

Woodham Mortimer and Hazeleigh Parish Council

ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES – TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2024

In attendance: Parish Cllrs: Simon Brady(SB) presiding, Kim McDonald(KM), Pauline McDonald(PM), Graham Harle(GH), Richard Britton(RB), Lorraine Cobb(LC). County Councillor Jane Fleming(JF), Andrew Ritchings(AR) Clerk to the Council recording proceedings.
One member of public in attendance.

135.24 APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Parish Councillor Stephen Pemberton was unable to attend due to a business function. District Cllr Simon Morgan sent apologies as he had to attend an alternative meeting.

136.24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations were made by Councillors.

137.24 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no matters raised.

138.24 PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting 12 November 2024 were approved as a true record of events as proposed by GH and seconded by KM.

139.24 PLANNING

24/00262/VARM – HALL FARM LAND HAZELEIGH HALL LANE HAZELEIGH – *Variation of condition 27 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)) on approved planning application 22/00261/FUL (The construction and operation of a solar photovoltaic farm and associated infrastructure, including inverters, security cameras, fencing, access tracks and landscaping.) Variation seeks: - Inclusion of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan as an approved document. LPA Deadline 03/07/2024 TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LPA*

24/00776/LDP - FAIRWATER 39 CONDUIT LANE WOODHAM MORTIMER – *Claim for lawful development certificate for proposed first floor front extension above existing garage. Changes to fenestration of front elevation LPA Deadline 29/11/2024. DEEMED NOT LAWFUL BY LPA*

24/00824/VAR – KINVARA MANOR LODGE ROAD HAZELEIGH – *Variation of Condition 2 on approved planning permission 24/00494/HOUSE (Erection of Carport and alterations to the existing driveway) LPA Deadline 27/12/2024. TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LPA*

24/00844 – GOLF DRIVING RANGE BURNHAM ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER – *Reserved matters application for the approval of all matters on approved planning application 22/00482/OUT (Outline application with all matters reserved for up to 18 dwellings with a provision for affordable housing) LPA Deadline 28/01/2025. TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LPA*

24/00869/FUL - LAND ON SOUTH SIDE MALDON ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER -
Demolish three existing buildings, redevelop the site for Gypsy and Traveller Use comprising the siting of a total of four mobile homes (including the retention of two existing mobile homes allowed on appeal under application ref. 22/00344/FUL), use of existing hay store building for storage together with associated facilities and landscaping. LPA Deadline 14/01/2025
The Parish Council have consistently raised objection to all previous applications at this site and as there appear to be ongoing matters associated with condition approvals of the previous application 22/00344/FUL, the Councils position is unchanged; the development would introduce a form of additional dwellings outside of the village settlement boundary as

protected by Policy S8 of the Local Development Plan 2014-2029. Cllrs continue to have concerns at the prospect of vehicles entering onto and leaving the busy 50mph A road strategic link between Chelmsford, Maldon and the wider Dengie area, which is considered a potential hazard. It is the Councils opinion this application would cause overdevelopment at the site exacerbating the concerns previously raised particularly as the Maldon Garden Suburb around Wyke Hill nears its completion along with further vehicle movements from the new crematorium and separate business establishments at the Claremont Garden Centre. The site does not have easy access to local services and facilities and will mainly rely on private transport adding to the aforementioned vehicle proliferation along this stretch of the A414 which the Council now understand has been deemed a casualty reduction zone.

24/00899/LDE - LAND ON SOUTH SIDE MALDON ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER -

Certificate of Lawful development certificate for a existing use or development to demonstrate lapsing of planning permission 22/00344/FUL allowed on appeal APP/X1545/W/22/3308046 and Consequential Nil use of Land. LPA Deadline 14/01/2025 - Councillors were unable to provide any information that supports or contradicts whether the application is lawful and have no further comments to make.

140.24 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

At a recent meeting of County Cllrs much discussion involved the new government intentions to press ahead with regional devolution, this is likely to have a major impact on the Maldon area as it may mean Maldon District Council are abolished and joined with other regions to form a much larger authority. Central government consider there to be significant advantages of a larger authority with less bureaucracy and significant cost savings.

County Cllr Fleming reported at the meeting with District Council Planners it seems likely that MDC may have to set out a further call for development sites in order to meet the Governments almost double new housing targets demand for the Maldon District.

141.24 COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE HAZELEIGH SOLAR FARM

Having considered the contents of the commissioned legal opinion report Cllrs agreed the report proved very helpful and are satisfied only minor changes to the Agreement are needed and no further legal input is required. GH will advise AR the amendments required and AR will then contact the solar farm develop company with requested changes, AR also to contact legal company thanking them for the opinion report.

142.24 HIGHWAY MATTERS

A414 Pedestrian Crossing – *measures to aid crossing the hazardous A414 Maldon Road, LHP Scheme No. 6.* - No updates to report.

Footway Defect A414 – *Foliage/soil restricting width of footway/pavement between Runsell Green Danbury and Woodham Mortimer Church. LHP Scheme No. 36.* - The Council originally requested the footway clearance in September 2018 and express their content that it has finally been cleared between Tom Tit Lane and Woodham Mortimer Church now rendering it safer for pedestrians use. The original request included the footway be cleared all the way along the A414 to Runsell Green and the Council will continue to pursue this section also be cleared.

Footpath 11 Hazeleigh (Dragons Path) – *gate restriction and return to previous character.*

From Land Registry information it is possible that the old Southend Water Company (now part of Affinity Water) have an easement right over the Footpath, Clerk to contact Affinity Water to see if they have any information that might identify the landowner of Footpath 11.

Vehicle Activated Speed Sign A414 adj Oak Manor Chelmsford Road. – *VAS Installation.*

The working group met again in early December resulting in a County Cllr request for additional highway measures to be implemented including red road surfacing, gated yellow

backed speed restriction signage and dragons teeth road markings. A Highway Authority speed survey will initially be undertaken prior to identifying the most appropriate VAS location.

Chimney Lane – *'Unsuitable for HGV' signage. LHP Scheme No. 22.* - No updates to report.

A414 30mph Speed limit – *between Oak Corner and Post Office Road.* - No updates to report.

A414 40mph Speed limit – *between Post Office Road and Limebrook Farm.* - No updates.

Post Office Road – *hedge encroachment at junction with A414* - AR reported on EH website ref: 2953028 and awaiting Essex Highways response.

A414 Chelmsford Road – *hedge encroachment between Zara Restaurant and gravel pit.* This has already been reported by JF as vegetation problems (ref: 2942385). The EH updated report as of 05/12/2024 is: "We have assigned this enquiry to the inspection team who will carry out an initial assessment."

A414 Maldon Road – *verge condition central island crossing point church side of Crematorium* - The developer has been contacted asking why the construction of the central crossing point has left an area of unsurfaced earthen footway on the church side of the A414 and been advised discussions with Essex Highways are ongoing associated with slope design standards.

143.24 BUS SHELTERS - *Graffiti removal updates.*

An ongoing negotiation with the contractor that has partially removed the graffiti has resulted in a reduced fee offer which The Council consider unsatisfactory, AR to contact contractor again seeking a further reduction. A quotation has now been received from an alternative contractor to blast the remaining graffiti off the brickwork which is acceptable to the Council, AR to contact the contractor to schedule work.

A further attempt at appointing a contractor to apply coatings to the shelters once the graffiti has been removed has proven unsuccessful, Cllrs resolved to gather a working party of volunteers to carry out the coating work.

144.24 BUS STOP BENCHES – *Potential installation of bus stop seating furniture via County Cllr Locality Fund.* SB and PM completed the respective bench application and consent forms, AR to scan and send to Highways licensing for approval.

145.24 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Balance of Accounts

Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account	£7,126.50
Unity Trust T1 Current Account	£753.44
Total funds on deposit	£7,869.94

Authorisation of payments

Clerk Salary Nett	776.20
HMR&C PAYE	194.00
Clerk allowances	52.00
Transfer funds from Savings to Current Account	£1,000.00

Transactions since the previous meeting

Lloyds Debit Card charge	-£3.00
Monthly account charges	-£6.00
Ink and paper	-44.80
A & J Lighting street light repair	-124.80

The above payments were approved by all Cllrs present as proposed by KM, seconded by LC.

146.24 BUDGET REVIEW AND PRECEPT DEMAND FOR FINANCE YEAR 2025-26

The review of finances identified additional items other than those usually forming part of The Councils annual funding requirements as follows:

- An allowance of reserves where issues requiring legal advice may be essential
- Costs associated with the village defibrillator
- Maintenance costs surrounding assets such as bus shelters, benches and other similar structures
- An upgraded email service
- New IT equipment
- Significant increase in Hazeleigh residents due to the completion of Maldon Garden Suburb development

In consideration to the above items, general yearly requirements and the OBR expected inflation target of around 3% Cllrs resolved to increase the Precept demand by 3.5% to £7,763.

Cllrs also resolved to seek reappointment of the Internal Auditor Heelis and Lodge, AR to contact Auditor for confirmation.

147.24 CLERKS EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY REVIEW

Having reviewed the latest NALC 'Local Services Pay Agreement 2024' Cllrs approved the Clerks salary to increase to SCP 17 at the current contract of 22 hours per month.

148.24 INFORMATION ONLY

Next scheduled meeting is Ordinary Council Meeting 14/01/2025.

It had been reported to the Council that the Street light in Hazeleigh at the junction of Burnham Road, Lodge Road and Goat House Lane is not working, AR to check and contact A&J Lighting for repair if needed.

It was with regret that the Chairman accepted the **resignation of Parish Councillor Richard Britton**. Richard's attendance at many meetings was thanked along with his valuable contributions to various village matters. The process to appoint a successor will be progressed shortly.

..... (Chairman to the Council) 14/01/2025