

WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at White Colne Village Hall
on Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 7.30pm

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

600. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Cllr Bell

601. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS ON ITEMS SHOWN ON THIS AGENDA - None

602. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last parish council meeting on 19 September 2023 which had previously been circulated, were agreed as a true record. There were no matter arising.

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

Cllr Siddall – the ECC budget gap is large and more details will follow at the next meeting. The ECC stance with Millfield is that the scheme was dropped due to ecological concerns. Cllr Siddall has advised the planners that an opportunity was missed to create a safe pathway for pedestrians and this scheme will inevitably end up in the Local Highways Panel list. Some councillor grant money is available Cllr Siddall advised that repairing the top of the Green was low priority but the PC could precept to finance double granite kerbing. A licence would be required with which Cllr Siddall could assist.

Cllr Spray – budgets for the coming year are still being discussed. The Scrutiny Committee will meet with the Cabinet regarding the projected vision for the next years. There is a £2M budget gap over the next 4 years. The plan to deal with the budget gap is to raise more income, such as increase planning fees, and make some savings. The Government settlement will not be advised until January 2024. All councillors grant money has been spent. There is not any further information about solar panels on listed buildings. CIL is part of the planning reforms and S106 payments will no longer be made. The advantage

of S106 is that the money remains local whereas CIL can be spent anywhere in the district.

Cllr Courtauld – a sum of £350 remains from the councillor for which Cllr Taylor will apply for a grant to help fund equipment for the Warm Hub. There have been 9 burglaries in Colne Engaine recently with vehicles being stolen to be used to steal other items. The Police are aware and confirmed there has also been a spate of thefts in Pebmarsh and Wakes Colne. Cllr Courtauld is on the Scrutiny Committee which will focus on the Council's priorities which are finance, climate and viability.

604. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS – residents advised that two posts are down at the village green and asked for an update about putting horse troughs on the corner which gets eroded away. The Council explained that this project was too expensive and unlikely to get ECC support. The bulb in the telephone box where the defibrillator is housed has blown and will be replaced. Millfield has become a very dangerous crossing on a convex angle. Any signage requests for this area will have to be submitted to the LHP for a PV2 study. The SID data will be made available. The verge in Colchester Rd is churned up again from parked cars. Cllr Spray advised that the Millfield planning breach was because the original conditions did not allow for a gate to be erected, and also the height of the gate and proximity to the Highway.

605. CO-OPTION

(a) To agree the co-option of John Brace – the Council all agreed the co-option of John Brace. John joined the councillors and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

606. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Applications:

23/02402/FUL Todd's Botanics Bures Road White Colne Essex CO6
2QF Construction of 1No. Agricultural building and erection of 1No. Farm workers dwelling. Expiry date: 2 Nov 2023 extended to 22 Nov 2023
White Colne Parish Council are willing to support the application if the following conditions are imposed, in accordance with our Village Design statement: The new build is on the line of Footpath 17 so the Council would like the path rerouted. The new development must always have horticultural ties. Light pollution to the surrounding countryside is considered and any impact mitigated. The impact of the soak away on the surrounding countryside is considered and mitigated A biodiversity report is obtained.

23/02511/FUL Brooms Farm Colne Park Road White Colne Essex CO6
2QN Erection of 1No. self-build dwelling and garage.

Expiry date: 14 Nov 23 extended to 22 Nov 23

The Parish Council are willing to support the application on the following conditions: An alternative improved access is provided Exterior lighting is appropriate for the location to prevent light pollution

(b) To receive an update about the Travellers site appeal hearing on 14/11/23 – the BDC website does not show any decisions. Cllr Spray confirmed that she attended the hearing.

607. COMMUNITY LIASON

(a) To receive an update about the Three Colnes Magazine – the magazine contained errors and misinformation about White Colne so could not be distributed.

608. WHITE COLNE MEADOWS

(a) To discuss a management plan and budget, and the quote for the path through the Heritage Orchard – Cllr Taylor met with the contractor to discuss the work required and the council agreed to the pathway into the orchard being cut to include around the trees so that going forward it can be included in the regular cutting schedule. The trees on the right-hand side to be pruned. It is hoped that volunteers will lay the hedge on the left-hand side of the orchard and also prune the fruit trees.

To receive an update about the play area inspections and discuss further action for 3 monthly inspections – the clerk advised that a local volunteer had completed the play area inspections course and passed the examination.

This course only allows for routine visual inspections. There is a further course which would qualify the inspector to carry out more detailed operational inspections which our volunteer would be willing to undertake. The cost of the course is £285 + VAT for the course and £245 + VAT for the exam. Following discussion, the council agreed to pay for this course for our volunteer.

(b) To discuss the quote to repair the safety fence by the pond – a quote of £210 was agreed to repair the fence.

609. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Payment of accounts since the last meeting – noted and agreed.

(b) Financial statement to 15 November 2023 – noted and agreed.

WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL MATTERS 15 November 2023

1. PAYMENTS

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

METHOD	PAYEE	£	VAT
DD	Lloyds - café costs 18.09.23	307.70	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall electricity 28.09.23	119.00	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall gas - 28.09.23	50.30	
DD	Everflow water - 16.10.23	57.15	
DD	Lloyds - community garden 16.10.23	1023.96	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall electricity - 30.10.23	45.18	
DD	Scottish Power - Village Hall gas - 30.10.23	50.30	
DD	Everflow water - 15.11.23	57.62	
TOTAL UNITY TRUST DIRECT DEBITS		1711.21	
UNITY TRUST BANK ACCOUNT (ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE)			VAT
18.09.23	Paula Bull - printing	60.79	1.39
18.09.23	C Gill - café cakes	28.00	
18.09.23	J Bond - VH hire deposit refund repaid	50.00	
18.09.23	G Allen - VH windows	14.00	
18.09.23	S Holt - Bures Rd drainage	465.86	
18.09.23	JPB Landscapes- grass cutting	489.89	81.65
18.09.23	K Nolan - community garden	668.00	
18.09.23	D King - café costs	24.98	
21.09.23	S Holt - community garden	566.80	
21.09.23	J Taylor - community garden	30.45	
21.09.23	P Batchford - VH hire deposit refund	50.00	
29.09.23	P Palfreyman - September wages	744.90	
30.09.23	Unity Trust Bank - service charges	18.00	
11.10.23	J Taylor - travel costs	13.80	
11.10.23	Jade Lock - VH bookings & cleaning	299.00	
11.10.23	K Nolan - community garden	324.00	
11.10.23	P Palfreyman - printer ink & laptop battery	85.90	14.32
11.10.23	BDC - election costs	70.05	
18.10.23	E Mills - VH deposit refund	50.00	
18.10.23	S Pilates - VH deposit refund	50.00	
18.10.23	A Fleetwood - VH deposit refund	50.00	
20.10.23	M King - course travel expenses	22.40	
20.10.23	JPB Landscapes- grass cutting	489.89	81.65
20.10.23	C Gill - café cakes	34.00	
20.10.23	J M Watt - handyman	577.98	96.33
02.11.23	HMRC - clerks PAYE	2.80	
02.11.23	EALC - H & S playground course	456.00	
02.11.23	P Palfreyman - October wages	664.10	
02.11.23	Jade Lock - VH bookings & cleaning	364.00	
07.11.23	ECMC - VH deposit refund	50.00	
07.11.23	L Tindall - VH deposit refund	50.00	
07.11.23	E Petchy - VH deposit refund	50.00	
13.11.23	Essexkio Ltd - PAT testing for VH	69.00	
13.11.23	JPB Landscapes- grass cutting	244.94	40.82
13.11.23	G Allen - VH windows	14.00	
13.11.23	N Drake - VH deposit refund	50.00	
15.11.23	R Tonkin - VH deposit refund	50.00	
15.11.23	N Holden - VH deposit refund	30.00	
TOTAL UNITY TRUST ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS		7373.53	
TOTAL DIRECT DEBITS AND PAYMENTS FROM UNITY TRUST		9084.74	
continued over			

2. FUNDS RECEIVED

Since the last report, the following funds have been received in to:

UNITY BANK			
18.09.23	L Tindall - VH hire	50.00	
18.09.23	Postu Pilates - VH hire	108.00	
18.09.23	Postu Pilates - VH hire	75.00	
18.09.23	N Holden - VH hire	95.00	
21.09.23	S Bassett - VH hire	7.50	
22.09.23	K Pratt - VH hire	86.00	
26.09.23	Sum Up - café income	89.47	
26.09.23	S Petchy - VH hire	125.00	
27.09.23	R Tonkin - VH hire	115.00	
28.09.23	BDC - 2nd installment precept	6121.00	
02.10.23	Stuhldreher - VH Hire	18.00	
02.10.23	J Taylor - VH Hire	20.00	
03.10.23	J OConnell - VH hire	72.00	
06.10.23	C Upward - VH hire	157.50	
11.10.23	L Tindall - VH hire	52.50	
16.10.23	PayPal - VH hire	106.51	
16.10.23	Postu Pilates - VH hire	120.00	
17.10.23	Sum Up - café income	90.91	
19.10.23	C Wada - allotment payt	25.00	
19.10.23	J Wilson - allotment payt	13.75	
24.10.23	NCT - VH hire	217.50	
26.10.23	E Webb - allotment payt	15.00	
27.10.23	S Price - VH hire	50.00	
30.10.23	E Docherty - allotment payt	15.00	
30.10.23	PayPal - VH hire	52.13	
30.10.23	H Smith - allotment payt	8.75	
30.10.23	J OConnell - VH hire	72.00	
30.10.23	J Taylor - VH Hire	60.00	
30.10.23	J Taylor - café income	85.06	
31.10.23	K Adams - allotment payt	8.75	
31.10.23	L Tanous - allotment payt	35.00	
02.11.23	C Upward - VH hire	126.00	
08.11.23	A Scullion - VH hire	50.00	
09.11.23	B Gaught - allotment payt	25.00	
09.11.23	D Drizen - allotment payt	18.75	
13.11.23	G McAllister - allotment payt	22.50	
13.11.96	PayPal - VH hire	57.96	
14.11.23	Sum Up - café income	32.00	
14.11.23	Postu Pilates - VH hire	90.00	
15.11.23	M Smith - allotment payt	16.25	
TOTAL UNITY BANK RECEIPTS		8669.53	

3. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATION

Following the above transactions, the credit balances on the bank accounts are:

UNITY TRUST as at 15 November 2023			
TOTAL BANK BALANCES		35687.96	
Balance held in reserve			
Village projects from White Colne 50 Club		1260.73	
Village Hall reserves (£11000 prev VH roof fund)		14000.00	
Allotments		15292.73	15292.73
Balance of alloc fund		15292.73	
Balance of unalloc funds			20395.23
UNITY TRUST BANK RECONCILIATION			
BALANCE at 15 September 2023		36103.17	
Add Receipts		8669.53	
Less Total Payments made		44772.70	
BALANCE at 15 November 2023		9084.74	
		35687.96	

- (c) To review the budget to 15 November 2023 – noted and agreed. Cllr Taylor pointed out the money spent from grants distorted the figures and the clerk has agreed to look at accounts packages as the Excel spreadsheet is already at maximum size.
- (d) To discuss and agree the clerks annual pay rise as recommended by the NALC – following discussion the pay in increase of £1 per hour, backdated to 1 April 2023, was agreed.

610.VILLAGE HALL

- (a) To discuss the quotes and next actions for the village hall roof – a quote of £200 for the current repairs was agreed. The grant for the solar panels is still being considered and we hope to hear in a few weeks.
- (b) To discuss the quotes and next actions for the village hall car park improvements – defer to next meeting
- (c) To discuss an increase in village hall hire rates – defer to next meeting
- (d) To receive an update about the land to the rear of the village hall – the ecology report for the site advised that the area could sustain 1000 -2000 trees per year and the pond on The Meadows scored over 80 for habitat, which is an excellent score. ECC have said they still wanted to retain the site for development Cllr Taylor has already written to ECC stating that White Colne Parish Council no longer support development of the site and request that the site is removed from the development portfolio as a community led tree nursery fits into the climate policy and forest initiative,
- (e) To receive an update about the Community Garden – the area is looking much smarter. A 2nd grant of £3195 has been agreed to buy outdoor furniture, lay gravel and extend the picket fence. A local landscape architect has offered to write a planting and maintenance plan, the scouts will return to help out and John Brace agreed to lead the garden project.

611. WHITE COLNE VILLAGE GREEN

- (a) To receive an update about the Christmas lights on the Village Green – the lights are due to be installed on the 29 November 2023
- (b) To receive an update about the arrangements for carols on the Village Green around the Christmas tree - the event will take place on Saturday 16th December from 6pm, with mulled wine, mince pies and carols accompanied by the Colne Valley Ensemble. The Revd Mark Payne will lead the carol service.

- (c) To receive an update about the request for a new dog bin on the Village Green – BDC have agreed to a new bin and asked for the location to be confirmed. The rubbish bins in the Village Green will be removed.

612. MILL FIELD

- (a) To note the report of a planning breach regarding the new gate – the breach was notified to BDC on 1 November 2023 and no further communications have been made or received since.

613. ALLOTMENTS

- (a) To receive an update about vacant allotment plots – the clerk advised that two plots have been surrendered. There are two names on the waiting list who would like specific plots, which are not vacant. The vacancies will be advertised locally via Facebook.

Cllr Brace left at 8.50pm and Cllr Bond left at 9.00pm

614. COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

- (a) To review and agree a Biodiversity report – defer next meeting
- (b) To discuss using Zoom/You Tube feed for members of the public to join the meeting remotely – defer next meeting
- (c) To agree meeting dates for 2024 – meeting dates were confirmed as the third Tuesday in every other month, starting in January 2024 and the Annual Parish meeting to be on 16 April 2024 and the Annual Council meeting on 21 May 2024.
- (d) To discuss councillor and clerk training via the EALC – the EALC will offer training locally if there are sufficient numbers. Surrounding parishes will be contacted to see if they would like to join in.

615. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA – none

616. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday January 16th 2024.

There being no further business the parish council meeting closed at 21.12pm