



CRESSING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of Cressing Parish Council
held on 11th January 2023 at 7.00pm
at St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing

Present: Cllr John Lawton – Chairman
Cllr Colin Haines
Cllr Alison Lapper
Cllr Harvey Porrett
Cllr Toria Rowe
Cllr Steve Watts

In attendance:

Mrs Christine Marshall (Parish Clerk/RFO and Proper Officer)
County Cllr Paul Thorogood
District Cllr James Abbott
PC James Draper
No members of the public

23/001 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND REPORT

- i. Charitable donations gifted at the end of December to charities that help residents locally and within the wider area are being acknowledged.
- ii. Still no date for Il Salice (The Willows) Appeal. The Clerk has contacted both BDC and the Planning Inspectorate in this regard. However, it is understood the property is being marketed through Embark Developments as a restaurant despite the change of use hearing outstanding.
- iii. Keep Warm coffee mornings are now being attended by residents and one volunteer has come forward to help. Councillors are requested to attend when they can to answer resident questions and help out.
- iv. Dog fouling remains a major issue and if witnessed, details need to be reported via the BDC reporting tool.
- v. Unfortunately, Essex Highways have not been able to attend a meeting. The Clerk will write to them highlighting issues and continue to invite them.
- vi. A report of the meeting between Councillors and James Cleverly, MP, due to be held on Friday 13th January will be published in the Community Magazine. **Action: Clerk**

23/002 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Drury. These were accepted.

Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Lapper

23/003 COMMUNITY POLICING

The Chairman welcomed PC James Draper (Braintree Community Safety & Engagement Officer) to the meeting and outlined some of the priorities for Braintree, which included: domestic violence and violence in any form; anti-social behaviour and road safety and how speed can be addressed. The Council held a wide-ranging discussion with PC Draper.

PC Draper advised that if the Community Speedwatch Team could liaise with him then every effort would be made for a Police presence. PC Draper also offered to hold an exercise with the CSW team and Councillors. Councillors welcomed this and Clerk will make the appropriate arrangements. **Action: Clerk**

In the event of suspected cannabis smoking or drug taking in Cressing, this should be reported to the Police.

The Chairman thanked PC Draper for his time and for the very useful discussion. Another invite will be sent to Essex Police for the March meeting.

23/004 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the council are subject to the Local Authorities Code of Conduct Order 2007 (SI 2007/1159) (The Revised Code) with the additional, non-mandatory, section 12(2).

There were no other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to items on the agenda to be recorded.

23/005 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Clerk confirmed that no items had been raised for discussion at this meeting. Any matters reported by residents are responded to and actioned within 24 hours wherever possible. There have been several reports of streetlights not working. Those owned by the Parish Council are repaired within 24 hours, but those in the ownership of Essex Highways are taking much longer and being chased.

23/006 REPORTS OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Thorogood reported: Rivenhall Incinerator Liaison Meeting – work is proceeding and Indaver are seeking a Development Consent Order to increase electricity generation to increase electricity generation without additional waste being incinerated. Condition 66 appeal not scheduled until May. Seeking donation from CPRE or Defra towards air quality measuring equipment.

District Cllr Abbott reported: New planning system at BDC goes live in February with Committee meeting every 3 weeks. Planning Forums will also go live. The Planning Committee are receiving training, and this will be rolled out to Parish Councillors in due course.

Government re looking to alter how housing supply land is calculated. The site at Rivenhall that was removed from the Local Plan and also refused by BDC, has been granted by the Planning Inspectorate.

BDC budget being set in February – currently looking at 2% increase in Council Tax, however Councillors are recommending 1%. Councilors are also trying to get the 33% cut in street cleaning grants as well as a reversal of decision to charge for green waste.

Cllr Abbott is seeking an update on the B1018 bends and the work related to the planned development.

Cllr Abbott has received a request for a road to be named after a family that were Cressing residents (Drory). *Since the meeting the Clerk has referred to the list of those included on the 1914-18 War Memorial and has confirmed "DRORY, Frank (J) - Transcribed as DRURY] Driver 208729, 4th Field Squadron, Royal Engineers. Died 15 March 1919. Aged 28. Son of Joseph and Emma Drory, of Lanham's Green, Cressing, Braintree, Essex. Buried in BEIRUT WAR CEMETERY, Lebanese Republic. Grave 269.*

23/007 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th November 2022 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded Cllr Haines.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

23/008 CRESSING COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

The Clerk confirmed that there is to be no change to the administration of the Community Magazine.

23/009 CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE

The Clerk referred to the explanatory paper issued with the Agenda and requested that Councillors consider joining other councils in the Braintree district, as well as throughout the country and signing up to the Pledge. After a short discussion **it was resolved** that Cressing Parish Council has the appropriate policies in place but will keep these current and enter into the Pledge, agreeing and committing to the following statements:

- i. CPC has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role
- ii. CPC has committed to training councillors and staff
- iii. CPC has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors
- iv. CPC has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- v. CPC will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- vi. CPC will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
- vii. CPC will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council
- viii. CPC supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

Proposed: Cllr Lapper, seconded: Cllr Rowe, all in favour.

Action: Clerk

23/010 PLAYING FIELD

- i. Changing rooms – The Clerk is waiting for information from BDC to proceed to tender stage.
- ii. Seating – BDC have confirmed agreement for the installations to be undertaken.

Action: Clerk

23/011 BRAINTREE OPEN SPACES PLAN

Councillors agreed the following to be added to this plan for 2023

- i. Reflectors to posts on triangle at Polecat Road/B1018 junction,
- ii. Hedging to green on Hawbush Green (in line with LHP request for barrier)
- iii. Further seating around the village
- iv. Additional planting around the village

The Plan will be updated and submitted to BDC.

Action: Clerk

23/012 FINANCE

- i. **Financial statements:** The Clerk/RFO referred to the reports issued with the Agenda. There were no queries, and **it was resolved** to accept the reports.

Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Rowe, all in favour

- ii. **A motion to approve bank reconciliation at 31st December 2022: It was resolved** that the bank reconciliation statement be approved. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Rowe, all in favour**

- iii. **A motion to approve retrospective payments for November and those presented for December 2022:** The list of payments and cheques to be signed against November and December expenditure were presented. There were no queries, and **it was resolved** to approve the payments. **Proposed: Cllr Lapper, seconded Cllr Porrett, all in favour.** Cllrs Lawton and Haines signed the cheques.

- iv. Donations: The Clerk advised that thank-you letters were being received.

23/013 BUDGET 2023/24

The Clerk presented the budget for 2023/24 and the following amendments will be made:

- i. King's Coronation – rather than a celebration event, **it was agreed** to purchase commemorative gifts for children at the school. Cllr Lapper agreed to speak with the Headmaster and also consider how to gift to those children in Cressing Parish who do not attend the local school. **Action: Cllr Lapper**
- ii. **It was further agreed** that the grass cutting contract for 2023 shall be re-negotiated with the current supplier and clause 11.d of the Financial Regulations 2022 shall be waived in this instance. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Watts, all in favour** **Action: Clerk/RFO**
- iii. **It was resolved** to retain the Precept request at the same level as for 2022/23 (£46,000) resulting in a decrease of 7.58% per Band D property. The Clerk was requested to submit the necessary request to BDC and publish it in the Community Magazine. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

23/014 20's PLENTY & PARKING
Nothing to report at this time.

23/015 S.106
The Clerk advised that an update is awaited from BDC. This will be chased and response copied to Councillors. **Action: Clerk**

23/016 WARM SPACES
The Clerk was pleased to report that residents were beginning to attend. This will be kept under review.

23/017 PLANNING

- A. To note Appeals determined by the Planning Inspectorate:** None advised
- B. To discuss Appeals submitted to the Planning Inspectorate:** Although not on the Agenda, **it was resolved** to include the following Appeal notice just received: 21/03053/OUT | Outline planning permission with all matters reserved apart from access, for the residential development of up to 35 dwellings (including 40% affordable housing), with vehicular access, areas of landscaping and public open space. | Land East Of Braintree Road Cressing Essex – the Parish has previously objected to this application and will submit a further objection to the Inspector prior to the scheduled hearing on 7th February. **Action: Clerk**
- C. To note Applications Determined by Braintree District Council or withdrawn:** None advised
- D. To discuss Applications received by Braintree District Council:**
 - 22/03153/DAC | Application for approval of details as reserved by conditions 16 (Biodiversity Enhancement Plan) & 17 (external lighting) of approved application 21/01940/OUT | Land Adjacent Leyfield Braintree Road Cressing Essex – *no comment to make.*
 - 22/03418/DAC | Application for approval of details as reserved by conditions 7 (Travel Pack), 8 (Satellite Dishes) & 24 (LEMP) of approved application 16/02144/OUT | Land Adjacent To Braintree Road Cressing) – *no comment to make.*
- E. To **note** Applications received by Braintree District Council and consider if comments should be made**
 - 22/03078/LBC | Conversion of 1No. rear window to a double door and full height side windows together with steps to the rear. | Bulford Mill Bulford Mill Lane Cressing Essex CM77 8NS - *no comment to make*
 - 22/03196/HH | Conversion of 1No. rear window to a double door and full height side windows together with steps to the rear. | Bulford Mill Bulford Mill Lane Cressing Essex CM77 8NS - *no comment to make.*

23/018 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NOVEMBER AGENDA:

- i. 20's Plenty and Parking Project
- ii. Parish Paths Partnership

23/019 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 8th February 2023, 7.00pm at St Barnabas Hall, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, CM77 8HG.

Any items for inclusion on the Agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk to be received no later than 12 noon on Tuesday 31st January 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

2023 meetings						
MARCH	8	7.00pm	AUGUST	9	7.00pm	
APRIL	12	7.00pm	SEPTEMBER	13	7.00pm	
MAY	9	*	OCTOBER	11	7.00pm	
JUNE	14	7.00pm	NOVEMBER	8	7.00pm	
JULY	12	7.00pm	DECEMBER	13	7.00pm	
• May meetings	9	6.30pm	Annual PARISH Meeting			
		7.00pm	Annual PARISH COUNCIL Meeting			
		7.15pm	PARISH COUNCIL Meeting			

Information only ref Minute 23/009

Civility and respect should be at the heart of public life, and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.

Throughout the local government sector, there have been growing concerns about the impact bullying, harassment, and intimidation have on local (parish and town) councils, councillors, clerks and council staff and the resulting effectiveness of local councils. Whilst this is not an issue at Cressing Parish Council, signing up to the Civility & Respect Pledge shows residents that the Parish Council finds this type of behaviour to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It also shows support to other parish councils in their struggles against these issues.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), One Voice Wales, the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and county associations (e.g. EALC) responded to these concerns by setting up a Civility and Respect Working Group to oversee the Civility and Respect Project.

The intimidation, abuse, bullying and harassment of councillors, clerks and council staff, in person or online, is unacceptable, whether by councillors, clerks, council staff, or members of the public.

This can prevent councils from functioning effectively; councillors from representing local people; discouraging people from getting involved (including standing for election) and undermining public confidence and trust in local democracy.

NALC, county associations and OVW, as the membership organisations representing the first tier of local government in England and Wales, and the SLCC, as the professional body for clerks, have worked together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the wellbeing of councillors, professional officers and staff.

848 councils have signed the pledge throughout the UK, some in close proximity to Cressing, including (but are not limited to) Finchingfield, Witham, Saffron Walden, Thaxted, Shalford, Great Notley, Little Waltham, Great Totham, Maldon, Tollesbury and Wickham Bishops.

By signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge, Cressing Parish Council demonstrates that it is committed to treating Councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

- Will put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- Has signed up to and regularly reviews the Code of Conduct for councillors
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

In order to sign up, the Council must register and agree to the following statements:

- i. CPC has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
- ii. CPC has committed to training councillors and staff.
- iii. CPC has a current Code of Conduct adopted for councillors.
- iv. CPC has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- v. CPC will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- vi. CPC will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
- vii. CPC will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council.
- viii. CPC supports the continued lobbying for a change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

END