

**Minutes of a Meeting of Earls Colne Parish Council held in the Council Chamber
On Wednesday 16th February 2011**

PRESENT:

Mrs. M. Barrett, Mr. J. Bendall (Chairman), Mr. R. Curtis, Mrs. R. Hall, Mr. C. Hazell, Mrs. D. Howorth, Mr. I. Sparks, Mr. M. Tracey and Mr. F. Williams.

Mrs. P. Herbert was present in her capacity as Clerk together with Cllr. G. Spray. Mr. P. Darlington (Village Agent) was present for part of the meeting

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. K. Shipp, Mr. R. van Dulken, Cllr. J. Pike (ECC) and Cllr. C. Siddall (BDC).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr. Sparks declared a personal interest in the tree application for Greenhills Place, Halstead Road as he was acquainted with the applicant.

Mr. Tracey declared a personal interest in the tree application for 9 Hayhouse Road as he lived next door to the applicant.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

The Village Agent confirmed that funding for this service had been secured for the coming year following which the service would go out to tender. He also advised that agents were being trained to help vulnerable people with the digital television switchover which would take place later in the year. Mr. Darlington thanked the Parish Council for supporting the Village Agent Service.

4 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th January 2011 were approved and signed.

5. CLERK'S REPORT:

- a) **Best Kept Village Competition:** The Clerk advised that entry forms had been received from the Rural Community Council of Essex and that the deadline for returning the forms was 8th April. It was agreed that the village should be entered in this competition.
- b) **Clock:** The Clerk advised that the Village Clock was not working and that a replacement part was being ordered.

6. PLANNING:

- a) **Decisions reached:** Members noted the following:

<i>10/00323/TPOCON – 25% crown reduction to four trees – 9 Foundry Lane</i>	Granted
<i>10/00324/TPOCON – 15% crown reduction – 2 lime trees – Connaught House 19A Coggeshall Road</i>	Part Granted Part Refused
<i>10/01623/FUL – Conversion of existing garage to bedroom and ensuite including New link to main dwelling and a replacement log store</i>	Refused

10/01700/LBC – Removal of chimney stack/breast to kitchen and bathroom and rebuilding of chimney stack above roof and installation of wall mounted gas fired boiler for domestic hot water and central heating – 42 High Street

Granted

b) **Current applications:** Mr. Tracey reported on the following planning application:

11/00061/FUL – Demolition of garage to be replaced with side extension to form granny annexe – 1 Broomfield Cottages, Coggeshall Road

Members had no objections in principle to this application, but suggested that the planning officers satisfy themselves that there would be sufficient parking area provided for this property as, although it was stated that the proposed occupiers of the annexe would not be driving cars, it is possible that future occupiers of the granny annexe would be car owners.

The Chairman reported on the following planning application:

11/00190/FUL – Erection of single storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear dormer window and detached garden shed – 6 Queens Cottages

Members had no objections in principle to this application, but would prefer to see a velux window used in the attic conversion, rather than a dormer window, as this would have less impact on the terrace.

Mr. Curtis reported on the following tree applications:

11/00010/TPOCON – Work to one lime tree – 24 Upper Holt Street

Members had no objections to this application.

11/00023/TPOCON – Fell one Norway spruce – 9 Hayhouse Road

Members had no objections to this application.

11/00025/TPOCON – Fell one Norway spruce – 8 Queens Road

Members had no objections to this application.

11/00037/TPOCON – Reduce bay tree by 50% and reduce magnolia by 33% - Greenhills Place, Halstead Road

Members had no objections to this application.

7. MEMBERS' REPORTS:

- a) **Speedwatch** – Mr. Sparks advised that he had resigned as leader of the Speedwatch Group following the proposal to charge such groups annually for the equipment which they used. The Group would no longer operate in the village.
- b) **Annual Report** – Mrs. Howorth reported on the progress which she and Mrs. Barrett were making in producing the Annual Report, which was on schedule for delivery at the beginning of April.
- c) **Parish Paths Partnership** - Mr. Curtis advised that he would be attending a course on Footpath Law and Enforcement on 2nd March. He also advised that the Parish Paths Partnership had introduced new requirements for contractors cutting footpaths. A

response from the Parish Council's contractor had been sent back to the Partnership to check that his qualifications would comply with their requirements.

- d) **Baptist Church:** Mr. Williams informed members that the Baptist Church was starting a new Youth Club for children between the ages of seven and eleven. Thirty children had expressed an interest in joining and sixteen people had volunteered to help.

- d) **Equipment for Community Worker:** It was agreed to proceed with the purchase of the following equipment:

One Sarp 536HX/HDR mower @ £918.00 + VAT

One snow blade & hydraulic ram @ £1057.00 + VAT

8. ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

- a) **Request for speed bumps in York Road:**

Members considered an e-mail received from a resident of York Road who claimed that since the new parking restrictions had been installed in Park Lane more cars were parking in York Road and, whilst he has no objection to this, he believed that cars were travelling along York Road more rapidly as they saw this as a less restricted road. He requested that speed bumps be installed to reduce the risk for children crossing the road.

Members felt that the installation of speed bumps would create a noise nuisance for residents and it was agreed that no action should be taken.

- b) **Refurbishment of Earls Colne Public Library:** The Clerk advised that the library would be closed between 9th February and 22nd March for refurbishment and installation of self service technology.

The Clerk also reported that as a result of budget cuts no libraries would be closed down but the County Council was looking to make savings through reviews of opening hours, staffing, a reduction in the stock fund and mobile services. The consultation was to determine the pattern of opening hours preferred by customers. Members considered the options for Earls Colne and supported option A which allowed for a varied schedule of opening hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

- c) **Changes to Highways and Transportation Dept.:** Members noted that the County Council had carried out a review of their staffing structure and had established a new Customer Liaison Team to deal with all enquiries. Team members would be located in each for the four Area Highways Offices and all customer contact would be channelled through this team via e-mail or the website.

9. BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- a) **Public Car Park and Toilets:** There was nothing new to report.

- b) **Halstead Local Committee Grant:** The Clerk reported that the application for this grant had been successful and the Parish Council had been awarded £3333 to repair and repaint the Village Sign, purchase two new seats for the Village Green and replace the broken olive tree. The Olive tree had been delivered and planted, the seats had been ordered and were ready for delivery and the Village Sign should be refurbished in approximately six weeks.

10. PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Clerk advised that District and Parish Council elections would take place on Thursday 5th May 2011. Nomination packs for Parish Council elections would be available from 7th March and could be obtained from the Parish Council office, the District Council's Returning Officer or via their website. Completed nomination packs must be delivered (not e-mailed) to the Returning Officer at Causeway House by the deadline of noon on 4th April 2011. The delivery of the nomination papers would be the responsibility of the candidate.

11. ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk reported that the Allotment Working Group had met on the 26th January to discuss the provision of water to the allotments. At that meeting it was agreed that a site meeting should be arranged with the adjacent landowner who had decided that he would be willing to allow a pipe to be laid across his land. Whilst trying to agree a mutually convenient date for a meeting the Clerk had received notification that the Community Initiatives Fund had awarded a grant of £6745 to cover the cost of Anglian Water installing a water connection to the allotment site via Newhouse Road.

It was agreed that, as funding was now available, Anglian Water should be instructed to carry out this work.

12. THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC FOREST ESTATE IN ENGLAND

Members had been sent an electronic copy of the consultation document, but agreed that, as it was anticipated that the Government would be scrapping their proposal to sell off state owned forests, no action should be taken.

13. APPLICATION BY PUMP HOUSE MEDICAL SERVICES LTD. FOR INCLUSION IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL LIST

The Chairman reported on the hearing which he had attended on 4th February and advised that a decision would be made in the next month or so.

14. QUARTERLY VILLAGE INSPECTION

Mrs. Howorth presented a report on the inspection which had been carried out by Cllrs. Howorth, Hazell and Hall on 5th February, and items which required attention were discussed. It was agreed that two seats in the play area in Halstead Road should be refurbished at a cost of £150 for both seats, and that the seat in the High Street outside the Co-op should be refurbished at a cost of £150.

15. VILLAGE HALL

- a) **Holiday Relief for Caretaker:** It was agreed that Mr. and Mrs. Joslin should be appointed as Relief Caretakers to cover the regular Village Hall Caretaker's holidays.

16. FINANCE

- a) **Payment of Accounts:** For schedule of payments see Appendix 1
- b) **Internal Audit:** The Clerk reported that the Internal Auditor had carried out an inspection of the Council's accounts for the period 1st October to 31st December 2010 and had found them to be satisfactory with no matters requiring attention.

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

Date

.....

CHAIRMAN