

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE YELDHAM, TILBURY JUXTA CLARE AND OVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, LITTLE YELDHAM ON TUESDAY, 17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 8 P.M.

In the chair: Mr. K. R. Nott

Present: Mrs. A. L. Gardiner, Mr. P. Gentry, Miss. T. Kelson, Mr. A. W. D. Osmond-Evans, Mrs. R. K. Marsh and Mr. D. Patient  
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)  
P.C. Craig Wheeler and a Special Constable from Essex Police  
Together with 2 (two) members of the public

Prior to commencement of the meeting P.C. Craig Wheeler of Essex Police gave an address upon policing in rural areas, community engagement events, recruitment of more Police Officers in Essex, increase and support for Special Constables and dealing with rural crimes. He answered a number of questions from Councillors. The Clerk confirmed that all Police reports were forwarded to Councillors regularly.

42) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs. K. Chapman (illness), Mr. M. Graham (away), Mr. P. Pawsey (another commitment), Mr. D. Finch and Mrs. I. Parker

43) TO FILL VACANCY FOR TILBURY JUXTA CLARE

Unfortunately no candidates had come forward and it was therefore agreed that councillors will approach Mr. James or Mrs. Claudia Gray of Allies Farm, Tilbury Juxta Clare to ascertain if one of them is interested in filling the vacancy.

44) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared.

45) MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th July 2019, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, were confirmed and duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

46) MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES

a) Former Land Settlement Association Piggeries

Mr. P. Gentry reported that he had again asked Mr. C. Paggi of BDC for an update, but he had not replied.

b) Access at the Old Hyde, Little Yeldham

Mr. Gentry reported that despite efforts there had not been any satisfactory result from the ECC Highway Officers.

There were no other matters arising.

47) CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence received and listed in appendix one was referred to Councillors for information and the contents noted. At the request of the Chairman it was agreed to place

the request for support from Essex and Herts Air Ambulance on the agenda for the next meeting.

48) ACCOUNTS

The Clerk reported that £2850.00 had been received from BDC in respect of the second half of the Precept.

The following accounts were presented for payment:

Colne Skips – hire of four skips	£1464.00
Braintree District Council – Election fees for 2019	£180.87
Joe Berens Tree Care – Removal of tree at Tilbury Juxta Clare	£576.00
Joe Berens Tree Care – Tree survey report for Little Yeldham	£636.00

It was proposed by Mrs. A. L. Gardiner, seconded by Mr. D. Patient and carried that the above accounts are paid.

49) UPDATE UPON ECC LOCAL SERVICE FUND GRANT

The Clerk reported that a very unsatisfactory position had arisen concerning the ECC Local Service Fund Grant, which is administered by EALC. The grass and hedge cutting grant applied for was annually for three years and the PC application quite clearly stated it was for each subsequent year so it was for three years in all. During 2018 an undated and ambiguous letter from EALC stated, inter alia, that “*Annual amount awarded - £1355. Total amount awarded for 1 year = £1355.*” The sum of £1355 was paid in 2018 and when the Clerk requested the 2019 payment the EALC alleged the grant was for one year only. Following further representations to EALC, the Clerk had raised the issue with Cllr. Finch, who had confirmed on more than one occasion that duration was not an issue. Contrary to the claim by EALC, Cllr. Finch had stated that the issue is not about the three year allocation, but is about appropriateness only. The Officers had claimed that grant funding was not appropriate because they allege it was for verge cutting, which was absolute nonsense. The Clerk had informed Cllr. Finch that the officers had got this completely and utterly wrong because the application was most certainly not for verge cutting, which was never mentioned. The application was for grass and hedge cutting on public open spaces including village greens, playing field and churchyards. As this was appropriate for one year’s funding, it must follow that it is appropriate for two further year’s funding because duration is not an issue. Cllr Finch had tried to speak to the officer concerned who was on leave. The Clerk will continue to pursue the matter.

50) INSPECTION OF TREES ON PARISH COUNCIL PROPERTIES

A report from Joe Berens Tree Care was circulated to councillors. Following careful consideration the following action was agreed:

- a. That the Clerk immediately communicates with UK Power Networks and requests that they remove branches and foliage away from their power lines on the trees in the Playing Field along School Road.
- b. That Joe Berens Tree Care is requested to quote for the complete removal of the willow tree and kill off the stump on the Playing Field immediately next to a barn.
- c. That providing this quote is under, one thousand pounds the Chairman, Vice Chairman and RFO are authorized to accept it and place an order for the work to be carried out as a matter of urgency. (If, which is not expected to be the case, the

- quote is over one thousand pounds then two further quotes must be obtained and placed before the full PC in compliance with financial regulations)
- d. That following completion of works by UK Power Networks, Joe Berens Tree Care is requested to quote for the remaining tree work specified in the report.
  - e. That if the quote is over one thousand pounds competitive quotes must be requested from two other contractors on BDC list of approved tree surgeons.
  - f. That upon receipt of quotes the RFO is to provide advice upon funding to the PC before any order is placed.
  - g. That the successful contractor must seek approval from BDC before carrying out work on any trees, which are subject to TPOs.

51) LITTLE YELDHAM VILLAGE HALL ISSUES

The Chairman reported that at the last PC meeting the Clerk was instructed to ask Mr. M. Graham, as the PC representative on the VH Committee, to provide specified information by the end of July. This included a report of the VH AGM, membership of the committee including representative members and disclosure of VH accounts. The AGM report and committee membership had not been received, but it was understood that Mrs. C. Graham had been elected onto the VH Committee to fill a vacancy. Accounts for the last five years had been disclosed and circulated to councillors, but the chairman had received representations from a member of the public indicating that the VH accounts had probably not been audited in recent years. The Chairman reported that, following complaints, particularly regarding the bottle bank and chains, he had written to Mr. Graham regarding his position at the PC representative on the VH Committee and suggested he resigns so that another Councillor can be nominated to avoid further conflicts. Copies of the letter had been sent to the Clerk, District and all Parish Councillors, but no reply had been forthcoming. Councillors expressed concern that Mr. Graham was sometimes acting unilaterally, without the authority of the VH Committee, such as with the bottle bank and that he was not acting in the interests of the PC, which had appointed him. The Clerk was instructed to ask Mr. Graham for the identity of the independent examiner or for evidence that the accounts were being independently examined.

52) PROW'S IN LITTLE YELDHAM AND TILBURY JUXTA CLARE

Mrs. R. Marsh reported upon a meeting with Mrs. A. L. Gardiner, Mrs. I. Parker and an Officer from ECC. Although there were many issues to overcome it may be that Mr. R. Gardiner could be contracted to cut additional PROWs upon payment of another £300 p.a. by ECC, which will be considered. Some waymarkers had been requested. Miss. T. Kelson reported upon a footpath obstruction in the vicinity of Tilbury Hall and passed on thanks from a resident for arranging to clear Jays Lane. It was agreed that Little Yeldham and Tilbury Juxta Clare would join the PROW maintenance scheme, but Ovington may not participate.

53) MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING COURSE

Miss. T. Kelson reported that she was arranging the Mental Health Training Course with Mrs. K. Chapman and that the use of Little Yeldham Village Hall had been offered free

of charge. There had been some support from residents, but more interest and people will be required to attend the course.

54) TO CONSIDER DEFIBRILLATOR AT TILBURY JUXTA CLARE

Miss. T. Kelson reported that she had spoken to a representative of Pebmarsh Parish Council who had provided much useful information. The cost may be about £1500 and further enquiries will be made with a company in Haverhill. An application will be made for a grant to HLF for the installation and possibly to include the first years contract. The Chairman thanked Miss. Kelson for taking this project forward.

55) TO CONSIDER MAINTENANCE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The Chairman reported that he had inspected the playing field equipment and agreed that it needs repainting and that one area of the safety matting requires attention. Mr. P. Gentry offered to consult Wicksteeds and others for quotes for the necessary work. Mrs. A. L. Gardiner asked if any funding was likely to be forthcoming from development at Sewells Farm. This question had previously been raised with Mrs. I. Parker who had agreed to enquire into the possibility under a S106 Agreement.

56) BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

In the absence of Mrs. I. Parker no report was given.

57) ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

In the absence of Mr. D. Finch no report was given.

58) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

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(Date)

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(Chairman)