

**Minutes of a Meeting of Earls Colne Parish Council held in the Council Chamber
On Wednesday 17th March 2010**

PRESENT:

All members of the Parish Council were present with Mr. J. Bendall in the Chair.

Mrs. P. Herbert was present in her capacity as Clerk together with Mrs. S. Brady (BDC Community Warden) and approximately 40 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. C. Siddall and Cllr. G. Spray

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr. I. Sparks declared an interest in item 16 – Land at Halstead Road – as he lived nearby and had used the land for recreational purposes.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Approximately 40 members of the public were in attendance and expressed concern about land at Halstead Road being fenced off and the possibility of development taking place on the land. The Chairman advised that the land was in private ownership and that no planning applications had been submitted to develop the land which was outside the village envelope. Members of the public requested that the Parish Council consider making an application for a path across the land to be included as a footpath on the Definitive Map as they claimed that the path had been used for more than 20 years and was a safer route to the Primary School for children from that end of the village.

Mrs. Brady (Community Warden) advised that a proposal would be considered at the District Council's Cabinet Meeting on 29th March to replace the Community Warden Service with three full time posts dealing with litter, fly tipping and graffiti and that the new posts would not be community based. Members were disappointed to hear this and congratulated Mrs. Brady on her work in the village. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the District Council urging the retention of the Service.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:

The Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting, held on 17th February 2010, were approved and signed.

5. CLERK'S REPORT:

- a) **Pudding Stone – Colne Priory:** The Clerk had contacted the owner of Colne Priory concerning the disappearance of the Pudding Stone and, as suspected, he had been unaware of the stone's existence or its history. It was most likely that the County highways Dept. contractors removed the Stone as spoil when they did the excavations at the Priory entrance.
- b) **Marks Hall:** Mr. Curtis volunteered to attend the Glider Pilot Regimental Association's annual remembrance day service on the 24th March, commemorating the 65th anniversary.

6. PLANNING:

a) **Decisions reached:**

09/01563/FUL – Erection of single storey extension – E.C. Recreation Club, Halstead Road Granted

09/01650/FUL – Proposed two no. roof dormers to front elevation and Various external and internal alterations – 41 Coggeshall Road Granted

- b) **Current applications:** Mr. Curtis reported on the following tree applications:

10/00032/TPOCON – Pollard Eucalyptus, remove Crataegus Prunifolia, thin out branches of Norwegian Maple, reduce height of 2 holly trees – 21 Queens Road

Members had no objections to this application.

10/00036/TPOCON – Cut one tree (species unknown) and crownlift three trees (species unknown) – 37B Park Lane

Members had no objections to this application.

10/00050/TPOCON- Horse chestnut – pollard, Lime tree – remove deadwood, Holm Oak – pollard, Sycamore – remove damaged branch and deadwood, Horse Chestnut – crown lift, Yew – crown lift, Robinia – remove deadwood – Colne Priory

Members had no objections to this application.

- c) **Consultation on Planning Applications:** Members were concerned to learn that the District Council would in future be sending only A3 size copies of planning applications submitted electronically and that from the end of the year it was likely that no paper plans at all would be sent to parish councils. Members felt strongly that full size copies of planning applications should continue to be sent to parish councils to enable meaningful consultation with the local community to take place and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the District Council suggesting that when applicants submit applications electronically they should still be required to provide a hard copy for the parish council.

7. MEMBERS` REPORTS:

- a) **Colne Valley Community Bus:** Mr. Curtis reported that a new service would run every Monday, commencing 19th April, from White Colne to Braintree via Earls Colne, Colne Engaine, Greenstead Green and Halstead. Mr. Curtis would attend the launch of this project on 31st March.
- b) **Parish Paths Partnership – Proposed Changes:** Mr. Curtis reported that the County Council was looking to reduce the number of parishes doing wholesale cutting of the entire parish, as was the case with Earls Colne. It was proposed that in future cutting of paths on arable land be done through the Headland Management Scheme and cutting by local contractors should be focused on tourist areas or prioritised paths e.g. in village centres, routes to school/shops/church etc. These would be decided in agreement with parish councils at suitable rates. Other paths, which were previously cut by parishes, but did not fit into the above categories, would be cut by County Council contractors.
- c) **E.C. Airfield Liaison Committee Meeting:** Mr. Curtis reported on a meeting he had attended on 9th March.

8. ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

- a) **Highways Matters:**
- i) **Vehicle Activated Sign – Church Hill:** Members noted that the painting of the VAS post would be put on the County Council`s programme of maintenance works but would not be classed as a priority.

- ii) **Disabled Parking Bays – High Street:** Members agreed that they had no objection to the removal of the two disabled bays outside The Drum P.H.
 - iii) **Gravel from private drives spreading onto the footway:** The Clerk advised that Highways had confirmed that they would pursue this with householders if an initial letter from the Parish Council did not resolve the matter.
- b) **Invitation to ECC Ecumenical Civic Service:** No-one was available to attend this event on Wednesday 28th April at Brentwood Cathedral.
 - c) **Consultation Document – Developers` Guide to Infrastructure Contributions:** No comments were made on this document.

9. BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- a) **Community Payback:** The Clerk advised that the District Council`s Community Development Officer was seeking new referrals for this scheme which was run by the Probation Service for the purpose of the reparation and rehabilitation of offenders. It was suggested that litterpicking the verge along the A1124 between Earls Colne and Halstead might be a suitable project and that information about the scheme should be mentioned to St. Andrew`s Church and the Millennium Green Trust.
- b) **Parish Emergency Plans and Community Risk Register Event:** Mr. Tracey volunteered to attend this event on Wednesday 21st April.
- c) **Overview and Scrutiny Study – How Section 106 Agreement contributions are managed by the Council:** It was decided not to send a representative to the Hearing to be held on 7th April.
- d) **Task and Finish Group – Public Services Provision for Older People:** Members felt that older people in rural areas needed to be better informed of the services available to them.
- e) **Proposal to locate glass recycling banks at De Vere Road:** Members had no objections to this proposal.
- f) **Public Car Park and Toilets:** A response to the Parish Council`s letter was still awaited.
- g) **Street Scene Partnership 2010-11:** It was agreed that a new agreement for 2010/11 should be signed and that the payment from the District Council would be £2492.61 (2.4% increase).

10. ALLOTMENTS

Members noted that a grant of £5000 had been awarded by the Halstead Local Committee towards the cost of deer/rabbit fencing and that confirmation of compliance with planning conditions had been received from the Planning Department.

The marking out of plots was scheduled to take place over Easter and the fencing would be erected within the next few weeks. Mr. Tracey advised that there were still a few plots available.

11. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND ANNUAL REPORT

Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Howorth gave a brief update on progress with the Annual Report and it was agreed that it should be printed in an A5 format.

Members were reminded that the Annual Parish Meeting would take place on 6th May and that individual reports were required for the next Parish Council meeting.

12. CHRISTMAS COMMITTEE MEETING

Notes of this meeting had previously been circulated.

13. 2010 ESSEX VILLAGE OF THE YEAR AND BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

It was agreed that Earls Colne should be entered for the 2010 competitions.

14. EALC – TRAINING:

It was agreed that the EALC should be asked to run a two hour training course for the Parish Council in the Council Chamber in October at a cost of £325.

15. CLOSURE OF SUE RYDER SHOP

Members were disappointed that the Sue Ryder Charity shop had closed and it was noted that the volunteers, some who had worked as volunteers for 28 years, had been given very little notice of the shop`s closure and had not been thanked for their long service to the charity.

16. LAND AT HALSTEAD ROAD

It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with the landowner`s agent to discuss public access.

17. VILLAGE HALL

- a) **Council Chamber:** All paintings and photographs had been removed from the Council Chamber walls to facilitate redecoration and the Clerk proposed that some of them would be more appropriate to other buildings in the village. The Clerk was asked to find out whether other organisations would be prepared to display the paintings and put this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

18. FINANCE:

- a) **Payment of Accounts:** For schedule of payments see Appendix 1
- b) **Proposal to purchase a dog bin to go at the start of FP 17, Hayhouse Road;** It was agreed that a dog bin and post should be purchased for this location.
- c) **Play Area – Halstead Road:** The Clerk advised that, as agreed with at the last meeting, she had contacted the company who had submitted the preferred quotation for swings and safety surfacing to see whether a discount would be available to bring the cost closer to the amount of the grants received. A discount of £1221.57 was offered leaving a shortfall of £1370 to be met from Council funds and. with the agreement of the Chairman, an order had been placed for this equipment which, weather permitting, should be installed at the beginning of April.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.50 p.m.

Date

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CHAIRMAN