

**MARGARET RODING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING**

Held at The Farmhouse, Reid Rooms, Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 7.30pm

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

0 Members of the Public

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME, Cllr Cooper opened the meeting.
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr Ian Crisp, Cllr Lorraine Player, County and District Cllr Susan Barker.
3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were approved and signed as a true record. They are available on the village website.
4. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT – Cllr Lee Cooper

Margaret Roding Parish Council continued to meet bi-monthly. The first meeting of the year was held on Zoom, after which the temporary legislation brought in to manage during Covid ended and the parish council had to revert to face-to-face meetings in order to carry out its business. It was not possible to meet in person for the scheduled September meeting, however Cllrs were able to join an online Zoom discussion to share information.

Whilst this year did not see the heavy rainfall and surface water flooding of the previous year, the parish council has continued to chip away at long-standing ditch maintenance issues with varying success. The Essex Highways jetting team once again visited, and some ditch clearance was carried out by the landowner to the open ditch in front of university college cottages. Correspondence is ongoing with Essex Highways for clarity of traffic calming responsibilities which are seen as necessary to allow landowners to clear roadside ditches, and with Uttlesford to confirm ownership of the ditch behind The Gossetts. The decision-making process and getting works completed remain slow. The village website contains a link to Essex County Council's guide to ordinary watercourse maintenance which sets out your responsibilities. If you own land or property alongside a watercourse, the parish council would encourage residents to consider this document.

The Local Plan call for sites took place during the year and responses include a site adjacent to Margaret Roding woods on the A1060. With the regulation 18 consultation delayed until later in summer 2022, we will have to wait to see if this site is evaluated as sustainable, and whether it forms part of the options proposed by Uttlesford.

The application for a proposed new sand and gravel quarry including a new access from the A1060 at Chalk End, Roxwell was approved by Essex County Council. The applications to the Uttlesford Local Highways Panel submitted over a year ago requesting a speed restriction through the parish and new signage on the bend at Garnish Hall, are still pending funding for evaluation.

Meeting agendas have included two projects the parish council continues to pursue. The first is the installation of a defibrillator. It is hoped we are getting nearer to agreeing a suitable location which will allow a village defibrillator to be installed during 2022. The parish council continues to investigate a vehicle activated speed sign to place at the entry to the 40mph zone when approaching from Chelmsford and we are in the process of an application to Essex Highways for the necessary permission.

In March, the Parish Council organised a litter pick and our thanks to residents who came along to help on the day and to those residents who regularly pick up litter when they are out and about.

In closing I would like to thank my fellow Cllrs for giving up their time to attend meetings and read the many emails and correspondence we receive. Super amount of thanks to the clerk for all they do.

Signed  
Lee Cooper  
Chairman Margaret Roding Parish Council

5. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL STATEMENT – Cllr Barker was unable to attend and sent a report which was read by the Clerk.

In 2021 the leader of Essex County Council (ECC) David Finch decided not to stand for re-election, so in May 2021 the Conservative Group elected Kevin Bentley as the new group leader, and with conservatives holding the majority of seats after the county elections, also the new leader of Essex County Council.

The Cabinet soon adopted some new ideas along the theme of renewal, equality and Ambition, and the decisions ECC makes are very much aligned with these. The Cabinet is heavily focussed, apart from the day-to-day work, on levelling up and climate change.

Before I go on to tell you about some of the things that have been done in the last year I must remind you that 2/3 of the Essex Budget is spent on 17,000 elderly and vulnerable adults and children. That is 2/3 of the budget on around 1% of the population. It is right that we do this as these residents need our help and support.

Essex Libraries have once again been the subject of scrutiny and they will all be remaining open, and will all have a literacy area as the Council acknowledges that residents no longer have a “job for life” but may have to learn new skills for new jobs. Adult Community Learning will also focus more on re-training and new skills.

The Council has agreed a £200m Climate action plan and has agreed to report annually on its own Greenhouse Gas emissions as well as for Essex as a whole.

Across the County

- 82 homes have received £800k from the sustainable warmth fund and there is more money available to claim.
- £100k has gone to groups from the Climate Action Fund.
- In terms of infrastructure Junction 7a is almost complete and will enable the expansion of Harlow Northwards and relieve congestion in the Town. How traffic flows will alter as a result of the junction is yet to be seen.
- 3700 homes that were excluded from Commercial Broadband roll out will now be connected.
- A new design (a hamburger Roundabout) has been agreed for the Army and Navy.
- Recycling Centres and Waste Depots have been brought back “in house” and a new system of bookings for vans introduced.
- The role of Heritage and Arts in our County has been recognised and the new Culture Fund attracted 200 applications that are currently being assessed.
- Although most schools across Essex are now academies we still keep track of how well they are doing, and I am pleased to report that 88.5% of all schools across Essex are rated Outstanding or good.
- Locally we have the RideLondon event coming to Dunmow. This seems to be a bit of a Marmite event where you either love or loathe it.
- The Highways Panel in June will consider the installation of traffic lights at the Hoblongs junction which has been the subject of a number of accidents over a number of years.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2021/22

The only receipt in the year was the £2k precept and after expenditure this resulted in a surplus of £300. Of note was the £0.3k reduction in grant funding which had applications for grants to support local organisations been received this would have ensured precept was used, the only grant given was £600 to St Margarets Parochial Church Council as a contribution to the insurance on the grade I listed church. Reserves therefore increased slightly to £7k.

7. PARISHONERS QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS - None

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.42pm.

Signed  
Lee Cooper  
Chairman Margaret Roding Parish Council