

WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at White Colne Village Hall
on Tuesday 15th November 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Batchford, Cllr Bond, Cllr Taylor (Chairman), Cllr Wada, Cllr Watt. Also present: Clerk P Palfreyman, Essex County Council (ECC) Cllr Siddall, Braintree District Council (BDC) Cllr Courtauld and 3 members of the public

458. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr G Spray

459. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS ON ITEMS SHOWN ON THIS AGENDA – none

460. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING The minutes of the last parish council meeting on 26 July 2022 which had previously been circulated, were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

461. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr Courtauld At the recent cost of living crisis meeting at BDC, cabinet members and officers made some suggestions for saving money. Some of the services BDC offer are not mandatory, some services are free, and some do not need to be offered, all which would save officer time and money. The budget is several £M down and any cuts that must be made will be announced after 17 November. Money will be redirected to food banks and warm spaces etc. As well as the reduction in the budget, the council also faces increased prices for fuel and energy which have an impact on the council. Cllr Courtauld offered the balance of his councillor community grant of approx. £200 which must be used before March 2023.

Cllr Siddall There is a gap of £40M in the budget next year. The Local Highways Panel have made some changes and introduced new ways of working and an officer will be meeting Cllr Siddall in the village next week to discuss the outstanding schemes and issues. The member led pothole

scheme allows for 18 of the worst potholes to be reported. £600 000 warm homes grants are available and £30000 for insulation. A new scheme for speeding has been successfully introduced in some areas which issues tickets. Council can buy a month's use of the unit (prices not available yet).

462. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS There has recently been flash flooding at the bottom of Colneford hill. Can a storm drain be put in? It has been reported several times to ECC Highways, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency.

463. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Applications:

22/02735/TPOCON 11 Colchester Road White Colne Essex CO6

2PW Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: - Sycamores and Conifers - Reduce on boundary 2 ft below wire. Yew tree - Reduce by 1.5 meters to give light into the front garden Expiry date: 21/11/22 No comments

22/02902/OUT Land To The Rear Of 5 Colne Park Road White Colne Essex CO6 2PL Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the construction of 1 No. 3 bedroom bungalow Expiry date: 29/11/22 Comment - The Council do not object to the build but would like to see a biodiversity report and evidence to confirm that there are no protected species in the area, as the site backs on to open land. > White Colne Parish Council, in partnership with Essex County Council have declared the village a climate focus area. The Essex Climate Focus Area aims to converge all efforts to improve the natural and urban environment in face of climate change. The Council recommends the developer makes a financial contribution under Essex RAMS.

(b) Any other planning matters raised by Members – none

464. LAND BEHIND THE VILLAGE HALL

(a) To receive an update about the land – Cllr Taylor has not had a reply to the letter sent in May 22. After a letter to the deputy of the portfolio holder, a meeting was agreed, then cancelled and has not been rearranged. The Council's agent has been working on this since 2004, although it has been ongoing since before that. Following discussion, the Council agreed to submit a Freedom of Information request to Essex County Council asking

the time spent by officers, the legal fees incurred, and the agents costs so far.

465.COMMUNITY LIASON

(a) To receive new information about the Community Energy initiative – the geospatial survey is underway. The area covered by the survey is White Colne, Wakes Colne, Chappel and Great Tey.

(b) To consider festivities for King Charles III coronation – the coronation is on 6 May and 8 May is a bank holiday. The Council will arrange an event to raise some money and will be discussed again at the next full Council meeting

(c) To record the commemoration of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II – the Council offered to open the village hall to watch the funeral but as there was only a small take up, it was cancelled. At the next community café, the book of condolence and pictures of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, was laid out. Afterwards the vicar took this to put in the Church.

466. WHITE COLNE MEADOWS

(a)To receive an update on the grant application from Essex Community Foundation for £3710 – the grant has been awarded and the Council have purchased a shed, tables, chairs and a gazebo to be used at events on The Meadow. A sink, cupboard and worktops will be built into the pavilion once all the event items are stored in the new shed. There is another working party next week.

(b)To review the quotes for work at the play areas, as advised in the ROSPA report, at a cost of £990 – the Council requested more quotes from other contractors for this work

(c)To discuss the grass cutting contract and 'No Mow May' – the Council requested more quotes for the grass cutting and agreed No Mow May for the Village Green and The Meadows. A cut will be needed at the end of April to ensure the ground is suitable for any Coronation event.

467. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) To approve payment of accounts since the last meeting - the payments listed were approved

(b) Financial statement – the financial statement was agreed

WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL MATTERS 12th November 2022

1. PAYMENTS

The Clerk advised that since the last report, the following payments have been made:

UNITY TRUST ACCOUNT		£	
METHOD	PAYEE		
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall electricity - 28.07.22	1.00	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall gas - 28.07.22	50.30	
DD	Go Cardless - County Broadband - 11.08.22	29.00	
DD	Everflow water - 15.08.22	34.43	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall electricity - 30.08.22	1.00	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall gas - 30.08.22	50.30	
DD	Go Cardless - County Broadband - 12.09.22	29.00	
DD	Everflow water - 15.09.22	36.76	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall electricity - 28.09.22	1.00	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall gas - 28.09.22	50.30	
DD	Go Cardless - County Broadband - 12.10.22	29.00	
DD	Everflow water - 17.10.22	34.43	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall electricity - 28.10.22	1.00	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall gas - 28.10.22	50.30	
DD	Go Cardless - County Broadband - 10.11.22	29.00	
TOTAL UNITY TRUST DIRECT DEBITS		426.82	
UNITY TRUST BANK ACCOUNT (ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE)			VAT
29.07.22	Jade Lock - village hall cleaner (PAID)	143.00	
29.07.22	J Taylor cafe costs (PAID)	77.90	
29.07.22	P Palfreyman - July salary (PAID)	558.13	
29.07.22	Paula Bull - printing (PAID)	39.15	1.19
29.07.22	Mortimer Contratcs - grass cutting (PAID)	204.00	34.00
29.07.22	Argent roofing - Village Hall roof repairs (PAID)	225.00	
29.07.22	P Palfreyman - website costs (PAID)	55.68	
29.07.22	J M Watt - handyman (PAID)	127.00	21.17
08.08.22	UK Safety store - Fire Escape signs (PAID)	25.38	4.23
08.08.22	Gary Allen - village hall window cleaner (PAID)	14.00	
08.08.22	J M Watt - handyman (PAID)	175.50	29.25
08.08.22	J M Watt - handyman (PAID)	135.88	22.65
26.08.22	PPLPRS Ltd - Music Licence (PAID)	95.58	15.93
26.08.22	Mortimer Contracts - Spider climber (PAID)	5040.00	840.00
31.08.22	P Palfreyman - August salary (PAID)	558.13	
12.09.22	Mortimer Contracts - grass cutting (PAID)	210.00	35.00
12.09.22	S D Arboriculture - Tree survey (PAID)	350.00	
12.09.22	Jade Lock - village hall cleaner (PAID)	104.00	
26.09.22	Rock Awnings - Meadows gazebo (PAID)	333.99	53.17
26.09.22	Essex IO - VH PAT testing (PAID)	69.00	
26.09.22	E Petchy - VH hire deposit refund (PAID)	50.00	
26.09.22	Sheds Warehouse - Meadows shed (PAID)	1670.46	278.41
26.09.22	K Lawrence - VH hire deposit refund (PAID)	50.00	
26.09.22	J Taylor The Meadows afternoon tea (PAID)	141.70	12.71
26.09.22	K Gusterson - VH hire deposit refund (PAID)	50.00	
26.09.22	Rinkit - Meadows chairs (PAID)	467.86	77.98
26.09.22	Paula Bull - printing (PAID)	36.43	0.83
26.09.22	Gary Allen - village hall window cleaner (PAID)	14.00	
30.09.22	P Palfreyman - September salary (PAID)	558.13	
30.09.22	Unity Trust Bank - service charge (PAID)	18.00	
05.10.22	J Taylor - VH Cleaning materials (PAID)	39.07	6.51
05.10.22	M Wise - VH hire deposit refund (PAID)	25.00	
05.10.22	J Taylor - VH Kettel & paper towels (PAID)	44.94	7.50
07.10.22	Huws Gray - VH ticket office repairs (PAID)	719.40	119.91
07.10.22	Halstead Electrical (PAID)	103.16	17.20
07.10.22	Decathalon - Meadows tables (PAID)	246.87	41.14
10.10.22	PKF Littlejohn - External auditor (PAID)	360.00	60.00
10.10.22	Mortimer Contracts -grass cutting (PAID)	82.80	13.80
10.10.22	J M Watt - handyman (PAID)	316.50	52.75
10.10.22	Jade Lock - village hall cleaner (PAID)	130.00	
10.10.22	J Taylor - café costs (PAID)	119.43	
10.10.22	P Palfreyman - VH smoke alarms (PAID)	300.96	50.17
12.10.22	J Taylor - tables for Meadows (PAID)	123.40	20.57
14.10.22	E Fitch - VH hire deposit refund (PAID)	50.00	
18.10.22	Hallmaster - set up PayPal (PAID)	26.40	4.40
28.10.22	P Palfreyman - October salary (PAID)	558.13	
28.10.22	J Taylor- café costs (PAID)	99.05	
28.10.22	BALC - annual subscription (PAID)	40.00	
04.11.22	L M Brown - VH hire deposit refund (PAID)	35.00	
04.11.22	Jade Lock - village hall cleaner (PAID)	221.00	
04.11.22	Gary Allen - village hall window cleaner (PAID)	14.00	
10.11.22	Huws Gray (PAID)	76.42	12.73
TOTAL UNITY TRUST ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS		15329.43	
TOTAL DIRECT DEBITS AND PAYMENTS FROM UNITY TRUST		15756.25	

- (c) To review the budget to date – noted and agreed
- (d) To consider the option to opt out of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements – the Council agreed to use the appointed external auditor
- (e) To consider the clerks pay rise and back pay to 1 April 2022, as approved by the NALC – the clerks pay rise of £1 per hour and back pay for 242.66 hours (hours worked since April 2022) was agreed. The Council also agreed to increase the working from home allowance from £1 per week to £3 per week.
- (e) To consider the budget for 2023/2024 – the first draft of the budget was considered and will be reviewed again at the next meeting.

468. VILLAGE HALL

- (a) To discuss setting up a warm community hub for residents to work from or socialise and consider the grants available from ECC and our district councillors – the community café recently extended the opening hours from 9am to 1pm, offering breakfast and lunch as well as the usual cakes and pastries, and was the busiest it has ever been. The plan is to open on a Monday to start with. A grant of £1000 toward the costs is available from ECC which will help cover costs and train volunteers in food hygiene, which might in turn help them gain employment. The café will still open every other week but with the extended opening hours. A volunteer has offered to set up the Hub from 7.30am. A local plant nursery has been approached to supply plants for the hall and if successful the Council could also consider a craft morning and demonstrations of pilates and yoga. Following discussion, the Council agreed to trial opening on Mondays and apply for a grant.
- (b) To agree works to repair the ticket office, at a cost of £966 and receive a report about the £500 Community Chest grant – the community grant has been received and the works are underway. The space now has a door and will be used for community information and a book swap
- (c) To confirm the appointment of a new bookings clerk for Village Hall bookings – Paula Bull has been appointed as the bookings clerk and will be paid £13 per hour. The Hallmaster bookings system now has a PayPal installed for payments.

Some village hall bookings have been cancelled due to financial uncertainty. The hall will be closed for bookings between 23 December 2022 and 3 January 2023, apart from one booking on 28 December which will be cleaned up on 3 January.

469. HIGHWAYS

(a) To consider the '20's plenty' speed limit campaign for White Colne – the Braintree Association of Local Councils recommend that all Councils support this. There is an online seminar next week which Cllrs Taylor & Bond will attend. Following discussion, the Council voted in favour of supporting the campaign with a view to introducing the speed limit in the village.

(b) To consider an application to the Essex Panel for Speed activated devices for Colchester Road, Colneford Hill, Bures Road, Colne Park Road. The Council agreed they would be better supporting Trucam – a digital camera using an integrated laser that can measure the time and distance between vehicles and can collect and store video evidence.

(c) To review the SID data – the SID has not been working well and has recently fallen over in high winds

(a) To consider next actions for the damaged streetlight on Colneford Hill – Cllr Siddall advised this should be referred to him to escalate the work

(e) To agree a member to complete the Essex Highways Users survey on behalf of the Council – Cllr Brown agreed to complete this

(f) Litter collection and signage - to discuss the effects of BDC signage around the village – the signage has not made any difference and in some instances, there appears to be more litter. The Council requested that the signs are removed and some signage to go in the lay-bys along Bures Road will be considered, with the permission of the landowner

(g) To agree a member to complete the Rural Mobility in Parishes survey on behalf of the Council - Cllr Brown agreed to complete this

(h) To consider a request from Earls Colne Parish Council to join their campaign to lobby against speeding through the surrounding villages – the Council suggested that ECPC join the 20's plenty scheme. Cllr Siddall advised that speeding issues on Wakes Colne, Bures and the surrounding areas are being looked at.

470. ALLOTMENTS

(a) To confirm the increase of 25% to £3 per square meter, from 1 October

2022, as discussed at the meeting on 21/9/21 minute reference 346 - noted (b) To receive feedback from the clerk about the recent allotment course – the clerk advised the benefits to the Council and the allotment holders of joining the National Allotment Association (NAS), including general and legal advice, practical and environmental advice and public liability insurance to plot holders plus retail discounts and more. A full plot is generally agreed as 250 square meters and a shed under 200 cubic meters does not require planning permission. If a tenant has more than one full plot, it can be considered as a small holding. There is no need to provide a car park and rainwater harvesting should be encouraged, with water troughs, button taps and hose pipe bans. The Council agreed to become members for £55 per year (less 10%) and the clerk will write to the allotment holders to encourage them to form an association and join the NAS.

(c) To note that there are three new allotment holders - noted

471. ENVIRONMENT

(a) To discuss the environmental report prepared by Cllr Brown – the councillors thanked Cllr Brown for writing the report and the suggestions made. Following discussion, the Council agreed the plan and that a new environmental action group should be set up.

(b) To discuss the environmental events planned for Autumn 2022 – cancelled due to poor weather

(c) To review the Tree Wardens duties – it was agreed that it would be the responsibility of all the councillors to look at the trees and make a collective decision

(d) To discuss the results of the survey of trees on village owned land and decide the action required – the work on 4 trees is agreed subject to satisfactory quotes

(e) To confirm acceptance of the offer for free hedge plants for the allotment fence and behind the goal posts – the Council agreed to accept the free plants but will not be planting them behind the goal posts. The plants arrive on 2 December 2022

(f) To discuss planting wildflowers on the Village Green – following discussion it was agreed to plant wildflowers along the bank on the Village Green where the grass doesn't grow.

(g) To discuss the BDC five-year housing land supply plan and consider

writing to BDC and the MP to demand all new properties are built using sustainable energy for heating – following discussion it was agreed that a letter will be sent to BDC & the MP to ask them to consider new housing and existing stock

472. WEBSITE

(a) To discuss the costs and implications of a new website – the Council agreed to go ahead with the new website at a cost of approx. £300 plus site maintenance charges of £120 per year

(b) To discuss a social media policy and agree a way forward – the booking clerk will be offered this role and if agreed, a policy will be decided

473. VILLAGE GREEN

(a) To review to the railway sleeper works on the Village Green – deferred until after Highways meeting

474. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(a) To note the resignation of John Jacobs on 1 August 2022 – noted

475. MEETING DATES

(a) To confirm meeting dates for 2023 – agreed as 3rd Tuesday of every second month starting in January except for March, when the meeting will be Tuesday 14th March

476. URGENT MATTERS

(a) To consider any other matters received since the preparation of the agenda and which the chairman considers urgent – some planning applications and notices have been received since this agenda was prepared. An extraordinary general meeting will be held on Thursday 8th December 2022 at 7pm to discuss the applications

477. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

An extraordinary meeting will be held on Thursday 8 December 2022 at 7pm.

The next full council meeting will be held on Tuesday 17 January 2023.

There being no further business the parish council meeting closed at 9.25pm