

HIGH EASTER PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
held in High Easter Village Hall on Monday 2nd June 2025

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

County and District Cllr Susan Barker (arriving during item 25/49 and leaving at end of item)

0 members of the public.

25/43 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr Robinson sent apologies, these were accepted by the meeting.

25/44 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING – None

25/45 PUBLIC FORUM – No public present

25/46 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The minutes of the annual meeting on 6th May were proposed as a correct record by Cllr Reeve, seconded by Cllr Boreham with all in agreement.

25/47 COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS REPORT

County and District Cllr Susan Barker confirmed she would be late to the meeting.

25/48 CLERK'S PROGRESS UPDATE and CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE

Annual inspection of play area, request sent to Wicksteed who are the regular inspectors, cost is £150 ex VAT.

The tree works on the playing field identified in the tree survey were completed during May.

Fly tipping in 4 locations along High Easter Road took place on 24th May, reported to Uttlesford for removal.

White 'dragon's teeth' and 30mph roundels on highway have been repainted at three entrances to the village, clerk to check why the markings on School Lane were not repainted and request missing yellow lines are repainted.

25/49 CLLRS REPORTS

25.49.01 – Playground Inspection

The clerk reported on the monthly playground inspection, there were no additional matters. Cllr Lodge proposed the two cradle swing seats are replaced due to cracks in the rubber, this was seconded by Cllr O'Connor with all in agreement. Clerk to order and once received Cllr Lodge and Cllr Boreham to install.

Cllr O'Connor had met with Creative Play to discuss the state of the wetpour surface, their report was circulated to Cllrs suggesting the cracking was signs of normal wear. Cllrs did not share this view, and the clerk was asked to seek further advice on repairs.

Cllr O'Connor to contact a resident to ask if they can repair the basketball board.

25.49.02 - Other Reports

Signed
 Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)

Cllr Reeve reported that trees had been planted in the Jubilee Meadow, further planting is pending when time allows, and the trees have been stored safely until this time. Thanks were extended to Cllr Boreham and Cllr Lodge for providing and positioning the water tank.

The parish council and village hall committee held a successful village commemoration for the 80th anniversary of VE day which included lighting of the beacon.

Cllr O'Connor asked for an update on notices for the car park, Clerk confirmed these are outstanding.

Cllr O'Connor reported that the war memorial planters has been filled with summer plants.

Cllr Colgrave led a discussion on the role of the lead Cllr on planning following the departure of Paul Sutton. Cllrs agreed the lead was an administrative roll and that all Cllrs would fully engage in considering planning applications in advance of and during meetings. Cllr Colgrave will attend the next available planning course at EALC.

County and District Cllr Susan Barker arrives.

Cllrs raised concerns with those using the cricket pitch parking vehicles on Pump Green, not only is this damaging the surface, it is also creating a danger for road users with reduced visibility at the junction. The Clerk was asked to contact the cricket club and advice the village hall car park, or on street parking is available and to request vehicles are not parked on the green. Possible alternative parking options were discussed and will be pursued by Cllrs.

Cllr Barker provided a report to the meeting and noted at Essex County Council there is little to report as this period would have been purdah (pre-election period), and no meetings were scheduled. Different options are being put forward and explored for devolution these options will be forwarded to the government for a decision in September.

Cllr Lodge raised the state of the potholes and particularly the road edges beyond the white lines. Cllr Barker has a provision to put forward repairs in the ward and all are encouraged to forward details direct. Cllr Barker went on to confirm no works will happen at Albans (High Easter Road flooding) for the next two years.

County and District Cllr Susan Barker leaves the meeting.

25/50 PLANNING

25.50.01 – Applications – No new applications.

25.50.02 – Decisions, for information only

Application	UTT/25/0722/HHF
Location	Wheats Farm, Stagden Cross Road
Development	Proposed two storey rear extension, two storey side extension and addition of porch
Decision	Conditional approval

25/51 PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY

25.51.01 Co-Option Policy

Cllr O'Connor proposed the parish council accepts the co-option policy as drafted and circulated by the clerk, this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

25.51.02 Resignation of Cllr Paul Sutton

The meeting noted the resignation of Paul Sutton on 7th May due to his imminent move from the parish. The Clerk notified Uttlesford who issued the notice advising of the vacancy which allows residents the opportunity to call an election, deadline 29th May. No request was received, the parish council is now able to co-opt, all Cllrs are encouraged to discuss the vacancy with residents, the clerk to include a notice in Parish News.

25/52 PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE

The parish council insurance is due for renewal on 12th June. The clerk had obtained three quotes which were circulate in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Colgrave proposed the parish council takes out insurance with Zurich at a cost of £695, this will cover the play equipment and surfacing to the value of £60, to note a limit of £10k per item. This was seconded by Cllr Lodge with all in agreement.

25/53 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

25.53.01 Internal auditor.

The clerk had circulated the internal audit report, the only comment to note was the suggestion VAT is recovered quarterly rather than annually.

24.53.02 Fixed asset register.

The clerk presented the fixed asset register, the two new defibrillators have been added, there are no other amendments.

25.53.03 Annual Governance statement 2024/25

The meeting considered each of the statements on the AGAR Section 1, after which Cllr Colgrave proposed the meeting responds positively to all applicable questions, this was seconded by Cllr O'Connor with all in agreement. The chair and clerk signed the statement.

25.53.04 Annual Accounting Statement 2024/25

The clerk had circulated the financial report. A question was raised on funding for Monday Muster, the clerk confirmed the previous decision of the council had been to cover 50% of net costs with grants, the balance being funded by the parish council.

Cllr Colgrave proposed acceptance of the accounting statement as drafted and circulated, this was seconded by Cllr O'Connor with all in agreement. The chair and clerk signed the statement.

25.53.05 Elector's Rights

The meeting noted the dates, 3rd June to 12th July, during which electors and interested persons may exercise rights relating to the annual accounts.

25/54 PARISH COUNCIL PROJECT UPDATES

25.54.01 VAS Sign

The meeting noted the refusal from Essex Highways to permit a 'sleeve' to be placed over the existing pole where the new VAS sign is to be installed.

Cllr Reeve proposed the parish council installs a new pole to the required specification, total cost of pole and VAS is c.£5k, this was seconded by Cllr O'Connor with 4 in favour and 1 abstention.

Given the value, clerk to obtain additional quotes.

25.54.02 Love Your Bus Grant plans - C/Fwd.

25.54.03 Play Area Phase 2

The clerk has now met with 5 contractors and the final drawings and quotes are pending. Clerk to arrange a meeting with the play area advisory committee (Cllr Lodge, Cllr O'Connor and Cllr Reeve) to agree how to progress.

25.54.04 Finger post painting – Outstanding clerk to contact local sign painting for a quote.

25.54.05 Phone Box Information.

Further to the question raised at the Annual Meeting, it was suggested plastic pockets are purchased to hold the parish maps, clerk to arrange.

25/55 REVIEW OF MONDAY MUSTER AND SUMMER EVENT PLANS

25.55.01 Monday Muster arrangements and responsibilities.- C/Fwd.

25.55.02 Summer Event

The clerk was asked to check availability of the village hall either side of w/c 17th August.

Cllrs agreed to continue the meeting which had now been running for 2 hours.

25/56 FINANCE

25.56.01 – Monthly Payments

Cllr Colgrave proposed the following payments be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Reeve with all in agreement.

<i>PAYMENT TO</i>	<i>VALUE</i>
Allison Ward - Parish Clerk May 2025	£ 339.30
Walker Tree Care – Tree works on playing field inc VAT	£1,440.00
K Weare – Internal Audit	£ 50.00
BJS General Cleaning – Cleaning of 5x white fingerposts	£ 50.00
JCM Services – Verge cutting inc VAT	£ tbc
Annual Insurance	£ 695.00

25.56.02 – Monthly Receipts

To note receipts in May 2025 as follows, ECC verge cutting 2024 (£4,231.37), Monday Muster 2024/25 (Cash in Hand banked from 2024/25 £39.00), Monday Muster April/May 2025 (£74.00), HMRC VAT Refund 2024/25 (£2,202.54).

25/57 APPOINTMENT OF NEW PARISH CLERK

Cllr Colgrave and Cllr O'Connor reported that interviews would be concluded this week.

25/58 ITEMS TO NOTE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The clerk to chase request for a joint meeting with the village hall committee.

25/59 DATE OF NEXT MEETING, Monday 7th July at 7.30pm in High Easter village hall.

TIME AND CLOSE OF MEETING 9.35pm

Signed
Robert Lodge (Chair Parish Council)