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MINUTES

Minutes of the Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council meeting held at 7pm on Thursday 24 November 2022 in Great Easton Village Hall.

Present:

Councillors

Cllr T Martens (Chairman), Cllr J England (Vice Chairman), Cllr D Hahn, Cllr C Hurst, Cllr D Lawson, Cllr P Neale and Cllr J Stevens.

Clerk: Kate Rixson

	The Chairman opened the meeting
11.22.01	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr Claxton's apologies due to absence abroad for work purposes were accepted by resolution.
11.22.02	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Cllr Lawson declared a pecuniary interest in relation to planning application UTT/22/2919/HHF (Colletia, Mill End).
11.22.03	MINUTES OF MEETING ON 27 OCTOBER 2022 The minutes of the 27 th October 2022 meeting were approved as an accurate record and signed by the chairman.
11.22.04	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION There were no members of the public present.
11.22.05	DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS Correspondence with Highways via Cllr Foley had been circulated. Members were pleased at progress made with cutting back overhanging hedges on Snow Hill although it was noted that some work remained to be done.
11.22.06	CHAIR'S REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES Speeding: The chair had attended a meeting at Hatfield Broad Oak to review, with the police, parish councils' concerns about speeding traffic in villages. The problem was very widespread, with many repeat offenders amongst speeding drivers. Issues discussed included having Police Community Support Officers using Uttlesford DC's Trucam camera system to identify drivers, and funding a special constable jointly with one or two other parishes at a combined cost of around £1,000 per year. Councillors noted that speed monitoring in Duton Hill this week had concluded that there was 100% compliance with the speed limit, but that was not what residents had observed at most other times. Speeding on The Endway in Great Easton was agreed to be a constant problem. Councillors concluded that the possibility of sharing the funding of a Special Constable with neighbouring local councils should be seriously considered. It was acknowledged that the constable was likely to be seconded elsewhere at short notice, however, according to police service needs. The chairman will obtain further details before the next meeting. Action: Chairman A Speedwatch group was not felt to be a realistic option partly due to the 18-month lead-in time from setting up the team. Speeding should remain a standing item on the agenda. Action: Clerk The fact that the police were carrying out speed monitoring should be mentioned in the Five Parishes Magazine and PCSO Natalie Smith should be contacted again to rearrange a meeting with councillors, the 7 Nov 22 date having been cancelled. Action: Clerk

11.22.07	<p>CLERK'S REPORT ON ITEMS NOT LISTED SEPARATELY ON THE AGENDA, AND CORRESPONDENCE The Clerk's Report had been circulated and was taken as read (annexed to these minutes). No questions were raised.</p>
11.22.08	<p>REPORTS ON ACTION POINTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways: potholes and drain cover damage near church. Although one missing drain cover/pothole on the bend opposite the village hall had been filled and the traffic cone removed, other potholes remained. Drains along The Endway were still not functioning and would be reported to ECC Floods team again by the Clerk. If possible a What3Words location would be supplied by councillors. Action: Clerk Increasing damage to the road surface was noted, along the bus route along the Chelmer. This should be reported to Highways with the endorsement of the bus company if possible. Action: Clerk • Highways: vegetation on pavement and overhanging hedge on B184. See also 11.22.06 above. Essex Highways had referred the issue of the hedge to its enforcement section as the landowner needed to carry out the work. It seemed this might already have been done. The spread of grass and weeds onto the pavement would be dealt with by Highways according to their normal priorities. • Speeding – see Chair's report above. • Village Hall dishwasher installation. The larger machine preferred was considered very expensive at nearly £2,000 and it was agreed this could not be justified when the use of the Village Hall was already under review. It was agreed that the Chairman would speak to the Women's Institute who had made the initial request. Action: Chairman • Village Green damage from traffic – prevention measures. Although the clerk had been advised by Essex Highways that the parish council could place whichever obstructions they wished, on its own land (which included the whole area of the green except for a narrow strip next to the tarmac of the road) to protect it from being driven over, councillors remained concerned that obstructions should not be placed within a metre of the highway. Councillors also noted the risk that large agricultural vehicles would be forced to drive on the green, whatever obstacles were placed there, to get past parked cars. Neither low fencing nor bollards seemed appropriate. Action: Clerk – to investigate options. • Meeting concerning parking next to Tilty church. The chairman had met Revd Sue Hurley and two members of the Tilty Church Committee to discuss the issues. The church committee confirmed its previous decision and asked those intending to visit the church to contact the church administrator Emma Nicholls for the combination to the lock. There was no movement in relation to other issues raised in the Parish Council's letter to the Diocese. Subsequently the clerk had been copied in on an email from the Archdeacon of Stansted to the Priest-in-Charge. It was agreed that the chairman would respond to the Archdeacon and the issue would be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Action: Chairman, Clerk • Liaison with Uttlesford on planning issues. The clerk had circulated her notes and official minutes of the meeting on 7 November 2022. It was noted that the planning department intended to work more closely with parish councils on planning appeals. • Repairs to play equipment at Great Easton playground. Southon Engineering Ltd had inspected equipment in the light of the Broadmead Leisure Ltd safety inspection and had removed the slide for repair. They would also repair some wooden parts on the climbing frame. All other items were considered safe but would be re-inspected in early Spring in case of deterioration over the winter.
11.22.09	<p>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Cllr Lawson had circulated draft terms of reference and a draft communications strategy. He set out a plan for the work involved in preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, the procedures which must be followed and the effect it could have. After discussion, it was resolved unanimously to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an advisory committee, to be known as the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Cllr David Lawson as the chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group • To approve the terms of reference (annexed to these minutes) • To approve the communications strategy (annexed to these minutes) <p>It was noted that the parish council was the approving body in relation to all matters relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and that the Steering Group as an advisory committee would provide reports, advice and recommendations. The Steering Group had a limited power to incur expenditure (up to £250) without reference to the parish council. Funds would be supplied mainly by grant-funding and to a limited extent by the parish council. Cllr Lawson planned to hold the first meeting of the Steering Group in January.</p> <p>Cllr Lawson was thanked for his work and the council's full support was offered. In particular, councillors agreed to assist with links to the community and local knowledge. Action: all councillors</p>
11.22.10	<p>MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT (PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNT)</p> <p>A summary of receipts and payments from 1 April to 31 October 2022 (omitting items from August as the bank statement was not available) and a note of the bank balance at 31 October had been circulated to councillors. This was taken as read and showed:</p> <p>Total income (including the precept) £34,035.61</p> <p>Total outgoings £23,783.31 plus £1,583.02 VAT noting that this omitted some items</p> <p>The balance on the current account on 31 Oct 22 was £39,407.30.</p> <p>It was noted that payments totalling £1,175.70 were due under contracts, made up of £614.55 for grounds maintenance and salary of £561.15, had been made since the last meeting.</p> <p>In addition the following payments were approved:</p> <p>Microsoft charges for email hosting/subscription (met by Cllr Hahn and reimbursed): £291.60</p> <p>Grounds maintenance: £50</p> <p>Tree surgery (removing a fallen tree, met in September 2022): £900 + £180 VAT = £1,080</p> <p>Audit fees (statutory requirement, met in September 2022): £200 + £40 VAT = £240</p> <p>Accounts software - Scribe invoice 3365: £288 + £57.60 VAT = £345.80</p>
11.22.11	<p>BUDGET AND PRECEPT</p> <p>A draft budget had been circulated.</p> <p>It was considered that higher amounts should be allowed for contingencies in all areas. In particular there was a need for a tree safety survey, more frequent play equipment inspections and support for local events such as celebrating the coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. The council might also need to replace play equipment and/or undertake major work on council land or buildings. The cost of demolishing derelict buildings at Laundry Lane would arise in the 2023-24 financial year but the amount was currently unknown. Donations to charities benefiting local residents should also be allowed for, in view of the economic climate.</p> <p>It was noted that the council had been meeting up to 20% of its annual expenditure from reserves for the past two years, as the precept had fallen short, even though during that period there had been very little capital expenditure. Reserves had therefore reduced and should now be preserved. It was noted that smaller councils were advised to hold 9-12 months of expenditure in their reserves.</p> <p>Total expenditure was forecast to reach £39,700 approximately for the 2022-23 financial year, leaving reserves of approximately £27,000 by the end of the year, a reduction of more than £5,000 over the year. It was considered that expenditure in 2023-24 would be at least as high as in 2022-23.</p> <p>To allow for inflation and the factors mentioned above, the council approved a budget of £42,000 and decided unanimously to make a precept demand of £42,000. This would allow for reserves to be maintained at adequate levels and take account of likely expenditure in 2023-24. Action: Clerk</p>
11.22.12	<p>VILLAGE HALL (Councillors sitting as a committee of Trustees)</p> <p>A report had been circulated which was taken as read, covering finances 1 April to 31 October 22 and bookings.</p> <p>Total income £2,926.45</p> <p>Total outgoings £6,610.14 with the note that this omitted some items as the bank statement for August was not available.</p> <p>The balance on the current account on 31 Oct 22 was £37,378.09.</p>

	It was decided to apply to open an account with Unity Trust Bank at a fee of £6 per month as TSB had not provided a good service recently and was ill-equipped to deal with multi-signatory mandates. A resolution was passed in the terms required by the bank. Action: Clerk
11.22.13	ADOPTION OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS' PAY AGREEMENT It was unanimously resolved to adopt the new pay scales for clerks with effect from 1 April 2022 and new holiday entitlement from 1 April 2023. To advise payroll service. Action: Clerk
11.22.14	NOTE OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S INTENTION TO ADOPT s45 LOCAL GOVT (MISC PROVNS) ACT 1976 The letter from Uttlesford District council dated 20 October 2022, concerning arrangements for the licencing of taxis and hire cars, was tabled and the contents duly noted.
11.22.15	DECISION ON PLACING A CLOTHING RECYCLING BANK It was decided not to accept the offer of a clothing and textile recycling bank as these were already available locally and an additional one was not needed. Action: Clerk
11.22.16	PLANNING APPLICATIONS, DECISIONS AND PROGRESS ON PLANNING MATTERS A written report on progress had been circulated. It was decided that no new comments needed to be sent to the planning inspectorate in relation to appeal reference APP/C1570/W/22/3305189 (relating to UTT/21/2919/OP), building two dwellings adjacent to The Green Man, Mill End Green). Cllr Lawson, having declared an interest, did not comment on the application 22/2919/HHF regarding Colletia, Mill End Green. It was unanimously decided that the council had no objection to make. Action: Clerk
11.22.17	RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS (FOR ITEMS NOT SHOWN SEPARATELY ON THE AGENDA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open spaces: see above in relation to play equipment and playing field • Footpaths, road safety and highways: Drains remained blocked and likely to cause flooding at several points on The Endway, Great Easton. To be reported again. A glass brick was missing from a cellar cover next to the old phone box at The Swan, Great Easton, and needed urgent attention as this was dangerous. A what3words location would be supplied. Action: Clerk • River interests: River weed needed to be removed from the Chelmer which was a council responsibility. This was likely to cost around £400-500 but estimates would be obtained. Action: Chairman • Airport: No representative currently. It was agreed that the chairman would approach a former councillor. A donation to the Stansted Airport Watch group was discussed for the current and next financial years. Action: Clerk • Community activities and events: A number of events were planned for Christmas. • DUFC: A quote for demolition at Laundry Lane was awaited. The cost was very difficult to estimate and may need to be covered by reserves. • IT, website and communications: Cllr Hahn drew attention to the increasing size of the website and that at some point it would need to be moved to a new hosting service. He estimated the cost at around £170 p.a. The current email hosting worked well and cost £3 per email address per month which was competitive. He recommended that the council continue with this service, which was agreed. The council thanked Cllr Hahn for meeting the website hosting charges to date and for his work on the website. It was noted that the quantity of emails forwarded to councillors made it difficult to identify important or urgent messages. If possible these should be flagged. Action: Clerk
11.22.18	ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA AND/OR FIVE PARISHES MAGAZINE The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group should be advertised in the parish council's article for the next magazine. Speed monitoring should also be mentioned (11.22.06 above). Action: Clerk
11.22.19	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Thursday 26 January 2023
11.22.20	There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.40pm