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## MINUTES

Minutes of the Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 28 March 2024 in Great Easton Village Hall.

**Present:**

**Councillors**

Cllr T Martens (Chairman), Cllr M Benterman, Cllr J England, Cllr D Hahn, Cllr J Heath, Cllr P Neale and Cllr J Stevens.

Clerk: Kate Rixson  
 District Cllr Haynes

	The Chairman opened the meeting at 7 pm
03.24.01	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were noted, and the reasons accepted by resolution, from Cllr Hurst.
03.24.02	<b>Declarations of interest</b> None declared
03.24.04	<b>Minutes of the meeting on 29 February 2024</b> The minutes of the council meeting on 29 February 2024 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the chairman.
03.24.05	<b>Public participation session and District and County Councillors' reports</b> District and County Councillor Martin Foley was unable to attend but had asked the clerk to report that signs would be installed warning of flooding at Great Easton ford, as they had been at Duton Hill. Cllr Foley had contacted Essex Highways and Affinity Water several times concerning the potholes at the B184/The Endway junction, and this area had now been inspected. District Councillor Richard Haynes advised that Highways had reported that the holes had been "made safe" but they were still there and any temporary repair was unlikely to hold due to water undermining them. Cllr Foley was pleased with progress on the draft Local Plan, in which the assessment of villages' facilities had been revised and allocated housing numbers reduced significantly for Great Easton. District Councillor Haynes was disappointed, however, in the second draft Local Plan. He had concluded that much of the required evidence such as heritage and landscape reports was lacking. In his view the timetable leading to submission of the plan to the Examiner at the Planning Inspectorate was optimistic as a lot of work was still needed. Councillors commented that the lower road along the river was in such poor condition that bus drivers were complaining. It was agreed that the clerk would again contact the bus company to explore how a joint approach could be made to Essex highways.
03.24.06	<b>Chair's report and receiving reports on progress for items not listed separately on the agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Village Green</b> – Restoration of the damaged area could not begin until the ground was drier and the council's preferred contractor would be used. In the meantime, drivers of farm machinery are being instructed by the farm business not to drive over the grass to get through the village.</li> <li>• <b>War Memorial</b> – The second quote for repainting the letters had been oral only and not yet forwarded to the clerk. <b>Action: Clerk, Chair, Cllr Neale</b></li> <li>• <b>Parking next to Tilty church</b> – the chair had emailed the new archdeacon and was waiting for a reply. It was noted that the signs at the gate next to the church had not been changed. <b>Action: Chair</b></li> <li>• <b>Tree surgery</b> – Flooding and bad weather had made it impossible to obtain quotes so far, but the chair had asked two tree surgeons to quote and would report in due course. Some work should be carried out in the next few weeks on the basis of the arboriculturalist's written advice. <b>Action: Chair.</b></li> </ul>

03.24.07	<p><b>Clerk's report on items not listed separately on the agenda, and correspondence</b> A written report (annexed to the hard copy of these minutes) had been made available and was taken as read.</p>
03.24.08	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meeting on 21 March 2024:</b> Cllr Neale and the clerk reported on this meeting between the Planning policy team at Uttlesford District Council and parish councillors from the “larger villages” as identified in the draft Local Plan. The parish’s facilities and services, such as the school, churches and pubs, had now been correctly assessed, with the result that Great Easton was still considered a “larger village” whilst scoring 40 for facilities – the lowest score which could bring a settlement into the “larger village” category. Duton Hill and Tilty were still considered “open countryside” for the purposes of allocating non-strategic housing to those communities. As a result of updating the number of houses already approved (to November 2023), the number of houses which would need to be built in larger villages had been reduced from 1,000 to 650. The plans now looked at villages/settlements rather than parish council areas, so that some development was now seen as belonging to a different parish council area than in the first draft. The consequence of these changes was to reduce the number of houses which should be built in the 2023- 2041 period in the parish area by nearly two-thirds, from 110 to 40. One site would be needed rather than three. A further recalculation would be carried out before the draft plan was finally submitted, to take account of approvals of housing plans and completions of houses up to April 2024.</li> <li>• <b>Neighbourhood Plan steering group</b> It was felt that since the only housing allocated to the area of Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council would be in Great Easton village, the steering group should consider asking for the designated area to be redefined to cover only that area. The steering group now needed members from the Great Easton area rather than elsewhere in the parish council area.</li> <li>• <b>Decision on whether to allocate a site for 40 houses in the Neighbourhood Plan</b> or to allow the site to be stated in the draft local Plan: The council voted unanimously to allocate a site in the Neighbourhood Plan. The clerk would contact Uttlesford to let the planning policy team know. <b>Action: Clerk</b></li> </ul>
03.24.09	<p><b>Parish Council Financial Reports and Decisions</b> A summary and note of the bank balance at 29 February 2024 had been circulated to councillors and was tabled. Bank statements to 29 February 2024 were made available to councillors and had been reconciled with the cashbooks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income and payments for the year to date (1 April 2023 to 29 February 2024)</b> Total income to 2023: £49,355.91 (precept, VAT refund, interest) Total outgoings to 2024: total £49,489.11 plus VAT £3,265.22, total £52,016.53</li> <li>• <b>Balances:</b> The TSB current account held £28,855.34 as at 29 February 2024. The NS&amp;I account was closed in February 2024 and the balance transferred to the TSB account. It was noted that the balance on the NS&amp;I account was not an earmarked reserve.</li> <li>• <b>Payments to note and approve</b> Purchase of a toner cartridge £117.66 was ratified and the Parish Online annual subscription of £37.80 was approved.</li> </ul>
03.24.10	<p><b>Approval of budget 2024-25</b> Councillors considered the proposed budget, totalling £49,000, which had been circulated and was tabled. It was unanimously approved and is annexed to the hard copy of these minutes and will be added to the website. <b>Action: Clerk, Cllr Hahn</b></p>
03.24.11	<p><b>Approval of Publication Scheme</b> A proposed publication scheme, in the form of the Information Commissioner’s Office template for local councils, had been circulated and was tabled. It was approved unanimously. This would be added to the website. <b>Action: Clerk, Cllr Hahn</b></p>
03.24.12	<p><b>Approval of Privacy Policy</b> A proposed privacy policy, drafted to comply with the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Information Commissioner’s Office requirements, had been circulated and was tabled. It was unanimously approved. It would be added to the website. <b>Action: Clerk, Cllr Hahn</b></p>
03.24.13	<p><b>Decision on repair or removal of the slide in Great Easton playground</b> After many enquiries a welder had been found who was willing to reconnect the stainless-steel components to the slide. The estimated cost was between £500 and £600 but a formal estimate had not been provided. It was agreed that a price would be requested and passed to the clerk, so that a decision could be taken before the next council meeting if possible. <b>Action: Chair</b></p>

03.24.14	<p><b>Decisions relating to the former pavilion on Burns Playing Field and a Men’s Shed</b></p> <p><b>Report on meeting:</b> Councillor Stevens reported on the meeting on 22 March 2024 with the representative of the Essex Men’s Sheds Network. The representative had said that the building was ideal for use as a Men’s Shed or a Community Shed (a community shed would be very similar to a Men’s Shed but would not be exclusively for use by men). The council felt that there was great potential to set up a Shed Project, preferably a Community Shed, with multiple uses. Attendees at the project would be using tools for woodworking and other similar craft tasks, giving the opportunity to meet other people. The community could benefit not only from the social opportunities but from the items produced, and this would mean the building would have a new use for the future. The representative had agreed to send more information and guidance to the clerk, and this was awaited. He had recommended visiting local Shed projects such as Little Canfield and Saffron Walden.</p> <p><b>Whether and how to take first steps:</b> As the parish council owns the building, it was recommended by the Network rep that the council help set up a “hosted” shed project and take on governance responsibilities in relation to the building and project. The council agreed unanimously to do this.</p> <p>To start the project, a team of three local residents would be needed who were willing to act as a management group. They could be supported by the Essex Men’s Sheds Network representative in Malden to obtain tools and equipment. They and the council would also need to deal with health and safety, plan sessions and organize publicity. The chair was meeting the Duton Hill Community Association next month and would discuss the project then. He would also speak to residents living close to the pavilion to discuss any possible noise disturbance. It was agreed that the short-term objective would be to establish a small management group and to start a Shed project using hand tools rather than power tools. <b>Action: Chair</b></p> <p>It was agreed to discuss how to garner support for the group at the May council meeting which would also be the Annual Parish Meeting. It was felt that a number of community groups could use the building at different times, and that the outside space could also be used.</p> <p>It was noted that the neighbouring landowner had previously agreed to create a path between the Great Easton playing field and the Burns Playing Field, which would improve access. The chair would contact him about this. <b>Action: Chair</b></p> <p><b>Maintenance and repairs on the pavilion:</b> Gutters needed replacement and there was a small leak in the roof. Security would need improvement if tools were to be stored there. It was felt that the internal layout of the building may need to be changed to use it more effectively.</p> <p>The chair had asked local builders for advice and quotes. <b>Action: Chair</b></p> <p><b>Decisions on seeking grants and help from the Community Payback Scheme:</b> It was noted that the Essex Men’s Sheds Network could supply details of grants for obtaining tools and equipment and that the Community Payback Scheme could supply, free of charge, unskilled labour supervised by a skilled person to help with clearing underbrush, emptying the building of debris and other similar tasks. CPS participants would be selected/screened to ensure they could safely work in this location in a playing field and neighbouring playground, strictly supervised, and would work in a defined physical area. It was agreed that the CPS should be approached, and enquiries made about grants for work on the building before the Shed project started. <b>Action: Clerk</b></p>
03.24.15	<p><b>Planning applications, decisions and progress on planning matters</b></p> <p>A note of the outcome of previous applications had been circulated and was tabled.</p> <p>The following new applications had been made:</p> <p><b>24/0628 – Knowlebury, Gallows Green Road</b> – extension. The council discussed this and had no comments to submit.</p> <p><b>Appeal ref 33292114 against refusal of UTT/23/0601/FUL – Nevilles Farm, Mill End Gn.</b> Application to build one agricultural worker’s dwelling. After consideration the council decided not to submit comments in relation to this appeal against refusal.</p> <p>The council had been notified of the following applications after the agenda had been published. Notifications had been circulated to councillors.</p> <p><b>24/0737/FUL – Muscombs, Broxted Road</b> – building two detached 1.5 storey houses on the former tennis court. It was noted that this would be a development within the curtilage (garden) of a listed building. After discussion the council agreed to submit comments pointing out that this would breach a number of local planning policies. The clerk would draft a submission for consideration by councillors and submission. <b>Action: Clerk, councillors</b></p> <p><b>24/0811/FUL – Ayletts, Mill End Green Lane, Great Easton</b> – building two detached houses, an amendment to the approved application 23/1081/FUL. After discussion the council decided not to submit comments.</p>

03.24.16	<p><b>Village Hall Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income and payments for the year to date (1 April 2023 to 29 February 2024)</b> Total income to 29 February 2024: £4,578.24– hall hire plus VAT refund and investment income. Total outgoings to 29 February 2024: £8,845.57 including VAT</li> <li>• <b>Balances:</b> The TSB current account held £10,408.28 and the Unity Trust Bank account held £21,313.41 as at 29 February 2024, a total of £31,721.69.</li> <li>• It was agreed to hold a trust committee meeting on 15 April 2024. An agenda will be circulated.</li> </ul>
03.24.17	<p><b>To receive representatives' reports (for items not shown separately on the agenda)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open spaces including playing fields and play areas</b> – it was noted that a resident near Burns Playing Field had complained about broken tree branches overhanging her garden although it seemed the tree did not belong to the council. It was noted that a number of trees on the Burns Playing Field needed to be felled. Quotes were being obtained. <b>Action: Chair</b></li> <li>• <b>Footpaths, road safety and highways</b> – Potholes at the B184 Thaxted Road and The Endway junction had still not been properly repaired. Cllr Foley would follow this up again.</li> <li>• <b>River interests</b> – nothing new to report.</li> <li>• <b>Airport</b> – the council agreed to respond to oppose the airport's plans to increase night flights. The contents of SAW's press release and advice were noted. The clerk would draft a submission. <b>Action: Clerk</b></li> <li>• <b>Community activities and events</b> — Great Easton Community Association: The auction of promises on 23 March had been very successful and raised £4,000 for the Centre Algarve charity and the village playground fund. The children's Easter Egg hunt had taken place on 29 March. For 16 June, alongside the Open Gardens event and the Scarecrow competition, a pop-up café in the Village Hall was planned as this had proved very popular. Duton Hill Community Association: Cllr Martens would be attending the next meeting. Duton Fest would be taking place on 5 May.</li> <li>• <b>Dunmow United Football Club</b> —The club's lease on the Burns Playing Field was ending in May 2024, by agreement.</li> <li>• <b>IT, website, social media and communications</b> – Cllr Hahn reported that the website content had been updated with recent documents and details of councillors and clerk. He again requested photos of events in the village hall for its new page on the website. Faces could be blurred if needed. <b>Action: All</b></li> </ul>
03.24.18	<p><b>The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as 7pm on Thursday 30 May 2024 and would be the Annual Parish Assembly (Parish Meeting of Great Easton Parish electors) and the Annual Parish Council Meeting.</b></p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.50 pm.</p>