



HIGHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20th March 2023 @ 7.30pm
Meeting held in Highwood Village Hall (foyer)

THE CHAIRMAN REQUESTED MOBILE PHONES WERE SWITCHED OFF/TURNED TO SILENT MODE

In attendance:

Cllr. P. Latham, Chairman	Cllr. T. Hornsell, Vice Chairman	Cllr K Latham-Pearmain
Cllr. U. Maher	Cllr. S. Maclean	Cllr. S Gill



A decision made



Expenditure decision

1/23.	<p>Declaration of Interests/Recording at Meetings</p> <p>All Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. They are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they have not previously notified her about it. The Chairman to give members the opportunity to declare any interests and note them.</p> <p>Councillors/Members of the Public to declare their intention to record the Meeting.</p>
2/23.	<p>Apologies for Absence </p> <p>A vote to be taken to accept apologies and the reasons submitted. Cllr. D. Cameron - Unwell</p>
3/23.	<p>Minutes </p> <p>The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 21st November 2022 were approved and signed.</p>
4/23.	<p>Cllr. Mike Steel/Cllr. Nicolette Chambers</p> <p>ECC report:</p> <p>Coronation</p> <p>The Street Party application date has been extended to 23rd March and can be done at https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parking-and-travel/temporary-road-closures/</p> <p>There are 2 types of events – A Street Party or a Special Event. The latter has more onerous conditions. The difference is that a Street Party is meant to be a local event, probably a cul-de-sac, which is not widely publicised. A Special Event may be for the whole village and requires PLI and Traffic Management. I am helping a local organisation which fell foul of the difference, to get them classified as a Street Party.</p> <p>Ukraine</p> <p>The hosting scheme is now a year old. I have received correspondence that says that Govt</p>

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continues to support Ukraine refugees with £150 million of new UK-wide funding in the 2023/24 financial year to local authorities and devolved governments to help support Ukrainian guests move into their own homes and reduce the risk of homelessness. There is a launch of a £500 million Local Authority Housing Fund, which will provide capital funding directly to English councils in areas that are facing the most significant housing pressures as a result of recent Ukrainian arrivals.

However, the reality is slightly different.. Many District Councils, including Chelmsford City Council, have a long waiting list for social accommodation. Private rental requires Guarantors which District Councils are unwilling to provide because of the onerous and open ended commitment(although they setting up rent deposit guarantee funds). In my opinion, continuation of hosting is the easiest option, but some hosts, having provided accommodation for a year, are limited in what they can continue to do. I am aware of some hosting coming to an end, and difficulties in obtaining their own homes, and would ask anyone to contact me if they can commit to being a host.

Member Led Pothole Scheme

I have now entered in all my 36 pothole allowance – actually entered 51 locations:

- 39 completed
- 2 works issued
- 1 referred to water company
- 9 accepted but awaiting response

The objective is to have all repairs done before end April.

You might like to view a Highways video about Make Safe repairs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCHfmBgTGZs>

I have thanked the Cabinet Member, Cllr Lee Scott, for the scheme and expressed how successful it has been. On several occasions I have suggested a similar scheme for footpaths. I am pleased to say that Cllr Scott has announced a further £4M for a similar scheme in the new FY which will also include pavement defects.

SID Poles

LHP requests for additional SID poles require a speed survey to show speeds in excess of the speed limit by 10mph. Alternatively, the Parish Council can fund these. I previously reported that a cheaper option will soon be available whereby the Parish Council can request existing lampposts to be audited to assess if they can be used to mount a SID. I was hoping the process would be in place by March, but it is delayed and I do not have a date yet.

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Highway Rangers Service:

The Chelmsford Highway Rangers service is administered by Chelmsford City Council but funded by ECC. ECC have given notice that they intend to cease funding the service as part of budget savings. Given that the service addresses County Council, City Council and Parish Council tasks, the Conservative group proposed an amendment to the City Council budget for City Council to continue the service and to be funded by freezing members allowances and better projections on the refurbished theatre income. Unfortunately, the amendment was defeated at the City Council budget meeting. All parties accept that the Highway Rangers offer a valuable service that address those tasks that generate pride in our environment that otherwise can only get done by a more elongated enforcement process.

CIlr Mike Steel





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Well, it's great to see you all, coming up for another election and I know you're apolitical, so I'm not going to go down that route. But all I would say is that the last four years have not been pleasant. For the first two and a half, we were all in COVID. We have gone through an awful lot of people and we've lost loved ones and we've lost all of that. It's just been awful. I won my election, as you know, 2019. And we as an administration left the council in a really good situation as far as money is concerned. Now we find that this current council administration is £8 million in deficit. There's lots of stuff going around. It's really not pleasant at the moment. We are suspicious that you will start to pay for your brown bin collection, that we may have charges when going into the city. These are all rumours that are flying around at the moment. We see that the Cramphorn Theatre is no longer called the Cramphorn Theatre. It's called the Sea Theatre, is now charging in excess. I was speaking to somebody tonight for the National Trust who used to have their meetings there, used to pay £400, £500 for a day, is now £1400, £1500 pounds for a whole day. We still have problems with collections, with bin collections, because we don't have staff.

Many drivers, HGV drivers are going elsewhere because they get more money. So I'm painting a very grim picture and I don't really want to, but that is it, basically. I have not been able to deliver to you as a parish council for the last four years because I am not part of the decision making process and indeed very few of us are in planning terms. Yes, I can advise on that and I can push it through. We find now that our planning department, we do not allocate officers, this literally goes into a big pot and they pull out whatever application that they can find and start to deal with it. I've also found that the decisions that they're making are not sound. For example, I have an application in Roxwell where the Highways Authority said this is not suitable for any development whatsoever and here is a letter from 2022. And in 2023 we find a completely different decision. And I would say to the planning applicator, well, what has happened? I mean, the pathway at home well, the road hasn't changed, so why are you making two different decisions?

More recently, I've been with a farmer in Roxwell where his land has been designated to actually an income producing area as for employment. So he put an application in to say, well, I want this little unit filled in with for employment and production. It's gone in for the, you know, the application's gone in and it's been refused. So he goes to appeal in Bristol, the judge comes along and have a look at what the hell is going on because they've got it all wrong. I mean, I would say that we're short of the grey hairs, really. Please don't misunderstand me. I was married to a chartered planner for eleven years. I know how it works, but you have these young people coming in with a planning degree but no real experience. They go by the book without having to think of what it really involves. And so we have an awful lot of problems in planning at the moment.

Nicolette confirmed she was standing for election in the upcoming local elections

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5/23.	Public Forum Member of the public raised concerns about a planning application within the village.
6/23.	Review of Community Projects/Action Plan for 23/24 🗑️ Deferred to the next meeting.
7/23.	Reports from Representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Liaison – Cllr Latham-Pearmain spoke about the planned Summer Sizzler event at Highwood Primary School. Planning going well with plenty of stalls booked. May look at Grant application to assist in advertising.• Play Area – to look at options for replacing equipment in Edney Common. See Saw and swings and if the installer would remove the old ones before installing the new. Digital check sheets designed by Cllr Maclean and presented to the council for debate. Decision to post these online to show the council are keeping a regular watch on the equipment in the two playgrounds.
8/23.	Finance 🗑️ <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Members reviewed & approved payments - Deferred to next meetingb) Clerk presented Bank Reconciliation/Bank Statements - Deferred to next meetingc) Clerk to present 3rd quarter budget review – deferred.d) HMRC VAT correspondence – Now sorted with HMRC. Forms to be completed deregistering the council from VAT.e) Members to review a quotation for a sensory garden at Edney Common – deferredf) Members to review fencing quotes for Edney Common – decided that the Council should wait until UKPN have completed their underground works before confirming fencing locations and areas. Two quotes presented for £5979 plus VAT and £13452 including VAT

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9/23.	<p>Planning 👍 23/00211/FUL Address: New Barnes Farm Ingatestone Road Highwood Chelmsford Description of works: Retrospective change of use from agricultural to mixed use including agricultural builder's yard incorporating office & storage</p> <p>Suggested refer to Nicolette to monitor and report to planning if necessary</p> <p>23/00227/FUL Address: The Paigles Loves Green Highwood Chelmsford Description of works: Single storey rear extension, with velux windows & garage conversion</p> <p>Advise to the planning department that it is not in keeping with the area and based on plot size and location it should be reloked at.</p>
10/23.	<p>General Village Items/Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact from residents – Resident comment cards including drainage at Church Farm, lack of reduction of speeding through the village, the condition of paths between the School and Bucknells Mead, road sweeper, drains and ditches need cleaning • Newsletter – Councillors asked for any additions to the magazine • Build outs at School – on hold until we have enough data from the SID to send through to Essex Police • SID installation/download of data – High speeds recorded with vehicles driving through over 80mph. • Drainage Church Farm – Queries to be made with Chelmsford in relation to ownership of drainage channels and what can/can't be done. • Kings Coronation – Event trying to be organized by the Village Hall Committee • Summer Fayre 2023 – PTA organizing the event. • Elections 2023 – Election papers completed, signed and given to Cllr Latham to take to Chelmsford City Council. • Litter Pick – Cancelled due to torrential weather • Potholes/Pathways – Tree roots – general disrepair • Clerk/Councillors to be offered the opportunity to share any further information/suggestions.
	<p>THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL – COUNCILLORS TO TAKE A VOTE TO EXCLUDE PRESS & PUBLIC 👍 📷</p>
11/23.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale of Garages – resolved to advertise to sealed bids in the next magazine. • Allotment site at Radley Green – after discussion, it was resolved for Cllr Horsnell to make contact with the previous tenant to see if they would

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be interested in purchasing the land.

- CCTV - Cllr Maclean spoke to a CCTV supplier and obtained a quote for cameras covering Chelmsford Road/Ingatstone Road junction, Wyses Road (each end) and Edney Common with a budget of around £50,000.

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