

GREAT HORKESLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2023
IN GREAT HORKESLEY NEW VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

Those present:

Cllr C Arnold (Chairman)	Cllr A Banks
Cllr J Burns-Langton	Cllr M Mead
Cllr P Tempest	+ 2 members of the public in attendance

23/058 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23/059 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Baker (personal).

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Sudbery (work).

23/060 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mead declared a pecuniary interest in item 23/064 (d), as the Treasurer of the organisation being discussed.

23/061 Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18th July 2023 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

23/062 Have Your Say – Public Open Forum

One member of the public expressed their concerns about various authorities taking far-reaching decisions in secret. The Chairman responded by confirming that the Parish Council do all they can to consult and engage with residents of Great Horkesley, for example with the recent Housing Needs Survey being delivered to every house in the parish.

23/063 Reports from Members and Officers of Other Authorities

Cllr Arnold reported he had attended the Colchester Clerk's Forum on behalf of the Clerk.

Cllr Arnold reported that Colchester City Council has to revisit housing numbers in the local plan. At some point in the next year, the City Council will be running a Call for Sites exercise. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will work quickly to get the next survey out to households this Autumn and the Open Spaces & Facilities Working Group should aim to get a questionnaire ready to go out at the same time.

Cllr Mead reported that the community group wishing to purchase a bench for the end of Keelers Way have been given permission to do so. This is separate from the Parish Council and therefore no discussion or decisions at a future meeting are required.

23/064 Finance

- (a) The Statement of Accounts as at 31st August 2023 was noted and Cllr Burns-Langton signed the document to confirm that the balances on the accounts matched those on the most recent bank statements.

- (b) The list of payments for July & August 2023 were approved in accordance with 2023/24 Budget and signed by the Chairman.
- (c) It was noted that the external audit for the 2022/23 financial year has been completed and there were no further comments from the external auditor. The Council expressed thanks to the Clerk for the work carried out to deliver faultless accounts for audit.

Cllr Mead left the room.

- (d) (i) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to pay £277.03 +VAT for the Adobe licence used to produce the Village News in the current financial year.
- (ii) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to transfer £277.03 from general reserves to cover the cost.
- (iii) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** that the Village FUNraisers be asked to submit a grant application for financial year 2024-25 and beyond so that the Parish Council can allow for the cost when setting precepts.

Cllr Mead returned to the room.

23/065 Planning

- (a) The following planning application was discussed, and **it was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to make the following comments to the Planning Authority:

231898 11 Barnfield Road

Application for a lawful development certificate

“Great Horkesley Parish Council does not have access to the technical expertise needed for it to form a view on whether the new use of 11 Barnfield Road as set out in the application falls within Use Class C2 or Use Class C3. However, it can confirm that Barnfield Road is one of the most peaceful residential areas of the village and it calls upon Colchester City Council – and not just as planning authority – to ensure that this does not change as a result of its determination of the current application. In view of the high level of public interest in the case, GHPC also calls upon the CCC Planning Committee to determine the application itself at a meeting that residents can attend and address, in order that the decision-making might be transparent and the rationale better understood by all concerned.”

- (b) It was noted that no comments were made on behalf of Great Horkesley Parish Council for the following planning applications:

231615 7 North View Cottages, Coach Road

Single storey rear extension for disabled adaptation

231614 Lodge Farm Cottage, Boxted Road

Single storey rear extension

231672 Blackbrook Stud Farm, Ivy Lodge Road

Conversion of existing buildings to create five residential dwellings

210390 Laburnums, Ivy Lodge Road

Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of 2 three-bed dwellings

231824 22 Exeter Close

Two storey rear extension in place of existing conservatory

- (c) It was noted that decisions have been made for the following planning applications:

230728 Holly Lodge Cottage, Holly Lane

Proposed single storey extension

Approve Conditional

231379	Ridgnalls, Boxted Church Road <i>Proposed wildlife lake, tennis court and PV panels mounted on ground</i>	Approve Conditional
221722	Brook Cottage, 2 Holly Lane <i>Proposed extensions and alterations (revised descriptions)</i>	Approve Conditional
231338	Westwood Home Farm, London Road <i>Application to determine if prior approval is required for change of use</i>	Prior Approval Required
231292	2 Barnfield Road <i>Proposed single/double storey side extension</i>	Approve Conditional
231614	Lodge Farm Cottage, Boxted Road <i>Single storey rear extension</i>	Approve Conditional
231421	Pitchbury Farmhouse, 191 Coach Road <i>Erection of a two storey side extension as guest accommodation</i>	Approve Conditional
231515	South Lodge, Nayland Road <i>New cartlodge (following demolition of existing cartlodge)</i>	Approve Conditional
231615	7 North View Cottages, Coach Road <i>Single storey rear extension for disabled adaptation</i>	Approve Conditional
231672	Blackbrook Stud Farm, Ivy Lodge Road <i>Conversion of existing buildings to create five residential dwellings</i>	Refuse

(d) No new applications were received after publication of this Agenda but prior to meeting.

23/066 Public Spaces

- (a) It was noted that the first meeting of the Open Spaces & Facilities Working Group took place on 7th September 2023. The Working Group will hold a public consultation at the Village Hall on Saturday 4th November from 9am to 11.30am, to see what views residents have regarding public spaces and facilities in the village.
- (b) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to delegate the power to appoint new members to the Open Spaces & Facilities Working Group to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman.
- (c) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to proceed with asking children at the primary school to design signs to encourage people to pick up their dogs' mess.
- (d) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to delegate power to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman, to have the designs discussed in (c) printed and installed in places around the village, particularly near to the school and in other areas where dog fouling is especially bad, up to a maximum cost of £250.

23/067 Highways

- (a) Cllr Arnold reported that a letter was sent to Cllr Kevin Bentley (Leader of Essex County Council) and Cllr Lee Scott (Essex County Council Member for Highways) on behalf of Great Horkesley Parish Council and the Headteachers of Bishop William Ward Primary School and The Trinity School, asking for the speed limit on the 400m stretch of derestricted road between Great Horkesley and Chesterwell to be urgently reduced, for the safety of the children now walking to and from the new secondary school.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold) to apply once again to have the speed limit reduced on this small section of road.

There was also a possibility of introducing temporary non-standard signage to warn drivers of additional cyclists on the road. This would require consent from the Secretary of State. **It was agreed** that an application for additional signage should be made.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold) that in view of the urgency Great Horkesley Parish Council would draw on its reserves to meet the cost of these changes.

- (b) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** that the Clerk would ask Colchester Borough Homes to confirm that they own the streetlight on Ramparts Close. If CBH deny responsibility, then the Parish Council will adopt it and be responsible for its maintenance and future running costs.
- (c) Cllr Mead reported the flooding on the A134 around the A12 bridge is still bad and will be dangerous during the colder weather. The Clerk will write to Cllr Barber to remind him of the issue. The Clerk will also report the drains on Keelers Way need clearing.

23/068 Village Hall

- (a) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to engage Safe I.S. Ltd to carry out the necessary works to ensure the Village Hall fire extinguishers meet safety regulations, at a cost of £310.40 +VAT.
- (b) Councillors discussed the quotes received for the removal and replacement of the hedge surround the Village Hall.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold) to accept the quote from Walton's Tree Services to remove the current hedge and replace it with a beech hedge. The Clerk will ensure that Walton's Tree Services will be responsible for closing the adjacent paths when the works are carried out.

- (c) Cllr Tempest reported that in July, a local first responder met with himself and the Clerk to check the defibrillator at the Village Hall. It was discovered that the defibrillator had previously been recalled by the manufacturer due to a fault, the battery was at less than 5% and the pads were out of date and in urgent need of replacement. The Clerk returned the defibrillator to the manufacturer for repair and due to the urgency of the issue, in consultation with the Chairman, replaced the battery and pads at a total cost of £289.90 +VAT.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Tempest) that the defibrillator be moved to an external position at the Village Hall so access can be gained by members of the public in an emergency at any time of day. **It was also agreed** that the costs should be met from the Council's reserves.

23/069 Councillors

- (a) **It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold)** to formally write to Mr Williams' to thank him for his contribution to the Council and the village of Great Horkesley.
- (b) It was noted that Cllr Tempest will attend New Councillor Training in November 2023.

23/070 Clerk's Report

- (a) The Clerk's report for July & August 2023 including a list of resolutions agreed at earlier Parish Council meetings and any progress to date was noted.
- (b) It was noted that the Clerk is booked to attend a set of HR training courses.

23/071 Village Warden

The Village Warden's report to the end of August 2023 was noted.

23/072 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 7.30pm in Great Horkesley New Village Hall.