

LEADEN RODING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Tuesday 19th October 2021 at Leaden Roding village hall.

Present: P.Sutterby (Chair), M.Whitehead (Vice-Chair), Mrs Bush, J. McIntock, D.Wareham, Cllr Susan Barker and John Starr (Uttlesford Community Development Officer)

Members of the public: 6

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING

None

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Tuesday 31st August 2021 were proposed by Cllr McIntock as a true record, seconded by Cllr Bush and carried unanimously. The minutes were signed by Cllr Sutterby.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

4.1 A resident stated another resident had asked to pass a complaint to the Parish Council regarding the cleanliness of the bus shelters. After discussion it was agreed that the Chairman would ask a volunteer if they would make them good during the upcoming village litter pick.

4.2 Another resident asked for information regarding the upcoming litter pick as she had not seen it advertised. She was informed it is advertised on the notice board and village magazine. The resident stated she refers to Facebook more often than the notice board. It was requested that the administrator of the Village Hall Facebook page will advertise litter picks in the future.

4.3 A resident requested permission to speak on item 12. Permission was granted by Parish Councillors (see below).

5. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

5.1 Cllr Barker reported that Highways have investigated flooding problems on A1060 Stortford Road and have cleared as much as possible for the water to drain away but to enable for the water to drain properly and stop flooding on the road a ditch behind the church and another ditch by School Villas need to be cleared by landowners. Cllr Barker will email the clerk details of these ditches and the clerk will find who the landowners are and contact them to request they clear the ditches.

5.2 Cllr Barker reported there are ongoing issues for Uttlesford concerning a resident living in Holloway Crescent but she hopes this will soon be resolved.

5.3 The Chairman and the clerk expressed their concern regarding the lack of acknowledgements and support that Highways give when reporting problems. Cllr Barker suggested that she would invite Cllr Day, the Essex County Council Cabinet member for Communities to attend a site meeting with the Chairman to observe for himself the broken signs, overgrown weeds, shrubs and trees and other issues which have been reported many times. Cllr Barker will arrange a site meeting in the near future.

5.4 The Chairman asked Cllr Barker to pass his thanks to Highways for the prompt removal of two deer from the roads in the village after they had been in collision with motor vehicles.

6. JOHN STARR – UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

- 6.1 Mr Starr stated that as Community Development Officer he is attending the meeting tonight to inform Parish Councillors of his role and areas of the community he can assist the Parish Council with.
- 6.2 Between meeting Mr Starr had attended a site meeting at Chalks Green and suggested that he would arrange a site meeting with Cllr Day (maybe coinciding with the meeting to be arranged in 5.3 above). It was felt if Cllr Day saw the issue himself, he might support the Parish Council in their pursuit of Uttlesford to manage the green by clearing the posts and tidying the green.
- 6.3 Mr Starr stated that within his role he would be able, if required, to get a group of volunteers from the village to collect data regarding issues in the village including speeding.
- 6.4 Mr Starr will organise a meeting with Cllr Day and the Community Safety Officer to discuss speeding in the vicinity of the school and seek assistance in installing more signs and deterrents to stop speeding.
7. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS
 - 7.1 Cllr Wareham reported that he was not happy with the progress or support being given by Uttlesford on the removal of posts on Chalks Green. He and Cllr Whitehead will attend a site meeting with Cllr Cox when arranged and hopes support given will create a path to move forward to resolve the issue.
 - 7.2 Cllr Sutterby reported that, after recently receiving a complaint from a resident regarding the cars parked on the pavement outside the car sales showroom, he has spoken to a representative of the showroom today and hopes this will cease.
 - 7.3 Cllr Sutterby reported that a complaint has been made regarding fly tipping in Holloway Crescent. Cllr Bush is aware of this and said the resident who left the rubbish is waiting for assistance from a relative for removal and hopes it will be cleared shortly.
8. CLERKS REPORT
 - 8.1 Damaged small village sign at Leaden Hill –the clerk has again reported this defect again, not yet repaired.
 - 8.2 Building waste/sand left adjacent to Windmill Café -not yet removed by Uttlesford. The clerk will ask the resident if they would like to retain the sand – if not the Chairman will arrange for it to be disposed of.
 - 8.3 Request that Highways revisit the speeding problems on Dunmow Road in the vicinity of the school – no reply from Highways after chasing three times – Cllr Barker has also contacted Highways for an update but no reply at this time.
 - 8.4 The clerk reported a roundabout sign erected in the wrong position on High Easter Road which could prove dangerous to drivers but has had no response. She has chased again as a matter of urgency. The Chairman reported he witnessed a Highways representative examining the area and hopes the sign will be re-sited soon.
 - 8.5 The clerk confirmed that both the Village Hall Trust and the Social Club committees were willing to join members of the Parish Council to arrange a Queen's 75th Jubilee celebration in the village. Bank Holiday dates for this celebration are Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd June 2022. A separate sub committee will be formed to discuss a way forward. It was tentatively suggested that a celebration could be arranged for Thursday 2nd June joining with villages around Great Britain in lighting a beacon at 7.15pm that evening. This will be discussed when a committee is formed.
 - 8.6 Damaged soakaway at the corner of Dunmow Road and Holloway Crescent – this has been reported but not yet fixed, the clerk will report again.
 - 8.7 The clerk has reported that the overgrown hedges on Chelmsford Road between Chalks Villas and Meghills are so overgrown that pedestrians need to walk on the busy road and has requested that they be cut back by the Highways Rangers – this has now been cleared.

- 8.8 The asbestos fly tipped on High Easter Road is still awaiting clearance from specialists.
- 8.9 After asking if the regular emptying of dog and litter bins have changed, the clerk received an email from Uttlesford's Waste Aware Supervisor stating that the days and frequency have not changed. They currently collect all waste from the bins on Fridays along with Mondays and Wednesdays for the litter bin outside the shop. He stated that they have, in some instances seen an increase in usage of public bins due to more people at home working. He stated he would request that an operative will monitor the situation.
- 8.10 After requesting if the frequency of cutting the council owned grass areas of Holloway Crescent and Holloway Close has decreased and requesting that the cherry trees at Holloway Close be cut back the clerk received an email from Uttlesford's Ground Maintenance Supervisor stating that, although there has been no change in policy, due to staff illness and broken machinery there have been fewer grass cuts this year. He stated that next year they will be taking delivery of new machinery which would hopefully enable the correct number of cuts next year. He also stated that the correct time to carry out any pruning on cherry trees is after flowering in July/ August to prevent and disease to the trees so the trees will be pruned at that time next year.
- 8.11 The results of a survey carried out to see if a School Crossing Patrol Officer is deemed necessary have been sent to the clerk and also to the resident making the request. The survey showed that after a survey taking place between 8.00am and 9.00am on 30th September findings were that the crossing point falls considerably short of meeting the initial criteria of provision for a School Crossing Patrol as only four primary school pupils crossed that morning. Under Road Safety GB Guidelines, a minimum of 15 primary aged students need to cross before they can undertake an eligibility study. This was similar to the results at a previous check undertaken on 12th November 2020. He did make some observations about the crossing and surrounding area which are listed below:
- There are school warning signs on the approach to the crossing but no zebra crossing warning signs. These may be beneficial but as the surveyor was not a qualified Highways Engineer, he was unsure about the legalities of having additional signage.
 - One of the bulbs on the zebra crossing was slightly obscured by the adjacent hedge.
 - Traffic approaching Leaden Roding in the direction of Aythorpe Roding did often seem to exceed the 30mph limit. It was noticed that the speed limit lowers in the direction only around 400 metres prior to the crossing.

The clerk contacted the resident who made the original request to invite her to discuss the issues at this meeting but the resident was unable to attend. However, she made some requests for the clerk to bring up on her behalf:

She would like a member of the council to attend a local highways panel on her behalf and request two zebra crossing signs be placed at the crossing, a bulb be replaced in one lamp and the hedge cut back so it can be seen. One of the main issues she would like to be addressed for fear of a serious accident is lowering the speed limit from Aythorpe Roding into the village from a more suitable distance of 400 metres and a speed limit of 20mph outside the school.

After discussion it was noted that the bulb has now been replaced on the zebra crossing and it is thought that the hedge has now been cut back. It was unanimously decided to defer any further requests until Cllr Cox has visited the site as it is hoped he will assist with the above issues.

9. FINANCE

9.1 Cllr Wareham proposed that the following cheques be issued, this was seconded by Cllr Whitehead and carried unanimously.

£17.00 to Leaden Roding Village Hall Trust – hire of hall

£280.00 to R.C. Bell – printing of Leaden Reading (Sept 2021)

9.2 The clerk reported that prior to the above payments being made the Parish Council bank balances are: Current account - £16,026.77

Deposit account - £344.83

The increase in the current account at this time is due to the half year credit of the Parish Precept.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

10.1 The following planning application was circulated to Parish Councillors between meetings for comments:

Serene, Chalks Green – Proposed single storey rear extension and internal alterations – *no objections*.

10.2 The following decision to determine the following planning application is:

Uptrees Cottage, Stortford Road – detached oak framed 2 storey garage – *refused*.

The clerk did receive communication regarding the comments made for the above application and she passed the Chairman's details to the resident to discuss.

11. FOOTPATHS

11.1 9.1 Cllr Sutterby reported:

Now that the harvest is completed footpaths in the village are in good order except for the two issues below which are still outstanding.

Footpath 1 at the bottom of Longsted Lane, the footbridge detached from concrete base – still ongoing

Footpath 5 at Leaden Hall, timber is rotting on the bridge over the river – reported on 3rd April (ref 2711562) – still ongoing.

12. ABUSIVE ACCUSATIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

12.1 Between meetings a resident from the village took offence to Parish Councillors' comments on a planning application and wrongly accused the Parish Clerk of making the comments. Abusive accusations aimed at the clerk were made on social media causing concern for the Parish Council and upset to the clerk. The resident was not happy that a comment made by Councillor Bush included the resident's name. The Chairman visited the resident between meetings to explain that the clerk merely records Parish Councillors comments and is not part of any decision making. The Chairman stated that the resident expressed a wish for letter of apology from the Parish Council. A resident attending this meeting urged Parish Councillors to make it very clear to the resident that the clerk had no part in any comments made and the comments on social media were unfair, unfounded and libellous and suggested the resident should apologise to the clerk, other attendees at the meeting agreed. The clerk stated she has never before had any dealings with the resident who made the accusations and would not know her if she passed her in the street but it appears the resident did not understand the workings of the Parish Council and over last few years as there have been numerous comments from Parish Councillors on planning applications on the land where the resident lives and she can only assume that resident must have thought were the clerk's views culminating in the social media attack on

her. The clerk stated she felt the comments were most definitely unfounded and most unfair but did not want to make things escalate by trying to defend herself on social media as a handful of other residents joined into the post who also appeared to think the comments were from the clerk. She stated that although she tries not to state residents' names where reporting to the Parish Council, when Parish Councillors choose to name residents, as sometimes happen and is not wrong, she adds this to the minutes to ensure a true record is made. The clerk also stated that the minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record of the comments made by Councillor Bush, they had been circulated to Parish Councillors and agreed as a true record at the next meeting. She stated that although Councillor Bush had done nothing wrong in mentioning the resident's name, if Councillor Bush felt it appropriate, she might consider sending a letter of apology for any upset caused. After discussion Parish Councillors were unanimous in deciding that the Chairman should write to the resident making it very clear that the post written on social media was unfounded, offensive and libellous towards the clerk and also explain the structure and workings of the Parish Council in the letter clearly stating that it is Parish Councillors' duties to make comments on planning applications received from Uttlesford and no comments are made by or sought from the clerk. It was also suggested that Councillor Bush might also send a letter apologising for any offence caused by mentioning her name but also clearly stating there was no error made.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13.1 Cllr Wareham stated overhanging bushes from a property on Dunmow Road were hampering pedestrians. The Chairman will request the resident cuts them back.
- 13.2 Cllr Wareham reported that the 30mph speed limit signs at the entrance to the village on Dunmow Road were being obscured by overhanging trees. The clerk will report this to Highways.
- 13.3 The Chairman enquired as to whether a rebate will be offered from Uttlesford for the green waste skip as on two occasions (27th June and 25th July) the skip was so full it could only remain in the village for approximately 15 minutes being very full when it arrived. The clerk has requested this from Uttlesford and will ensure the rebate is taken into account when an invoice is received later in the year.
- 13.4 The clerk reminded Parish Councillors of the email circulated between meetings from Uttlesford inviting comments on the Local Plan. She advised Parish Councillors to email any comments to Uttlesford via the address advised on the email.
- 13.5 The clerk read an email reminding Parish Councils that they are invited to take part in the lighting of the Jubilee Beacons to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of the Queen at 19.15GMT on Thursday 2nd June 2022. Parish Councillors will consider obtaining a beacon when a working party comes together from members of the Parish Council, Village Hall Trust and Social Club to discuss village celebrations to celebrate this event.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE DATES FOR 2021.

Tuesday 7th December 2021

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05pm.