

Woodham Mortimer and Hazeleigh Parish Council

ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES – TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2025

Convened at Woodham Mortimer & Hazeleigh Village Hall at 7:30pm

In attendance: Parish Cllrs: Simon Brady(SB) presiding, Graham Harle(GH), Kim McDonald(KM), Pauline McDonald(PM) Lorraine Cobb(LC), Stephen Pemberton (SP). District Cllrs Mark Durham(MD) & Simon Morgan(SM), Andrew Ritchings(AR) Clerk to the Council recording proceedings.

There were 3 members of the public in attendance.

28.25 APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

County Cllr Jane Fleming sent apologies due to being away on holiday.

29.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

SP declared a non-pecuniary interest to the solar farm community benefit fund item being the freehold owner of the leased land subject to the solar farm company.

30.25 PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public in attendance commented that it was pleasing to see the installation of the new traffic islands helping pedestrians cross the busy A414 but that they now found it more difficult exiting Post Office Road in their vehicle

Other members of the public enquired about the latest situation associated with land on the south side of Maldon Road subject to outstanding planning applications. SM provided attendees a brief history of development matters and that following reports to the Council of various activities at the site MDC are investigating matters. SM is also attempting to arrange a meeting with planners, police and environment agency so that any environmental, planning or lawful breaches can be addressed. SB advised the public to report any issues and their concerns to the various organisations, and to keep logs and evidence of associated activities.

31.25 PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting 11 February 2025 were agreed as a true record of events as proposed by KM and seconded by GH.

32.25 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*

24/00844 – 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 TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LPA*

24/01014/OUTM – LAND SOUTH OF MALDON ROAD DANBURY – *Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of up to 72 dwellings with associated infrastructure. LPA Deadline 18/04/2025 TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LPA*

25/00081 – 1 SPRING COTTAGES CONDUIT LANE WOODHAM MORTIMER – *Single Storey side extension. LPA Deadline 25/03/2025.* Cllrs thought the proposals to be consistent with other properties and therefore consider the development would not be detrimental to the current street scene and recommend GRANTING the application.

25/00105/LDE - KEESTON CHELMSFORD ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER - *Claim for lawful development certificate for existing use of dwelling without complying with agricultural occupancy restriction as stated at condition 2, MAL/647/79. LPA Deadline 09/04/2025.* Cllrs have no information available to suggest the development is not lawful.

25/00019/PACUAR – LAND ADJACENT LODDARTS LODGE ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER – *Prior approval for conversion of agricultural barn to one dwellinghouse and for building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion. LPA Deadline 09/04/2025* Cllrs consider the conversion would be an improvement to the site implementing the modernising and sustainable use of a redundant building and recommend GRANTING the application.

25/00084/HOUSE – MILTON GRANGE POST OFFICE ROAD WOODHAM MORTIMER – *Removal of existing garage roof with replacement roof to create first floor home office with balcony to rear. New garage door and stairs to side. LPA Deadline 09/04/2025.* Given the secluded location of the site Cllrs consider there would not be any detrimental effect to the current street scene and recommend GRANTING the application.

24/00772/FULM – LAND ADJACENT 30 CONDUIT LANE WOODHAM MORTIMER – *Construction of 4No.three bedroom detached dwellings and 2No. four bedroom detached dwellings with associated garages and carports. New vehicular accesses to each property. LPA Deadline 16/01/2025.*

The proposed development lies adjacent to the current Woodham Mortimer southern settlement boundary and now the Golf Driving Range has received outline planning approval including a public open space this proposed area lies between the developed and proposed development areas. Therefore in consideration with pressures faced by Maldon District Council to meet an increased housing supply, Cllrs consider the development scale and nature appropriate to the space being urbanized. A well-considered and detailed ecological report has been provided and it is the Council's opinion dwelling designs are of character that would not appear unbalanced or detrimental within the current setting.

The Council do however have concerns about general and foul drainage due to the low lying nature of the site in close proximity to Woodham Mortimer Brook and would urge the Planning Authority to review a detailed investigation report into surface and foul drainage especially in consideration to the additional housing that will be delivered by the approved Driving Range development. The current narrow nature and condition of Conduit Lane is also of concern in respect to the increased access use and in particular construction traffic and consideration should be given to improving the current surface.

It is noted that Footpath 25 Woodham Mortimer resides within the development boundary at its eastern side. The Council would like to see the introduction of a condition that would protect the access of the Footpath during the construction phase at an adequate width for pedestrian use and following the completion of the development the integrity of the Footpath is fully kept. Cllrs raise NO OBJECTIONS to the application excepting the aforementioned concerns and recommended conditions.

33.25 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

SM advised the meeting about various planning enforcement cases currently in progress. The ongoing Devolution proposals were discussed and MD advised although no decisions have yet been made it seems possible that Essex may end up with just three separate authorities, with the ultimate decision likely to be made by The Treasury. The target for completion is some time in 2028, but District Cllrs agree there is a vast amount of work to be undertaken within that timescale.

SM also advised the meeting that despite the District Council's representation it would not be possible to meet the Governments housing targets in the District; the new government is insisting the housing targets must be delivered.

SB commented that since the completion of the new road layout and pedestrian island at Conduit Lane there now appears to be a space allocated for a bus shelter and whether the County or District Cllrs know if a shelter has been programmed for installation. MD advised to seek guidance from County Cllr Fleming as he believes there is a new bus shelter budget.

34.25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Balance of Accounts

Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account	£5,173.16
Unity Trust T1 Current Account	£311.39
Total funds on deposit	£5,484.55

Authorisation of payments

Clerk emoluments:	
PAYE Nett	£776.20
HMR&C PAYE tax	£194.00
Work from home allowance 13 weeks	£52.00
Transfer of funds from Savings to Current Account	£1,000.00

Transactions since the previous meeting

Lloyds Debit Card charge	-£3.00
Unity Trust Account charges	-£6.00

The above payments as proposed by KM and seconded by GH were approved by all Cllrs and payments authorised.

The Council's banking provider has advised a change of savings account interest rate from 2.5% to 2.25% effective from 06/05/2025.

AR advised he had been able to allocate time recently to research a new laptop to replace the current aging device and should have estimated costs by the next meeting.

Software options were discussed and it was agreed the best business solution would be for the Clerk to operate a full MS365 license with Cllrs utilising Microsoft email accounts only as all the programs available with a MS365 Account would not be necessary.

35.25 COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE HAZELEIGH SOLAR FARM

The Chairman signed the Community Benefit Deed engrossment which was witnessed by all Cllrs and co-signed by GH, the deed will be sent to the solar farm developers for finalisation.

36.25 HIGHWAY MATTERS

A414 Pedestrian Crossing – *measures to aid crossing the hazardous A414 Maldon Road, LHP Scheme No. 6.* Both crossings have been implemented and being extensively used by parishioners.

Footway Defect A414 – *Foliage/soil restricting width of footway/pavement between Tom Tit Lane and Runsell Green Danbury (LHP Scheme No. 36).* No activity.

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

Correspondence with Essex & Suffolk Water has resulted in the identification of a potential historic landowner and the Council will continue with further enquiries.

Vehicle Activated Speed Sign A414 adj Oak Manor Chelmsford Road. – *VAS Installation.* The Working Party will meet again in March once the traffic survey cables have been laid and data collected.

Chimney Lane – *'Unsuitable for HGV' signage. (LHP Scheme No. 22).* AR advised he has noticed the lane now has signage both ends and this scheme now appears to have been implemented.

A414 30mph Speed limit – *between Oak Corner and Post Office Road.* No activity.

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

A414 Chelmsford Road – *hedge encroachment between Zara Restaurant and gravel pit (EH ref: 2942385).* No activity.

A414 Maldon Road – *verge condition central island crossing point church side of Crematorium.* Awaiting levelling of church access lane to be implemented by Essex Highways.

Footpath 17 Woodham Mortimer – *diversion around crematorium site.* The diversion order has now been Confirmed and the new route Certified fit for public use by Essex Highways. The new path will eventually be landscaped into the Crematorium site. Further to reports at the February meeting AR surveyed the alignment and believes the path is available without obstruction except the initial gap adjacent to the A414 which appears to be a few meters east of the Order plan location (Point C), however as the path has been certified by the Highway Authority it is not considered worthy of taking the matter any further.

37.25 BUS SHELTERS - *Graffiti removal updates.*

The Council have received an additional quote from an alternative company which is considered disproportionately costly and AR will make other enquiries.

38.25 BUS STOP BENCH – *Installation of bus stop seating furniture via County Cllr Locality Fund.* The licensing authority required a detailed installation method the Council were unable to provide resulting in the license application not being approved, consequently SB decided to withdraw the application as the Locality Funding needed to procure the bench has now expired. SB recommended the funds be transferred to the Village Hall for upgraded heating provision.

39.25 'LOVE YOUR BUS' - *Grant funded bus service application with neighbouring Parishes.* The Council were unable to meet the financial requirements of apportionment of grant funding which has now expired and will not be taking the proposals any further.

40.25 CASUAL VACANCY – The co-option of a new Cllr will occur in due course.

41.25 INFORMATION ONLY

The Council received an offer of trees for planting within the Parishes but no locations could be identified other than to re-stock the trees that had been removed along the green lane of Footpath 11 Hazeleigh, however it was not considered appropriate until a respective landowner has been identified. .

GH and LC raised concerns about the hazardous condition of Hazeleigh Hall Lane and it was decided the best approach was to contact County Cllr Fleming which GH would action.

Next scheduled meeting is Ordinary Council Meeting 08/04/2025

Simon Brady (Chairman to the Council) 08/04/2025