

Margaret Roding Parish Council

4

MINUTES

Ordinary Meeting of Margaret Roding Parish Council

held on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at The Farmhouse, Reid Rooms

Present

Cllr Peter Briggs
Cllr Simon Philips (chair)
Cllr Chris Turner
Clerk Allison Ward

Residents and Visitors Rev Robert Stone – Vicar Rodings, Easters and Great Canfield Benefice (*leaving after item 4*)

1	Apologies for absence	
	<p>Apologies were received from Cllr Lee Cooper (family commitments), Cllr Ian Crisp (moved February 2023), Lorraine Player (work commitments), all were accepted by the meeting.</p> <p>In the absence of the chair and vice chair, Cllr Briggs proposed that Cllr Philips be chair for this meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Turner and accepted by Cllr Philips.</p>	
2	Declaration of Interest for this meeting	
	None	
3	Public Forum	
	None	
4	Future of St Margaret's Church	
	<p>A paper from Rev Stone (RS) and Paul Wilkinson (churchwarden) had been circulated to the parish council in advance; Paul Wilkinson sent apologies to the meeting.</p> <p>RS began by thanking the parish for the annual contribution to support the cost of insurance for the church building, before commenting on the paper circulated. Attendance from the village at the monthly church service is down to one, sometimes there are two or three in the congregation if the wider benefice church community attends. This isn't sustainable practically or financially with the church using depleting reserves to pay the bills. Whilst there are challenges for the church to consider in its styles and forms of worship, it must also consult with the wider community on the future options for the building. The opportunity to have this discussion with the parish council is the first step in that consultation. The church is conscious this is the last community space in the village and one option is to consider alterations to provide an adaptable space that could be used by the church and community groups. Alternatively, it could be left to go the way of Berners Roding and simply become a shell or be transferred to private ownership for development.</p> <p>Cllrs responded to the church worship challenge highlighting how the limited styles and formats have not been seen as welcoming to young families and those new to the village. Cllrs also recognised for a village the size of Margaret Roding inclusive and variable worship alone is unlikely to resolve the practical and financial issues.</p> <p>Cllrs were interested to explore the option of retaining the building for community use, however concerns were raised with vehicle access and although there is now direct access and parking in</p>	

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	<p>the churchyard from the A1060 it is on the dangerous bend, it was noted there is walking access to the church although this is alongside the busy A1060. RS confirmed the building is structurally sound, however there would need to be 'out of the box' thinking to sort out heating, lighting, facilities, floor space.</p> <p>In conclusion Cllrs unanimously agreed they would not wish to lose this final public building and would be willing to support exploring multi-functional community use. They highlighted the importance of asking the community for their views as nothing would be possible without wider support, RS confirmed this was the churches next step.</p> <p>Cllr Philips thanked RS for attending and sharing the issues, the meeting extended an open invitation to RS to attend meetings to keep the council up to date as discussions progress.</p> <p><i>Rev Stone left the meeting.</i></p>	
5	<p style="text-align: center;">Minutes</p> <p>Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting 17th January 2023 were proposed by Cllr Philips as a true record, seconded by Cllr Briggs with all in agreement; the Chairman signed the minutes.</p>	
6	<p style="text-align: center;">County and District Cllr Report</p> <p>County and District Cllr Susan Barker sent apologies to the meeting, there was no written report.</p>	
7	<p style="text-align: center;">Clerk's Progress Update and Correspondence</p> <p>7.1 Various information has been forwarded to Cllrs re the forthcoming district and parish council elections. Nomination papers for any resident who is eligible to stand for the parish council are available via the Uttlesford website. Further information on what is involved in being a parish cllr is available from the clerk.</p> <p>7.2 Ride Essex-London cycle event has announced the route for Sunday 28th May. Whilst the route does not pass through Margaret Roding it will limit residents' ability to travel around the district and county. See this link for further details, https://www.ridelondon.co.uk/community-info/community-info/essex</p>	
8	<p style="text-align: center;">Councillor's Updates</p> <p>8.1 Environment and Health</p> <p>8.1.1 Cllr Philips reported on a successful community litter pick on Saturday 4th March with c.15 residents joining .</p> <p>8.1.2 A resident asked the council to consider funding the weekend green waste service provided by some parish councils in Uttlesford. The Clerk confirmed schedules for this year are already in place and added the cost is £88.20 per hour which for a bi-weekly service is c.£1.8k per annum. Most importantly the service requires a suitable location to stop in order that residents can safely access the service, the meeting was unable to identify a suitable location in Margaret Roding. The meeting concluded this is not something the parish council was in a position to support at this time for the reasons discussed including the unknown need across the wider community, it noted the service is available in adjoining parishes and residents are also able to sign up to Uttlesford's household garden collection service, details on the Uttlesford website.</p>	

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<p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p>	<p>Transport – The clerk had reported the broken glass in the bus shelter. The meeting noted £2 single bus fares including when using the Digigo service, have been extended to June 2023.</p> <p>Communication – Nothing to report.</p> <p>Local Government – The local elections on Thursday 4th May will be for both District and Parish Cllrs.</p>	
<p>9</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Planning</p> <p>Applications</p> <p>Application UTT/22/3382/FUL Development Section 73A Retrospective application for change of use of agricultural silo building to a single dwelling house Location Silo 1, Marks Hall</p> <p>Cllr Briggs proposed no comment on this application, this was seconded by Cllr Turner with all in agreement.</p> <p>Decisions</p> <p>Application UTT/23/0034/FUL Development Conversion and change of use of an agricultural barn to a dwelling house, and land to the west and north of the barn to be used as residential curtilage for the dwelling. Location Refused</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Highways</p> <p>The Clerk and County Cllr Susan Barker attended an online meeting with the Essex Highway senior drainage engineer and his team to discuss two issues, the surface water flooding along Marks Hall Lane, and the lack of ditch maintenance outside University College Cottages which is causing flooding of resident’s gardens.</p> <p>Re Marks Hall Lane, it was agreed the engineers would contact Thames Water who are responsible for this drainage and ask them to jet, Essex Highways are of the view from their visit in December that there is a blockage in this network. However, the meeting recognised this is not the sole issue and discussed various other related matters. In conclusion it was agreed once Thames Water had completed their work the issue would be revisited.</p> <p>Re the ditch in front of University College Cottages, Essex Highways agreed they would arrange for a road closure and carry out the maintenance. They also commented they are aware of the blocked ditch in front of Hillenor further along this stretch which will also be attended to.</p> <p>The Clerk had forwarded the suggestion from the January meeting to the landowner which may reduce the flow of water into the Marks Hall Lane network, the Clerk was asked to continue to try and engage with the landowner to determine if this was feasible.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>11</p> <p>11.1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Annual Review of Parish Council Policy</p> <p>Standing Orders – National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has updated Standing Order 18 (financial controls and procurement) to bring it into line with the procurement position post-Brexit and to reflect current procurement threshold figures for local authorities. As Margaret</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

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	Roding Parish Council follows the NALC model orders Cllr Philips proposed the standing orders are amended to reflect this update, this was seconded by Cllr Briggs with all in agreement.	
11.2	Financial Regulations – No change to NALC model orders.	
11.3	Grant Policy – The parish council confirmed the existing policy remains unchanged,	
11.4	Complaints Procedure – The parish council confirmed the existing policy remains unchanged.	
11.5	Other – The parish council confirmed the existing privacy policy and freedom of information police, remain unchanged.	
12	Parish Council Projects	
	No progress on VAS sign. Parish Council to include future projects on the next agenda.	Cllrs
13	Grant Request	
	The Clerk had received an email grant request from Margaret Roding Parochial Church Council asking for assistance towards the insurance cost of the parish church. The Clerk reminded the meeting of the legislation and guidance on making grants to churches, after considering Cllr Briggs proposed that given the historic pattern of assisting the church and the fact this is the oldest building in the village and the only community space remaining, that the Parish Council awards a grant of £600 for the purpose requested, this was seconded by Cllr Philips with all in agreement.	Clerk
14	Finance	
	Cllr Philips proposed the following payment, this was seconded by Cllr Turner with all in agreement. Allison Ward (Parish Clerk for February and March 2023) £ 135.62	
15	Items for next Agenda	
	The next meeting will start with the Annual Village Meeting and be followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.	
16	Date of Next Meeting	
	Tuesday 16 th May 7.30pm at The Reid Rooms. The meeting closed at 8.40pm.	