

meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 20 February 2019

Present: Maria Oats (Chair)
Chris Exley
Hannah Taylor
Chris Jacobs

Apologies were received from Cllr. Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North) and Michael Scales.

No Pecuniary or Non-pecuniary Interests were declared in relation to agenda items.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January, amended to remove the names of individuals listed as being vulnerable in the Emergency Assistance Plan, were approved as an accurate record.

2. Affordable Housing

Chris Exley reported that no report had been received from Hastoe HA on the "Village Walk Round" and the report when received would suggest potential sites after considering the options and accessibility.

It was agreed that the impression had been that Hastoe HA favoured building three/four properties to give better profitability and allow for future demand in the village – the Parish Council would not object to this option.

3. Clerk's report

a. Emergency Assistance Plan

The list of vulnerable people had been provided to Chris Jacobs and their original permissions would be retained.

Work on the Plan would be progressed in March.

b. Playing Field

It was reported that the playing field, Bus Shelter and War Memorial Green had been cut by D A Page Landscapes & Fencing at a cost of £60 + VAT. The mower used has the capability to mulch the grass cuttings thereby leaving no residual grass cuttings to be disposed of.

If Jerry Munson was unable to resume his contract, Danny Page could pick up the work at a price that would mean 2/3 weekly cuts from April to September – in line with the budget allowance of £1,000 allowing that the VAT was recoverable.

The playground generally looked good – Hannah Taylor had weeded and planned to remove guards from the orchard trees and prune lower branches.

The disappointing response from Paul Cook, CBC Tree Officer, was noted and the search for a Tree Surgeon to evaluate the oak in the playing field would go on. Chris Exley agreed to pursue other options for a survey on the oak tree.

c. Road & Verges

The correspondence between the Chair and BSC was noted, however, the planned on-site meeting had not materialised, and the Chair would follow up.

There was a general discussion on the appalling state of verges throughout the village which seemed to increase year on year. It was agreed the damage arose, not just from heavy lorries and agricultural activities, but the failure of all vehicle users to respect the countryside and drive accordingly.

The Essex Highways Update was noted – and the difference in the levels of activity between the south and north of the County appeared obvious.

d. Superfast Essex

There was a discussion about the business practices, ethical and financial, that County Broadband appear to adopt, and it was agreed that the Parish Council would not promote their service to the centre of the village. However, it is possible for individuals to investigate whether the new aerial at Maltings Farm could provide a service.

e. Parish Council Website

The Clerk reported that he had failed to discover any source of information on the accessibility requirements being introduced by the Government by 2021. However, he had written to EALC suggesting an urgent need for a Parish Council training course on the implementation of the legislation.

It was agreed to discuss with Jenny McBride to see if she had any experience.

The reaction of EALC may give an indication of the priority they are giving to this matter – the Clerk to follow up.

4. Planning

a. Application No: 182896 Ridgecrest, School Road, Little Horkesley
The withdrawal of this application was noted – no reasons were given.

b. Application No: 190289 Park Farm, Park Farm Road, Little Horkesley
This application for a large rear extension was noted and no objections raised.

c. Application No: 190228 Thrift Farm Barns, Horkesley Hill, Great Horkesley
This application for an extension of current temporary licences and the history of the site was discussed. It was agreed that the Parish Council should comment on the length of time this issue had been under discussion and the need for a conclusion.

5. Finance

a. The following expenditure was approved:

- Lorraine Brooks £132.50 – PC website maintenance;
- Jake Jacobs £100.00 – Play ground monitoring;
- J R Drury £43.97 – secretarial supplies;
- DA Page Landscapes £72.00 – grass cutting.

b. The acknowledgement from DV & SV Project of the Parish Council donation was noted.

c. The predicted out turn for the year was noted and the fact that a bill for bark + labour from CBC was outstanding despite the fact they had been reminded in the autumn.

6. Correspondence

a. The following correspondence was noted:

- Essex Energy Switch;
- DV & SV Project AONB Update for January 2019;
- Essex Warbler.

b. EALC Legal Update – it focused mainly on the upcoming elections.

7. Items for the Next Agenda

Hannah Taylor reported that needles etc associated with drug taking had been found in the Children’s Playground at Stoke by Nayland. The Police believe that this incident could be related to “County Lines” drug gangs and asked the public to report any suspicious activity in the area.

..... (Maria Oats – Chair)
..... (Date)

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on 20 March 2019.