

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE YELDHAM, TILBURY JUXTA CLARE AND OVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, LITTLE YELDHAM ON TUESDAY, 27<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021 AT 8 P.M.

In the chair: Mr. P. J. Gentry

Present: Mrs. A. L. Gardiner, Mrs. R. K. Marsh, Mr. K. R. Nott, Mr. D. Patient,  
Mr. P. E. Pawsey and Mrs. M. D. Pearce  
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)  
Mr. P. Schwier (County Councillor)  
Mrs. I. Parker (District Councillor)  
Together with one member of the public

26) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs. K. Chapman (holiday), Mrs. C. M. P. Gray (working) and Mr. A. Osmond-Evans (post meeting apologies)

27) TO CO-OPT NEW COUNCILLOR FOR TILBURY JUXTA CLARE

It was reported that no candidates had come forward and it was therefore agreed to defer this item to the next meeting. In addition the appointment of an Emergency Planning representative and a trustee to Belchamp St. Paul Community House to represent Tilbury Juxta Clare were also deferred.

28) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared.

29) TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, were confirmed and duly signed by the chairman as a correct record.

30) MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

a) Mr. K. R. Nott

The new Chairman thanked Mr. K. R. Nott for his work as Chairman over many years.

b) Blocked drains in highway at Ovington

Mr. P. E. Pawsey reported that two blocked drains in the highway, either side of Upper Farm, which were reported to ECC Highways about three months ago, had not been cleared. Councillors also reported that drains in Little Yeldham Road, which had also been reported some months earlier, had not been cleared. It was agreed to pursue these issues with ECC Highways and County Councillor. There were no other matters arising.

31) CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence received and listed in appendix one was referred to Councillors for information and the contents noted.

32) ACCOUNTS

The Clerk reported £1275.77 had been received from BDC under the Street Cleansing contract and he had ordered the usual four skips for August Bank Holiday weekend.

The following accounts were presented for payment:

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|--|----------|
| a. Rural Community Council of Essex – annual subscription                    | £52.80   |
| b. Braintree District Council – grass cutting                                | £980.40  |
| c. M. J. Frost – drain repairs   | £696.00  |
| d. Colne Skips – skip hire (to be held until 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021) | £1632.00 |

It was proposed by Mr. D. Patient, seconded by Mrs. R. K. Marsh and carried that these accounts are paid.

33) REPORT OF INTERNAL AUDIT

The Clerk reported that Mr. T. Money had completed the internal audit of the Parish Council's Accounts, which he had found in order. The relevant documents had since been added to the PC website and the External Auditors notified of Exemption.

34) TO APPROVE GDPR DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Mr. D. Patient briefly mentioned the two GDPR documents, which were approved at the previous meeting and explained that a third document required consideration, which was the Document Retention Policy. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk and Mr. Patient had met to discuss the importance of retaining historical documents, including minutes. Destruction dates for other documents had been carefully considered and included in the draft Document Retention Policy, which the Clerk had circulated for approval. As the Clerk will retain essential documents, copies held by Councillors could be destroyed at the expiration of one year, unless pertinent documents are required for reference. As GDPR Controller, Mr. Patient offered any further advice and support, which may be required. It was proposed by Mrs. M. D. Pearce, seconded by Mrs. A. L. Gardiner and carried that the Document Retention Policy is approved. The GDPR Security Compliance Checklist was then duly completed and signed by Mr. Patient (as GDPR Controller) and countersigned by Mr. P. J. Gentry (Chairman) and will be reviewed annually. The Chairman thanked Mr. Patient for all his work in connection with GDPR.

35) REPORT UPON THE BRAINTREE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Mr. P. J. Gentry reported upon BALC Meetings held 12<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> July, in which he had participated. BALC had been resurrected, approved a constitution and will be a voice for Parish Councils in the Braintree District. The affiliation fee will be £40, many PCs had given support and the Chairman and Vice Chairman were tasked with getting more support from the remaining PCs in the District. The Chairman and Vice Chairman were elected as the two representatives on the Executive of the EALC and appointments had also been made to the ECC Highways Panel. A newsletter will be produced and a website is in progress. BALC has a temporary Clerk who is also the Clerk of the Colchester Association of Local Councils and a permanent Clerk for BALC is required.

36) THE FORMER RIDGEWELL AIRFIELD

a) To consider ASB issues

This agenda item, which was requested by Mr. A. Osmond-Evans, was deferred.

b) Proposed Solar Farm on former Ridgewell Airfield

The Clerk reported that towards the end of May 2021, BDC Development Management had notified Mrs. I. Parker, as Ward Member, of a 'Screening Request' in connection

with ‘*Construction of Solar Farm and battery storage facility*’ on the former Ridgewell Airfield. The address given was Foxes Road, Ashen, which was misleading, because the majority of the site was in Ovington and Tilbury Juxta Clare. BDC had failed to notify the PC of the screening request and it was only through the courtesy of Mrs. Parker that the PC became aware. The applicant was Renesola Hercules Energy 3 Limited and involved 76 hectares over three parcels of land, with a life of 40 years, which could be extended. The request was asking if it is necessary to carry out a full environmental impact assessment, which may be followed by a full planning application. Following consultation with the Chairman, together with Ovington and Tilbury Juxta Clare Councillors, a letter had been sent to BDC strenuously opposing the proposal because of its environmental impact and reserving the right to make further representations when an application is made. The Clerk also reported upon correspondence from Dr. Abhay Pradhan of Milkwood, Tilbury Road, Ovington, who also objects to the proposal. Mr. K. R. Nott reported that the two landowners involved are Mr. S. G. Norris of Hole Farm, Ovington and Mr. Robert Chapman of Ashen Hall. The proposal will affect the majority of Ovington and significant objections are anticipated, including concern about noise from the battery plant. In addition the Gliding Club is completely opposed because light from the panels will reflect when gliders come into land and the safety of air traffic is important. Councillors agreed to strenuously oppose this application when made.

### 37) TO CONSIDER ADDITIONAL PLAY EQUIPMENT ON PLAYING FIELD

Mrs. M. Pearce reported upon her research into play equipment and funding criteria. Following prior consultation with LY Councillors the project had been re-assessed. The consensus was that the children’s area needs more equipment, the existing matting replaced and the entrance gateway improved. Although various age groups were considered, items for all ages, including disabled, were preferred. Councillors were advised to look at ‘*springers*’ and the ‘*roundabout*’ at Sible Hedingham Recreation Ground. Mrs. Pearce asked for approval to seek quotes for consideration at the next meeting with a view to thereafter applying for grants. Although the proposals had generally received support in Little Yeldham the views of Tilbury Juxta Clare and Ovington were requested.

Mr. K. R. Nott reported that the majority of Ovington residents go to Clare for services where children use play facilities. He agreed that the matting needs to be replaced, had no objection to self-funding, but expressed caution about future maintenance costs. Mr. P. E. Pawsey also expressed concern about the possible burden on future generations. The Chairman stated that the intention is to fund the project through grants, not from PC funds, so there is no liability on the PC, except for annual maintenance costs.

Mrs. Pearce outlined the many funding opportunities including the Lottery, Government, County and District Councils and that suppliers are willing to help with seeking grants. Mrs. R. K. Marsh anticipated that some grant making bodies may seek match funding, although this could be from other grants and not necessarily from the PC.

Mrs. Pearce advised that there had been some public consultation and there is public demand, which some grant making bodies look for. The existing swings and slide are safe and can remain, but replacement matting is required.

Following some discussion it was resolved to authorize Mrs. Pearce to seek quotations from three or four suppliers for a scaled down project to match the expectations of LY

Councillors, to include a new safety surface, springers, roundabout, goal posts and basket-ball apparatus. It was hoped to consider these quotes at the next meeting and thereafter Mrs. Pearce offered to apply for grants. The Chairman and Councillors thanked Mrs. Pearce for all her work.

38) ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Mr. P. Schwier thanked everyone for their warm welcome to his first PC Meeting as the new County Councillor for the Hedingham Division. He gave brief details of the new administration at County Hall and then concentrated upon highway issues. He gave details of the extensive network of highways in the county and that the ports and two airports contributed to the high volume of traffic. He explained the reporting procedure online and assured the meeting that the reporting 'tool' had improved. Online reports were looked at twice a day by two officers who try to prioritize the work. Although the system mainly works well some reports do get missed. If no action is taken after a reasonable length of time, Mr. Schwier invited councillors to let him know. He is also a member of BDC and is keen to develop relationships and circulate information quickly.

Mr. D. Patient queried, a reasonable time, if no action is taken upon highway defects. This depends upon the nature of the defect, but if no action is taken following one reminder then it can be referred to Mr. Schwier for action.

Mrs. A. L. Gardiner reported that upon one day recently highway men had spent six hours sitting in their vehicles and only two hours working. Mr. Schwier explained that these men were not direct employees of ECC Highways but were Sub-Contractors.

Mrs. R. K. Marsh questioned road diversion signs which were often impossible to follow. Mr. Schwier explained that diversions were often the responsibility of Utility Companies, which were required to obtain licenses from ECC, which is obliged to grant them and therefore diversion signs are often the responsibility of Utility Companies and Sub-Contractors and not of ECC.

Mr. Schwier was thanked for attending the meeting and for his report.

39) BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Mrs. I. Parker reported upon the following:

- a. During the pandemic for the last 16 months, BDC has been administering the government and ECC support schemes for businesses and had given more than 10,000 grants totaling £54m to businesses.
- b. BDC finances had taken a hit as a result of the pandemic, due to additional costs and loss of income, e.g. car parks. BDC was looking to generate more income.
- c. BDC was awarded compliance plus in seven areas in the annual Corporate Customer Service Excellence Assessment.
- d. The examination in public of Section 2 of the Local Plan had ended and there will be a further consultation on proposed modifications to the plan.
- e. BDC had calculated that it has a 5 year supply of deliverable homes, assessed against housing need, so is in a better position to resist speculative planning applications.
- f. 91 new affordable houses have been completed in the district in three months towards the target of 200 new dwellings for the year.

- g. Work is progressing for BDCs new business centre near Great Notley, the new Victoria Square development and pedestrianization of Braintree Town Centre. A new enterprise centre is proposed at Witham and work to improve Halstead Town Centre. The all-weather sports pitch has been resurfaced at Halstead.
- h. Land secured through a S106 Agreement in Sible Hedingham for a new GP Surgery is to be transferred to a specialist development partner, One Medical, which will be constructing a new medical facility for the GP Practices in Sible and Castle Hedingham, for which work is expected to start in early 2022.
- i. A new anti-litter sign trial has showed promising results.
- j. The Councillor Grant Scheme will continue this year for which Mrs. Parker has £1500 to distribute to community projects.
- k. The trial not to cut verges will be reviewed at the end of the year, but if any verges require cutting, in the interests of safety, they should be reported to BDC.
- l. The proposed Solar Farm on the former Ridgewell Airfield had caused concern.
- m. BDC Planning Enforcement deals with 400-500 cases each year and there are currently 248 live actions.

Mr. K. R. Nott reported that the BDC Planning Department was in chaos, through failure to make decisions and it takes two years for an appeal. Mrs. Parker accepted that there had been a lack of planning officers, but the department is now fully resourced, including some junior staff, who, are supervised. Applicants can appeal for non-determination and some Consultees are slow with responses. Large applications occupy much officer time as do appeals, which officers have to attend. Mr. Gentry referred to a recent application in connection with 7 School Road, Little Yeldham, which went through the system reasonably well, but the time involved depends upon the complexity of the application. Mr. D. Patient referred to the effective litter signs in Sible Hedingham and asked for signs in Little Yeldham. Mrs. Parker advised that these were unlikely to be provided in Little Yeldham or along minor roads. Mrs. Parker was thanked for her report.

40) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following anniversaries were noted:

- a) The Golden Wedding of Mr. Roy and Mrs. Mary Pearce in 2021
- b) Mr. K. R. Nott had commenced his 64<sup>th</sup> continuous year as a Councillor having been elected to Gestingthorpe Parish Council in June 1958 and serving until 1999. He was elected to this PC in 1993 and had also served on BDC.
- c) Mr. A. Corder-Birch had been appointed as Clerk to the PC in May 1971 and had therefore completed 50 years continuous service.

There was no other business.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

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(Date)

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(Chairman)