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MINUTES

Minutes of the Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 31 July 2025 in the Function Room of the Three Horseshoes, Duton Hill.

Present:

Councillors

Cllr T Martens (Chairman), Cllr J Stevens (Vice-chair), Cllr M Benterman, Cllr J England, Cllr D Hahn, Cllr C Hurst and Cllr P Neale.
Clerk: Kate Rixson

12 members of the public attended, including District Councillor Sutton of Uttlesford District Council, cabinet member for communities, and ward District Councillors Haynes and Foley.

	The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00 pm
07.25.01	Apologies for absence Cllr Heath was unable to attend as she was away. The reason for absence was accepted by resolution.
07.25.02	Declarations of Interest Cllr Hurst declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to the land owned by the Essex Wildlife Trust in Duton Hill. Cllr Benterman declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application for a license at The Green Man pub in Mill End Green.
07.25.03	Minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting on 15 May 2025 were approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the chairman.
07.25.04	Public Participation The chair exercised his discretion to allow representations on a matter not on the agenda. <i>Clerk's note: Due to a proof-reading error the proposal for the parish council to nominate the land as an ACV had not been included on the agenda despite being put forward by councillors and accepted by the clerk. As the land in question was to be auctioned in October and the process of designation (likely to take eight weeks) needed to be completed by then, it was an urgent matter. It could therefore be dealt with under the powers in paragraphs 2 (liaison with district council) and 3.1 (dealing with urgent matters including regarding planning) of the clerk's Scheme of Delegation if councillors were consulted as required by the Scheme. Most councillors had already given their views but the comments of the full council were expressed during this council meeting.</i> Representatives of the Duton Hill Community Association asked the council to nominate land in Duton Hill for designation as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The land is for sale at auction in early October 2025. There was a general discussion on the topic. Points made by members of the public, district councillors and parish councillors included: - DHCA members believe that benefit to the wellbeing of the community from the use of the land can be shown. - DHCA can provide the evidence and draft the nomination form for consideration by the parish council, which would need to have accurate and sufficient evidence from the community and form its own view if it were to nominate the land. - The nomination form asked for possible future uses of the land for community benefit. Such uses

	might include allocating part of it for affordable housing for the local community if it could be designated as a Rural Exception Site. This would be dependent on the outcome of the forthcoming Housing Needs Survey which would be part of the work of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, as local residents would need to form a Community Land Trust. It was noted that the nomination form asked for details of how a potential bid to buy the land would be financed. DHCA is considering this. They are aware of possible local buyers who might contribute or buy the land outright and there would be a meeting within the following week about this. Councillors agreed unanimously to make the application, subject to receiving sufficient supporting evidence and a draft of the nomination form from the DHCA. The parish council would decide the content of the nomination form and select the supporting evidence before submitting it to Uttlesford District Council. Action: Clerk
07.25.05	District and County Councillors' reports Cllr Foley commented on the request from residents for a 20mph speed limit through Great Easton and Duton Hill villages. A speed survey had been carried out in 2023 showing an average speed of 21.5mph which would not meet the criteria for consideration of a reduced speed limit. In any event Essex County Council was strongly against 20 mph limits. However Cllr Foley will raise the matter at the next Local Highways Panel meeting (the LHP meetings have just been reinstated after a hiatus). To support the case, Cllr Foley strongly recommended forming a Community Speedwatch group and operating regular monitoring. The presence of Speedwatch warning signs and people checking speeds would in itself reduce the speed of vehicles. Councillors advised that, when this was last tried, not enough local residents were available and there was a waiting list of 18 months for training. Cllr Sutton advised that if a suitable roadside position could be found, the Uttlesford District Council speed gun could be used by local police. This was noted for the council to follow up. Parish Councillors referred to two recent head-on collisions in Great Easton near the church and expressed strong support for efforts to reduce speeds. Action: Clerk The dangers for pedestrians along the B184 near the school and junction of The Endway were discussed. It was noted that the hedge between the top of Snow Hill and the junction with Duton Hill was overgrown and the pavement very narrow, and that speed limit signs were damaged or hard to see. Cllr Foley was in contact with Essex Highways about this. Cllr Foley also advised that the form of local government reorganisation was not yet decided. At least two different groupings of the existing fourteen local authorities in the geographical county of Essex had been proposed. UDC councillors would prefer five unitary authorities while the government appeared to prefer only three. The government would eventually make the decision and Cllr Foley would keep the parish council informed. Cllr Haynes reported on progress with the Uttlesford Local Plan. The inspector's report was expected in September. It was known that the inspector was concerned about the lack of supply of land for housing and he was likely to comment on how housing had been allocated, and the amount, across the district. The Community Infrastructure Levy had been discussed and Cllr Haynes could provide further information if requested. Cllr Haynes also advised that the district council was still supporting local Neighbourhood Plans as confirmed by the letter from UDC to the Parish Council on 30 July 2025.
07.25.06	Reports from Chair and councillors See Item 8 and representatives' reports Item 15 below.
07.25.07	Clerk's report on items not listed separately on the agenda, and correspondence This had been circulated and made available before and at the meeting. There were no questions.
07.25.08	Neighbourhood Plan – report and decisions Cllr Stevens reported in the absence of the Chair, Gary Hutchings, on: - Grant-funding: central government funding had been withdrawn but the grant from Uttlesford DC would cover the cost of the residents' survey and the housing needs survey which are now being prepared - The residents' survey is ready to be delivered to every address in the parishes, and the group is waiting for it to be set up for completion online as well as in hard copy. The deadline for people to return the survey to the NP group is likely to be 30 September. - After that, a housing needs survey will be carried out with the assistance of experts at the Rural Community Council of Essex. This was an essential element of evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan.

	• A consultation with local businesses will also be conducted, together with other evidence-gathering to support the plans put forward in the Neighbourhood Plan. The plan would then be voted on by all electors in the Great Easton and Tilty parishes. • The group believes it will need about £15,000 to complete its work to the point of a referendum of parish residents on the Neighbourhood Plan. However this work will spread over two years and it is hoped that the parish council would be able to provide most of these funds. The balance of the £5,000 offered by Uttlesford District Council is also available (about £4,000). • Cllr Stevens thanked Gary for his hard work in co-ordinating and planning the group's work. About 20% of the people in the parishes had been to one or other of the open days. Cllr Martens responded on behalf of the council to recommend that funding the Neighbourhood Plan should be included in the budget process for 2026-27 and agreed with Cllr Stevens on the great importance of a Neighbourhood Plan to influence development in the parishes, especially if planning functions would in future be carried out by a new unitary authority which would have little knowledge of the Tilty, Duton Hill and Great Easton area.
07.25.09	To consider applying to Essex Highways/Essex County Council to reduce speed limits in the parish, taking account of County Councillor Foley's advice See above at 07.25.05. Cllr Foley will raise this at the Local Highways Panel meeting on the council's behalf.
07.25.10	Parish Council Financial Reports Councillors noted receipts of £32,040 and payments of £34,004.18 up to 17 July 2025. They noted that the balance in the cash book matched the bank account balance of £42,272.41. It was noted that this included £6,300 earmarked reserves for the Burns Playing Field biodiversity project. The council received a budget analysis for the first quarter of 2025-26. John Lewis was appointed as Internal Auditor for the 2025-26 financial year, subject to his agreement.
07.25.11	Financial Decisions The following decisions were approved: • To set up a standing order for payment of rent (the price of a pint of ale annually) for the square yard of land on which the Duton Hill beacon stands. Action: Cllr Martens to obtain details and pay current year's and back-rent from council funds. • Payments ratified or approved: ○ Treatment of hogweed on parish council land £1,822 (paid) ○ Renewal of membership of the 100 Parishes Society and that this subscription should be added to the list of regular payments approved as a group under the council's Financial Regulations 5.6 and 5.7 ○ Fee for a copy of the Village Green registry entry for Great Easton Village Green for £25. A cheque was signed for this purpose. Action: Clerk ○ Increasing the amount of cloud storage for council data held on the clerk's laptop. The cost would be advised. Action: Clerk • To re-allocate funds between budgets as needed, to meet payments approved by the council. • The replacement of the clerk's laptop was approved in principle, and it was agreed to allow for expenditure of about £600, as the manufacturer had advised that parts and repairs were now unavailable (from 2 July 2025). Disposal was authorised. Action: Clerk
07.25.12	To decide a new location for the Great Easton beacon After discussion it was agreed that a decision would be made at the next meeting and councillors were asked to discuss with local groups and residents and suggest possibilities. In the meantime Cllr Neale will speak to the owner of the site and arrange to have the beacon and post removed and laid flat in the hall car park. A letter of thanks should be sent to the landowner. Action: Clerk
07.25.13	Planning applications, decisions and progress on planning matters – including any applications or other matters notified after agenda was published. To consider commenting on applications and appeals notified: Planning applications – no new applications had been received since the last meeting. Licensing application – The Green Man, PL0209: to add a bar to the marquee in the pub garden. Deadline for comments 20 August 2025. The council had no comments to make. Report on the outcome of previous applications:

	<table><tr><th>Planning Decisions</th><th>Address</th><th>Application</th><th>Current position</th></tr><tr><td>25/1522/HHF</td><td>Kiffards, Dunmow Rd</td><td>Roof/1st flr addition to garage</td><td>approved</td></tr><tr><td>25/1283/FUL</td><td>Land at Radleys End</td><td>build 2 detached dwellings</td><td>withdrawn</td></tr><tr><td>25/1086/FUL</td><td>Woodlands, Grange Green Tilty</td><td>demolish and replace with self-build dwelling</td><td>refused</td></tr><tr><td>25/0898/OP</td><td>land adj Six Acres Duton Hill</td><td>2 self-build dwellings</td><td>refused</td></tr></table> Enforcement matters – It was noted that there was an outstanding enforcement issue at Mill End Green with no recent update. Action: Clerk Comments on planning applications: The parish council had submitted a strong objection to the airport’s application to increase passenger numbers to 51 million (planning reference UTT/25/1542/FUL). The planning committee at the district council would probably be considering this at its September meeting.	Planning Decisions	Address	Application	Current position	25/1522/HHF	Kiffards, Dunmow Rd	Roof/1st flr addition to garage	approved	25/1283/FUL	Land at Radleys End	build 2 detached dwellings	withdrawn	25/1086/FUL	Woodlands, Grange Green Tilty	demolish and replace with self-build dwelling	refused	25/0898/OP	land adj Six Acres Duton Hill	2 self-build dwellings	refused
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07.25.14	Representatives reported as follows on items not shown separately on the agenda: • Open spaces including playing fields/play areas and trees – the park group would arrange a date for a meeting • Footpaths, road safety and highways – ○ Footpaths were noted to be more accessible now, after harvest. However the field path from the primary school to Duton Hill was not usable. The chairman will check its condition and speak to the landowner. The alternative of walking on the pavement alongside the B184 was dangerous due to the very overgrown hedge. Action: Clerk ○ Some roadside hedges were very overgrown which was affecting pedestrians and drivers. The clerk was asked to follow this up with corporate/institutional owners where possible. Action: Clerk • River interests – Nothing new to report. • Airport – See 07.25.13 above regarding the current planning application. It was noted that there had been many representations from across Uttlesford, especially from parish councils for areas near the airport, objecting to the proposal to increase passenger numbers. • Community activities and events ○ The Duton Hill Community Association planned a rounders match on Burns Playing Field soon. There was great concern about losing the car-parking facility on the Essex Wildlife Trust land accessed from Wolseys Chase, making it difficult to plan events after October. Other areas for car parking might need to be considered. ○ Great Easton Community Association was planning a September sports day, a Magic Night in October, a quiz in November and another talk from Colin Sutton after Christmas. The indoor events would take place at the Village Hall. • Easton AFC – New floodlighting had been installed. It was noted that the club had agreed to take down any netting when the ground was not in use. This should be checked. Action: Clerk • IT, website, social media, and communications – Cllr Hahn reported that the Neighbourhood Plan residents’ survey was being added to the website for online completion. He recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group should have a separate website, which they had requested, and that the council should allow for between £500 and £750 within the costs discussed at 07.25.08 above.																				
07.25.15	Items for inclusion on next meeting’s agenda or in the Five Parishes Magazine See above for future agenda items. The chairman noted that a possible breach of the councillor Code of Conduct had been discussed at the May council meeting. Cllr Neale was asked if he had any response or further comments to make on the matters raised. He confirmed that he did not and, as there would be no repetition, the matter should be regarded as closed.																				
07.25.16	The date and time of the next meeting Thursday 25 September 2025 at 7pm at Great Easton Village Hall.																				
	There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.																				