



CRESSING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th January 2024 at 7.00pm at St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing.

Present: Cllr John Lawton – Chairman
Cllr Colin Haines
Cllr Harvey Porrett

In attendance:

Mrs Christine Marshall (Parish Clerk/RFO and Proper Officer)
County Cllr Paul Thorogood
District Cllr James Abbott
3 members of the public

23-4/107 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman declared the meeting open and proposed a change to the order of the published Agenda to bring forward item 23-4/112, Essex Highways' discussion.

Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Porrett

The Chairman then reported as follows:

- i. Il Salice (The Willows) is now under new management and BDC have outlined the issues and steps required to comply with the enforcement notice. This matter is now closed as far as the Parish Council is concerned.
- ii. Despite advertising Parish Councillor vacancies, the Chairman was disappointed to report that no enquiries had been received. These vacancies will remain open with no closing date.

23-4/112 ESSEX HIGHWAYS

The Chairman opened the discussion by giving an overview of how the Parish Council has been trying for a full year to have the County Council portfolio holder for Highways to attend a meeting to discuss the issues of continuous road works and road closures in the Parish. Since then there have been changes within ECC and Cllr Tom Cunningham is now the portfolio holder for Highways. He has offered an evening slot at his "Highways Surgery", but Cllrs considered this unsuitable as there would be insufficient time for discussion and very limited in attendance (i.e. two Cllrs and no members of the public).

A current major concern expressed by those members of the public who were present was the closure of Long Green from 15th January to 7th April to facilitate the installation of a roundabout to serve the new housing development. Immediately following this The Street will be closed for one week at the beginning of April. Throughout this period further roadworks are planned affecting all main thoroughfares through Cressing.

The Parish Council will continue to pressure Essex Highways to consider the effect this is having on residents and the impact on their everyday lives.

Actions:

- a. Residents present were provided with contact details for Cllr Cunningham for them to submit their views to Essex Highways.
- b. County Cllr Thorogood to approach Cllr Cunningham on behalf of Cressing to hold an evening meeting (since the meeting this has been declined and Cllrs Thorogood and Cunningham will meet to discuss these issues.
- c. The Clerk to provide briefing paper to Cllr Thorogood

The Chairman assured the meeting that the Parish Council was doing everything it could to alleviate the situation, but unfortunately is limited in what they are able to do.

23-4/108 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no absences to be recorded.

23-4/109 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 pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests to be recorded in relation to items on the agenda.

23-4/110 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Clerk confirmed that no requests to speak at the meeting had been received.

23-4/111 REPORTS OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

District Cllr Abbott:

- i. BDC Cabinet meeting of 18th December, a new Policy for Household Waste & Recycling Collections was agreed. Confirms existing arrangements but also confirms the introduction of the subscription-based garden waste collections from 4th March 2024.
- ii. Missed collections need to be reported to BDC by noon the day following the scheduled collection.
- iii. From BDC 1st April 2024 will no longer collect "side waste" (ie waste not in a BDC supplied bin, bag or caddy) and that subject to some flexibility for individual circumstances, BDC will take an approach whereby persistent side waste will result in households being advised, then warned, but ultimately fined if they do not stop presenting side-waste.
- iv. BDC Budget setting for the financial year 2024/5 continues with the next Budget Scrutiny meeting set to be held on 31st January at Causeway House, which is open to the public.
- v. An objection has been lodged to the application from Indaver to have more construction working at night at the waste incinerator site.
- vi. Cllr Abbott has written to ECC Customer Services with two main questions - why once again so many closures in one area; and can they evidence why the new roundabout on Long Green will take months to build, given that they appear to be having a full 24/7 closure.

County Cllr Paul Thorogood:

- i. Essex Minerals Local Plan being reviewed for the provision of sand and gravel from 2025-2024. Consultation on the proposed plan will start in early February.
- ii. Proposed Braintree Eastern boundary changes for county council elections in May 2024 taking place. If adopted, Cressing will be removed from the Braintree Eastern division and placed in a West & Rural division with Hatfield Peverel, Black Notley, etc. Consultation until 19th February (<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/essex>)
- iii. Proposal to implement 20mph speed limit to qualifying residential roads has been rejected.
- iv. Indaver planning application to increase electricity production to above 50 megawatts will make the site a Nationally Significant Infrastructure project making funding available to set up independent air quality monitoring by Essex University and Cllr Thorogood has facilitated a meeting between the University and Indaver.
- v. Households in the BDC area produce considerably more waste for grey bin collection than other areas in Essex and BDC will look to improve this by non-

collection of side waste and collect from bins only where the lid is closed.

23-4/113 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th November 2023 were confirmed as a correct record. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded: Cllr Haines**

The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

23-4/114 PLAYING FIELD

- i. Work to changing rooms proceeding on schedule, with roof imminent.
- ii. The Clerk reported that the grant application under the Rural England Prosperity Fund had been refused. Due to the work having commenced in October, it will not be possible to seek further funding for the project at this time. Consequently the balance of the costs will be met through the Parish Council's Reserves. Cllrs considered this and agreed there was no other option.
- iii. Next site meeting is 16th October.
- iv. Repairs to the fence, gates, chains and new seat for the swings have been completed.
- v. Cllrs considered three options for replacement of the roundabout. It was proposed to accept the quotation from Wicksteed at a total cost of £9,165. This equipment is suitable for disabled children as well as those in wheelchairs. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Wicksteed to confirm the Parish Council's intentions, but an order will not be placed until grant funding has been explored. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded: Cllr Lawton. Action: Clerk**

23-4/115 FINANCE

- i. **Financial statements:** The Clerk/RFO referred to the November and December reports issued to Cllrs. There were no queries, and **it was resolved** to accept the reports. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded: Cllr Lawton, all in favour**
- ii. **A motion to approve bank reconciliation at 9th January 2024: It was resolved** that the bank reconciliation statement be approved. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Porrett, all in favour**
- iii. **A motion to approve payments for November and December 2023: Proposed: Cllr Haines, seconded Cllr Porrett, all in favour.** Cllrs signed the cheques.
- iv. **2024-25 Budget and Precept:** The Clerk presented the final budget which included any required amendments put forward. Expenditure in the coming year will be closely monitored to ensure spend is made wisely. In view of this, it was agreed that the request for Precept payment to BDC should be £51,500 which will show no increase to householders in the portion of the Council Tax allocated to Cressing Parish Council. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Porrett. Action: Clerk**

23-4/116 PLANNING

Appeals – no appeals had been notified.

Applications determined: None advised

Applications received: None advised

Applications received by Braintree District Council and considered if comments should be made (Householder Application, General Permitted Development Order):

None advised

Enforcement Enquiries: None advised

23-4/117 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

No items raised.

The Chairman declared the public meeting closed at 8.55pm to enable a closed meeting of the Parish Council as follows:

23-4/118 COMMUNICATIONS

Cllrs discussed some recent communications from a resident asking questions that had been responded to on several occasions previously. In view of the disproportionate

amount of time taken to address these communications and the effect they were having on staff and Councillors alike, **it was agreed** to invoke the Council's Vexatious requests Policy for Cllrs to draft a suitable response for the Clerk to issue. **Action: Cllrs/Clerk**

23-4/119 **PLAYING FIELD & PAVILION**

As a consequence of the re-build changing rooms at the playing field, Cllrs agreed it was now appropriate to consider issuing a new lease for the playing field and pavilion. The previous lease had been allowed to continue despite its expiration in 2013. The Clerk was instructed as follows:

- i. to make enquiries of three firms of solicitors for estimated cost of negotiating a new lease
- ii. to begin preparation of statement of condition in order to have a fair rent appraisal undertaken
- iii. seek three independent estimates for rental value
- iv. To advise Cressing Sports & Social Club accordingly and for them to identify who will liaise with the Parish Council

Action: Clerk

The Clerk requested that one Cllr should lead in this matter and Cllr Porrett agreed to do this.

23-4/120 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 14th February 2024 at **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 6th February 2024.

The closed meeting ended at 9.10pm

2024 meetings					
JANUARY	10			JULY	10
FEBRUARY	14			AUGUST	14
MARCH	13			SEPTEMBER	11
APRIL	10			OCTOBER	9
MAY	8	ANNUAL MEETINGS		NOVEMBER	13
JUNE	12			DECEMBER	11