

MARGARET RODING PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING
Held at Marks Hall Farmhouse Tuesday 7th May 2019 at 7.30pm

Present: From the Parish Council, Cllrs Peter Briggs, Lee Cooper (chair), Ian Crisp, Simon Phillips, Chris Turner and the Clerk Allison Ward

County and District Cllr Susan Barker

0 Members of the Public

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME, Cllr Cooper opened the meeting.
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Parish Cllr Lorraine Player
3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING held on Tuesday 15th May 2018 were approved and signed as a true record.
4. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT
 - a. General Business – Cllr Lee Cooper

Margaret Roding Parish Council continued to meet bi-monthly during 2018/19 in order to carry out the normal work of the Council, including both the planning process and acting as liaison between residents and the County and District Council.

There were only four minor planning applications during the year and in addition the Parish Council continued to monitor the Local Plans for both Uttlesford and Chelmsford as well as the Stansted airport planning application; none of these have a significant effect on Margaret Roding.

Getting highways issues, including surface damage to footpaths, and overgrown vegetation and weeds resolved continues to be a challenge with the constraints on Essex Highways budgets. On the more positive side some of the minor highway maintenance jobs, sign cleaning and repairs were completed by the Uttlesford Highway Rangers during the year.

The Parish Council also met its responsibilities in ensuring its policies were up to date including a new Data Privacy Policy following the introduction of GDPR, all policies are available on the Parish Council website.

A number of projects progressed during the year.

Firstly, I would like to thank Cllr Peter Briggs for his work on producing the village map which provides information to residents on the local footpaths as well as some interesting history about Margaret Roding; the cost of producing the map was funded by the Parish Council and delivered free to every household in the village; further copies are available on request to the Clerk.

Championed by Cllr Lorraine Player, the Parish Council has been exploring the possibility of buying a defibrillator for the village, however finding a suitable central location has proved difficult. We are grateful to Martin Ritchie for his offers of assistance. Before committing on a final location the Parish Council has enlisted the support of our MP, Kemi Badenoch in discussing with Thames Water whether they will reconsider their decision and allow the pumping station to be used. Once these discussions have concluded the Parish Council will be in a position to make a final decision on whether there is a suitable location which benefits the majority of residents.

Also pending a final decision is the purchase of a Vehicle Activated Sign, the Parish Council decided to put on hold its purchase pending the results of a speed survey carried out in November 2018 by Essex Highways to

Signed
Lee Cooper
Chairman Margaret Roding Parish Council

determine if the 40mph stretch of the A1060 met the criteria for an Essex County Council funded sign. The results were received in April 2019 and unfortunately confirm the village does not meet the criteria, in light of this evidence the Parish Council will consider its next steps during the coming year.

Cllr Ian Crisp has continued to monitor and advice the Parish Council on the developments in fibre broadband. Those properties in the parish close to Good Easter are now able to access a service from BT and we are encouraged that the remaining properties should have access to a fibre service via the operator Gigaclear, in late 2019/early 2020.

Litter, in particular along the A1060 is a constant battle and the Parish Council is very grateful to those residents who regularly pick up litter thrown from vehicles. My thanks also to Cllr Simon Phillips for organising this year's village litter pick in early March.

The Parish Council organised a very successful village event for the commemoration of 100 years since the end of World War 1 and I have asked Cllr Ian Crisp to report separately on this event after the Chairman's statement.

Finally, I would like to close by thanking my fellow Parish Councillors who have all willingly stood again as Parish Councillors for another four-year term, for giving up their time freely to attend meetings and for their practical actions and support given outside of meetings.

b. November 11th Event – Cllr Ian Crisp

The 11 November 2018 "Remembrance and Celebration" event was a notable success.

Over half of the population of the village came to The Reid Rooms. Nearly half of the properties in the village were represented.

We had appropriately themed live music from Woodwind of Dunmow (one of the musicians is a village resident), we fed over 110 people with two courses, and we had a splendid firework display. We did it all without charging for admission and with a combination of grants, sponsorship, and donations we not only raised enough money to cover all the costs but also were able to donate £200 to Help for Heroes. At the end of the evening we went outside to join a thousand other events across the nation in a live performance of "The Last Post" and the lighting of the "Beacon of Light". That was followed by a two-part firework display with an atmospheric first part attempting to evoke something of the experience of the young soldiers going to war, experiencing the trenches, and the Christmas Truce. It was very moving to hear the audience joining in with singing Silent Night. The second part moved into an all-out and spectacular celebration of the end of the war and the start of the years of peace.

It was disappointing that at a very late stage we had two anonymous objections to fireworks at a Remembrance event. It was equally disappointing that we were unable to explain the nature of the display or to invite the objectors to come and see for themselves.

All feedback received was positive. People said that we had brought the village together and that they had enjoyed getting to know fellow residents they had never met before.

The whole event would have been impossible without the free use of the Reid Rooms and the support of Martin Ritchie. We are also grateful to Fireworks Crazy of Chelmsford for their excellent display and willingness to adapt to our plans for the first section.

Peter Briggs and his team did an outstanding job with the catering, not only sourcing the food and cutlery and crockery etc. but also in getting everybody through the serving area twice, in time for us all to be outside for The Last Post on schedule. The PA systems provided by Chris Turner helped to give the event a professional finish. The Clerk's behind-the-scenes paperwork efforts also played a crucial part in bringing it all together.

If there is one reason for the success of this event, I believe it was the decision to invest in high quality promotional material and to put it out in three waves starting well in advance. Of course, that wouldn't have

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worked without the efforts of the distributors. There is a lesson there for any future events aimed to build on the success of this one.

5. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL STATEMENT – Cllr Barker

On behalf of the meeting Cllr Cooper congratulated Cllr Barker on her re-election as District Cllr for High Easter and The Rodings.

Cllr Barker thanked the meeting and confirmed it was indeed very strange times and I now find myself in the company of 26 Residents4Uttlesford, 7 Lib. Dems and 2 Independent District Cllrs. It has been a difficult week with lots of people who have given their time and energy to the District Council finding themselves without seats largely due to the issues in central government. We will have to wait and see how it all works out.

There was an extraordinary Uttlesford Council meeting on 25th April with a motion to delay signing the section 106 agreement relating to the approval of the planning application to increase passenger numbers until after the election, whilst this motion was defeated a second motion to independently review the legal advice was tabled and this will now take place under the newly formed Council administration. Again we will have to wait and see what happens.

Budget pressures continue at Essex County Council especially with Social Care where a significant amount of budget is spent on a small portion of the population.

On more local issues, The Gossetts residents have been asked to contribute to pavement repairs which is in accordance with their deeds, however there are some issues and now we have confirmed a plan we will go out to tender for further quotes to ensure a proper job is done at a reasonable price.

Peppers Green is due to be resurfaced and I will confirm when.

A discussion then took place on the number of highway issues that remain unresolved because they do not currently meet the criteria; sadly, many continue to deteriorate and then prove more costly to repair. Cllr Cooper commented on the poor state of the footpaths along the A1060 particularly west of Ongar Road where the pavement is almost level with the road surface and Cllr Crisp commented on the pavement pot holes. The Council agreed to consolidate its most important highway issues and the Clerk was asked to forward information to Cllr Barker. A lengthy discussion followed on the speed of vehicles along the A1060 particularly outside the 40mph zone and a number of options in addition to extending the 40mph zone were tabled, including solid white lines to prevent overtaking. The Clerk will pull together a note of the Parish Councils concerns and suggestions to forward to Cllr Barker.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2018/19

For the year to March 2019 the Parish Councils expenditure exceeded receipts by £1,486, this included the Parish Map project £693 and a £488 contribution from the Parish Council to the WW1 event. The largest item of expenditure was £800 paid to St Margaret's church towards the maintenance of the historic building. It was a planned overspend as the Parish Council continues to look at opportunities to benefit and support residents and to reduce its reserves to a more acceptable level. The closing cash balance for the year was £6,526.

The Parish Council has few fixed assets valued at £1.5k including the speed gun and notice board.

7. PARISHONERS QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS - None

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting – Tuesday 12th May 2020 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed
Lee Cooper
Chairman Margaret Roding Parish Council