

# **Little Totham Parish Council**

## **Minutes of Meeting, Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024**

The Parish Council met on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December in the Evangelical Hall, at 7.30pm

### **PRESENT**

Chairman N. Lawrence

Councillors: V. Hare, J. Hughes, and J. King

Parishioners: 3 and 6 other visitors

**24.164 Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Gritton and Venton sent apologies.

### **24.165 To invite Councillors to declare an interest in matters on the Agenda**

Councillor King has an ongoing interest in the common land. Councillor Hughes declared an interest as a district councillor in the planning enforcement item.

### **24.166 Minutes 05/11/24**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 be approved and confirmed.

### **24.167 Planning enforcement discussion**

Representatives from Tolleshunt Major and Tolleshunt Knights Parish Councils attended the meeting for joint discussion regarding problems with planning enforcement by MDC and to take a joint approach going forward. Chairman Lawrence explained the background to today's discussion and had prepared a draft questionnaire to request information from MDC on behalf of all three parish councils.

The enforcement issues were discussed at length and some additions to the draft questionnaire were suggested. It was agreed that any other comments on the document be sent to the clerk and then the questionnaire to be sent to MDC firstly from Little Totham PC and then the other parish councils in turn on a regular basis, with responses to be shared between all three parish councils. This will enable evidence to be collected and compiled and then this can be followed up with Priti Patel MP if no progress is made.

### **24.168 Update for parish newsletter**

Chairman Lawrence had already prepared a lengthier than usual update for December following a request from the newsletter editor, which had been submitted in advance of the deadline. The updates will then be written as follows:

January: Councillor Gritton

February: Councillor King

March: Councillor Venton

April: Councillor Hughes

May: Chairman Lawrence

### **24.169 Dates for 2025 meetings**

Dates were agreed as 7<sup>th</sup> Jan, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 6<sup>th</sup> May (annual meeting of the PC and normal monthly meeting), 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 5<sup>th</sup> Aug, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep, 7<sup>th</sup> Oct, 4<sup>th</sup> Nov and 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec.

#### **24.170 Budget and precept**

The clerk had circulated financial summary 2023/4 and actual and projected costs for 2024/5. Grass cutting remains the largest item of expenditure and it was agreed that other quotes for this service should be obtained before next renewal. Councillor Hughes proposed an increase to the precept of 5%, seconded by Chairman Lawrence and agreed by all.

#### **24.171 Common land**

The misunderstanding about more tree planting on common land has been resolved and the Clerk had written to Robert King as the representative of the registered commoners to request a meeting to establish communication going forward. Councillor King reported that commoners are still not willing to meet at this stage. Councillors again expressed frustration that progress and communication cannot be made until a meeting is held. Councillors fully acknowledge that matters have not been well managed in the past between the parish council and the registered commoners, and are very keen to change this going forward.

#### **24.172 a) Planning applications**

FUL/MAL/24/00756 Garage conversion including front extension to create annex accommodation at Springside, School Road – Councillors received written responses from residents prior to the meeting and listened to the concerns from residents present at this meeting about the application for this site. Councillors are concerned about these issues and do not support the application with response to include mention of light and privacy issues, design and overdevelopment of site, change to streetscene and possible highways issues.

OUT/MAL/24/00890 Outline application for erection of one dwelling on land adjacent to Church Lane – Councillors do not support this application because it is outside the defined settlement boundary.

HOUSE/MAL/24/00903 Addition of windows to the front and rear elevations at Two Jays, Green Lane – Councillors had no comment.

#### **b) Planning decisions**

No decisions

#### **24.173 Potential outdoor gym equipment project**

Tolleshunt Major Parish Council supplied useful information about their equipment. Sovereign will visit the site and provide a no obligation quote once it is established that there is agreement from MDC to locate the equipment on Sawyers Field.

**RESOLVED Councillor Hughes to confirm site management agreement details with MDC.**

#### **24.174 Christmas**

The tree from ECC has been planted by Chairman Lawrence and Councillor Venton, but a cut tree will be needed this year. Chairman Lawrence will speak with Braxted Farm Shop.

#### **24.175 Tru Cam report**

The latest report received was for October when three people were caught speeding.

**24.176 Invoices presented for payment**

M. Gardiner	Clerk’s salary November	£220.73
LT Evangelical Church	Hire of hall	£20.00
DM Payroll	Payroll services Oct-March	£66

**24.177 Correspondence**

All correspondence had been circulated to councillors.

**24.178 Update from District Councillor**

Councillor Hughes reported that a Government White Paper on devolution is due to be released soon and MDC is working with other local authorities in anticipation of this. Councillor Siddall is attending working group meetings to discuss the future of St Peter’s Hospital and NHS services in the district. A new contract has been signed with Places Leisure to deliver leisure services in the district, the conditions are more favourable for MDC than the previous one. MDC is in a strong financial position and looking to support local projects.

**24.179 Public questions**

It was commented that Maldon and Dengie Ramblers appreciate the access to and maintenance of the common land in the parish.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.13pm

Signed by the Chairman.....

ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH’S AGENDA – 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Planning enforcement