barker (leaving after 23/122)

No residents

23/118 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – All in attendance.

23/119 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING

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.

23/120 PUBLIC FORUM – No public present.

23/121 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, Cllr Lodge proposed the minutes of 6th November 2023 as circulated be accepted as a correct record this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

23/122 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT

County and District Cllr Barker reported as follows on matters at Uttlesford District Council.

- Two new enforcement files have been opened in the parish in the last month, Uttlesford now has additional enforcement officers to deal with these matters.
- Reminder of the Local Plan consultation which closes on 18th December.
- Uttlesford has appointed a new legal officer and audit manager.
- A full council meeting will take place on 5th December and this includes a proposal to retain Local Council Tax Support at 12.5% to support those on local income in the district. This is the lowest percentage contribution requirement of any authority in Essex and has remained at this level for 10 years.

County and District Cllr Barker reported as follows on matters at Essex County Council.

- At the council meeting on 12th December a motion will be presented to reduce speed limits on residential roads to 20mph, (*comment post meeting, to note this motion was lost*).
- A further motions will be presented at the 12th December meeting on Adult and Children's Social Care, Recognition and Reform, this will both recognise the achievements of officers and staff and commit to continuing innovation and managing the changes required as a result of increasing and complex demands, and national policy.
- Local Government Boundary Commission is consulting (closing date 19th February) on proposals to change the ward boundaries in Essex, this would increase the number of county Cllrs from 75 to 78 and see the current Dunmow division split into two.

Cllrs raised the following matters with County and District Cllr Barker,

- Cllr Boreham commented on the poor road repairs with loose chippings now on the highway and holes reopened, examples include School Lane. Cllr Lodge commented that he was meeting with the Essex cabinet member for Highways and would raise this.
- The clerk confirmed there had been no further response from Kemi Badenoch MP re the issues with diversions along single track lanes when the B184 is closed, clerk to chase.
- Cllr Lodge commented that he is now on the 6th planning officer for a personal planning application, Cllr Barker confirmed that there had been high turnover of staff, however people were now in position and the situation should improve.

Signed
 Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)

- Cllrs advised Cllr Barker the issues with street lights remaining on all night remains unresolved, Cllr Barker to follow up.

County and District Cllr Barker leaves the meeting.

23/123 CLERK'S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE

The overhanging vegetation at the Thames Water sewage works at School Lane has been reported and should be cleared in early December.

Further correspondence with County and District Cllr Barker re street lights and inaccurate waste collection days on the Uttlesford website for some residents. The clerk agreed to provide Cllr Reeve with a summary by postcode of the waste collection day errors on the district website which would allow Uttlesford to amend.

The clerk had received correspondence from the village hall committee requesting a grant to support the installation of solar panels on the village hall. This was received after the agenda was published and will be carried forward to the January meeting, however Cllrs noted their support in principle. In addition it was commented that solar panels only are fully vatable, whilst solar panels with batteries are zero rated for VAT.

23/124 CLLRS REPORTS

23.124.01 – Playground Inspection

Cllr Boreham carried out the playground inspection and confirmed no new issues, Cllr Boreham confirmed he had added additional cable ties to the 5-a-side nets.

23.124.02 – No further reports to note.

23/125 PLANNING

23.125.01 – New Applications - None

23.125.02 – Decisions

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 associated external works
Decision	Withdrawn

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
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application	UTT/23/2167/HHF
Location	The Hill, Chelmsford Road
Development	Proposed two bay cart lodge
Decision	Conditional Approval

Application	UTT/23/1248/CLE
Location	Maidens Barn, Green Street
Development	Use of premises for making of bespoke furniture in accordance with the terms of planning permission UTT/19/1783/FUL for class E purposes
Decision	Refuse Certificate of Lawfulness

23/126 UTTLESFORD REGULATION 18 LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

23.126.01 The parish council considered the proposal that High Easter is a ‘larger village’ and as such is required to provide c.100 new homes (non-strategic allocations) in the plan period.

Cllrs noted the site put forward in the draft plan at Lawn Hall would accommodate the number of homes suggested for High Easter. However, it was noted this site is c.4.5 miles from the village centre by car where most services are available. This would not be a sustainable site and would not contribute to supporting existing services.

Cllrs considered other sites closer to the centre of the parish including those where planning permission has previously been refused and were of the view any development on the scale required would change the character of the village and this was not the intention of the Local Plan. Cllrs also noted the road infrastructure in and out of the village would not be appropriate for the scale of development.

Cllrs noted at the village public meeting most residents were opposed to development on the scale proposed in the draft Local Plan.

The clerk had produced an analysis of the scoring for larger villages which challenged the allocated scoring proposed by Uttlesford. Cllrs considered and added additional comments.

In conclusion Cllr Robinson proposed the parish council challenges the definition of ‘larger village’ and submits a response based on the revised scoring mechanism that would see High Easter drop to a ‘smaller village’ definition with no housing allocation. This was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

23.126.02 Based on the current definition of a ‘larger village’ and in response to the consultation question asked by Uttlesford, Cllr Sutton proposed that High Easter does not produce a neighbourhood plan to meet the identified non-strategic allocation of c.100 new homes (this is consistent with previous decisions), however agrees if required to work with Uttlesford to identify non-strategic allocations that would be added to the version of the Plan, to be published in Summer 2024. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson, with all in agreement.

23.126.03 Cllrs considered other elements of the draft plan including climate change proposals, Stansted Airport impacts, rural diversification; clerk to submit relevant comments on these elements.

23.126.04 Clerk to issue further guidance to residents on the email distribution list, based on the parish council responses, and to encourage individual responses.

23/127 PARISH DEFIBRILLATORS

23.127.01 – Locations

The clerk confirmed the church had responded and whilst supportive were of the view a more visible and accessible location for a defibrillator would be in the bus stop at the Punchbowl. If for any reason this was not possible, the church were happy to reconsider a location at the church. Cllr Lodge to follow up.

Cllr Lodge confirmed the owner of The Spotted Dog was happy to permit a defibrillator on the outside of the building and a location has been suggested.

Cllrs noted both proposed locations would require listed building planning consent from Uttlesford, clerk to verify requirements for applications.

Clerk to chase village hall committee re first aid training.

23.127.02 – Fundraising

Cllr Lodge proposed a vote of thanks be recorded to Cllr O’Connor for organising a successful quiz evening in November which raised £1,300, this was split between Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and the parish council to support funding of the additional defibrillators.

23/128 PARISH PROJECT UPDATES

23.128.01 – Cllr Colgrave updated the meeting on plans for the Christmas lunch to be held on Monday 11th December at Lodges museum. The clerk confirmed the budget for the event was c.£120. Cllr Colgrave proposed the parish council writes to the pre-school early in 2024 requesting consideration be given to allowing the village hall to be used on the Monday 9th December 2024 for a parish Christmas lunch, this would allow the event to be open to all residents and reduce the challenges of organising in a non-catering environment. This was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

23.128.02 – The clerk provided two quotes for tree plaques to be mounted on the tree guards, after further consideration Cllr Reeve proposed appropriate tree ‘stake’ markers be purchased using a more durable material, maximum spend £100. This was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

23.128.03 – No further progress on other projects.

23/129 CLERK ANNUAL SALARY REVIEW

Cllr Lodge proposed to approve the pay award negotiated by NALC and SLCC for clerks and other town/parish council employees as detailed in E01-2023/24 Local Government Services Pay Agreement, with the increase backdated to 1 April 2023. This was seconded by Cllr O’Connor with all in agreement.

The clerk confirmed a piece of work is outstanding to establish the correct pay scale for the High Easter parish clerk, this will be assessed using the national guidance and presented to a future parish council meeting for consideration.

23/130 FINANCE

23.130.01 Cllr Colgrave retrospectively proposed the following payment which was paid between meetings due to timescales. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson with all in agreement.

<i>PAYMENT TO</i>	<i>VALUE</i>
Bar House Events Ltd – Hire of oven for Christmas lunch inc VAT	£ 84.00

23.130.02 Cllr Lodge proposed the following payment is approved, this was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

<i>PAYMENT TO</i>	<i>VALUE</i>
Allison Ward – Parish Clerk November 2023 including agreement in item 23/129	£ 504.92

23.130.03 The funds of £650, reference item 23/127/02 were received in November 2023.

23/131 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

To agree precept 2024/25

23/132 DATE OF NEXT MEETING, Tuesday 2nd January 2024 at 7.30pm in the village hall.

TIME AND CLOSE OF MEETING 10.00pm

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)