

HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
held in High Easter Village Hall on Monday 6th January 2025

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

County and District Cllr Barker (leaving after agenda item 24/133)

0 Members of the public

24/129 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Cllr Colgrave, reason for apologies were accepted by the meeting.

24/130 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING – None.

24/131 PUBLIC FORUM – No public present.

24/132 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING it was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2024, (proposed by Cllr Sutton, seconded by Cllr O'Connor with all in agreement).

24/133 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT

Cllr Neil Reeve arrives

County and District Cllr Barker noted updates received from Uttlesford, and shared with this council, on three current enforcement cases; Maidens Barn (awaiting allocation of planning inspector for enforcement appeals), Walnut Cottage demolition (Uttlesford planning team are continuing to work with its legal team to consider and progress formal legal action) and Greens Farm unit no planning application for biomass unit (intention to serve an enforcement notice in January/February).

Repairs to pavements outside Cock and Bell are due to take place in mid-January under County Cllrs repairs.

Essex County Council (ECC) and Uttlesford District Council both have meetings coming up on the government white paper re devolution which was published on 16th December. ECC are likely to accept the governments invitation to be part of the devolution programme. The plan would then see development of a proposal for how this might work in Essex for submission to government by March 2025 with a more detailed plan by Autumn 2025. This would allow mayor elections (if that is the option chosen) in 2026. It is likely ECC will decide to delay the ECC elections scheduled for May 2025 for at least 12 months to allow the plans to be developed and some form of 'shadow authority' set up in 2026.

County and District Cllr Susan Barker leaves the meeting

24/134 CLERK'S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE

Notification received from Essex Highways of closure of High Easter Road (Barnston parish) 11th and 12th January whilst Essex Highways undertake drainage repairs.

Uttlesford confirmed the Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 18th December. The Secretary of State will now appoint a Planning Inspector to review and assess.

Reported to Uttlesford the broken sign on the green in front of St Mary's Bungalows, and the tree in the same location that is becoming entwined in the telephone cables.

Signed
 Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)

24/135 CLLRS REPORTS

24.135.01 – The monthly playground inspection will be carried out by Cllr Robinson post meeting.

24.135.02 - Other Reports

Cllr Boreman to speak to residents re cutting back the hedge adjacent to the highway at Twin Willows.

Several boxes of books have been left in the phone box, Cllr O'Connor and Cllr Lodge to sort, re-stock and clear any excess books.

Cllr Reeve gave a further report on the discussions at Uttlesford re devolution. The proposals would see 3 or 4 unitary authorities in Essex. It would see Essex County Council disappear and the City and District Councils combined.

24/136 PLANNING

24.136.01 – New Applications

Application	UTT/24/3206/TPO
Location	Walnut Tree Cottage
Development	Walnut tree removed, came down in strong winds 07/12/2024

Cllr Lodge proposed a comment that a mature, replacement walnut tree is replaced in the same location. This was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

24.136.02 – Decisions, for information only

Application	UTT/24/2807/HHF
Location	4 Bellhouse Villas
Development	Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and front porch
Decision	Refused

Application	UTT/24/2854/HHF and UTT/24/2855/LB
Location	Cottons Cottage, The Street
Development	Erection of two storey rear extension and other alterations to fenestration and new door (renewal of planning permission UTT/21/3303/HHF)
Decision	Conditional approval

Application	UTT/24/2410/HHF and UTT/24/2430/LB
Location	3 Parsonage Farm Barns, High Easter Road
Development	Reinstatement and renewal of fire damaged roof and roof space accommodation; structure and fabric repairs.
Decision	Conditional approval

Application	UTT/24/2792/LB
Location	Spotted Dog Public House
Development	Installation of life-saving equipment
Decision	Conditional approval

24/137 GREEN TRIANGLES

The clerk presented a report on the condition of green triangles in the parish and options for protecting them from further erosion.

Cllr Lodge proposed flexible verge marker posts be placed on the triangles which are being damaged by vehicles. Clerk to contact Highways to see if they will supply, if this is not possible it was agreed to purchase sufficient markers for 4 triangles at c.£25 ex VAT per marker. This was seconded by Cllr Boreham with all in agreement.

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)

It was further agreed the clerk would pull together a report detailing the white directional finger posts in the parish that need cleaning and obtain quotes for consideration by the parish council.

Cllr Lodge declared a pecuniary interest in the next agenda item as owner of company operating the bus route subject to the proposed application.

24/138 LOVE YOUR BUS GRANT FUNDING

The parish council agreed to seek the support of neighbouring parish councils and to investigate the possibility of pulling together an application to support the sustainability of the local village bus service in 2025/26. With the support of Cllr Lodge and Cllr Reeve, clerk to contact councils and arrange a meeting, a proposal to be brought back to the February meeting, deadline for grant submissions 14th February.

24/139 SALT BAG PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

24.139.01 Cllr Boreham to look at how to clear salt from the existing salt bins.

24.139.02 The clerk directed Cllrs to the parish website which contains information setting out requirements of the salt bag partnership scheme. Cllrs and volunteers who wish to clear areas under the scheme are responsible for reading and understanding the contents.

24/140 GENERAL MAINTENANCE/PROJECTS

24.140.01 There is a delay to the agreed tree works on the playing field due to the willow trees being entwined within the power cables. A date for works is pending from the contractor.

24.140.02 A successful 'overs' Christmas lunch was held in mid-December, the parish council records its thanks to Lodge Coaches for the venue, Cllr O'Connor for co-ordinating the event, Sara Pike for gift boxes and Butterfly's pre-school for joining the event. Total costs were £230, this included £120 which was donated back by Garnetts for Monday Muster, and £110 for the warming oven, all other food and drink were donated by volunteers.

24.140.03 The clerk confirmed net costs for Monday Muster, September to December 2024 of £940. The net cost for the calendar year 2024 totals £2.6k, grants and donations totalled £1.7k with the balance of £0.9k being covered by the parish council precept.

24.140.04 The defibrillator and cabinet for The Spotted Dog has arrived and will be installed in January, estimated cost for installation is c.£300. Cllr O'Connor proposed the parish council purchases a bleed kit c.£100 to place in the defibrillator cabinet, this was seconded by Cllr Bore with all in agreement.

24.140.05 No further progress on phase 2 play area works and a new VAS sign.

24/141 PRECEPT 2025/26

24.141.01 The accounts were presented by the clerk for the period April to December 2024, these were accepted by the parish council. The cash balance on 31st December was £48.8k of which £25.5k is in general funds.

24.141.02 Cllr Reeve proposed the reserves for the play area be increased to £20k and a further reserve created of £0.5k for new and replacement VAS signs. This was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement. The clerk will update and publish the amended reserves policy.

24.141.03 The clerk presented a draft 2025/26 budget for consideration. Cllrs discussed before Cllr Lodge proposed a precept of £23,500, which will show as a 5.6% increase on the current year on council tax bills. The average band D cost will be £67.46 per annum. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson with all in agreement.

24/142 FINANCE

24.142.01 Cllr Lodge proposed retrospective approval for the following payment which was made between meetings to secure the grant funding for the defibrillator. This was seconded by Cllr Sutton with all in agreement.

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)

<i>PAYMENT TO</i>	<i>VALUE</i>
London Hearts donation	£ 750.00

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

<i>PAYMENT TO</i>	<i>VALUE</i>
Allison Ward - Parish Clerk December 2024	£ 339.30
EALC – Cllr training (introduction to planning) inc VAT	£ 156.00
Hundred Parishes – Annual subscription	£ 10.00
Lilly Kelsey – Monday Muster assistant payment September to December 2024	£ 180.00

24.142.03 The only receipt in December 2024 was £219.83 Monday Muster donations for the period October to December 2024.

24.142.04 Cllr Sutton proposed Cllr Colgrave is added as an additional bank signatory on the current and savings accounts. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson with all in agreement.

24/143 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

VE Day 2025
Tenders for grounds maintenance
Litter pick

24/144 DATE OF NEXT MEETING, Monday 3rd February 2025 at 7.30pm in the village hall.

TIME AND CLOSE OF MEETING 9.20pm.

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)