



GREAT HORKESLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.greathorkesley-pc.gov.uk

Minutes

**Minutes of the meeting of Great Horkesley Parish Council
held at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 19th February 2019
Members present: Councillors Arnold (Chairman),
Baker, Harris Mead and Rennie**

1. **Welcome and announcements:** The Chairman welcomed the other members of the Council to the meeting. He explained that there would be a short pause after each item discussed so that he could make a note of the decision, the Clerk being unavoidably absent.
2. **Apologies for absence:** All members of the Council were present.
3. **Declarations of interest:** There were none.
4. **Public open forum:** No members of the public were present.
5. **Minutes of the last meeting:** Subject to the addition of the decision (proposed by Cllr Mead) that in future all failed street lamps should be replaced with an LED equivalent, **it was agreed** to adopt the draft minutes of the meeting on 22nd January as a true record.
6. **Planning applications:**
 - a. **190302 Land adjacent to Great Horkesley Manor. It was agreed that**
 - i. there would be a special meeting of the Council in the new Village Hall at 1900h on Wednesday 6th March to hear representations from residents and agreed the response to CBC.
 - ii. The meeting would be publicised on the village community Facebook page.
 - iii. Cllr Arnold would obtain advice on the housing mix and in particular how to obtain sheltered housing in the village.
 - b. **190288 Thrift Farm Barns.** After thorough discussion **it was agreed** to make no comment to CBC.
 - c. **190277 Broomfield, London Road.** No comment.
 - d. **190298 Fen Cottage. It was unanimously agreed** that the proposal should be strongly resisted for the following reasons:
 - i. The site is in countryside outside the village envelope. An aerial photograph of the village shows clearly that there is an east-west boundary formed by the housing in Ivy Lodge Road, Tile House land and Pattinson Walk. Development of the village in the last 30 years has been south of this line, creating a settlement that is now concentrated around Horkesley Heath. To permit development of the application site would be to encourage further sporadic linear development of sites along the A134 at increasing distances

from the community facilities around Horkesley Heath. The existing village envelope boundary is in the right place and should be respected.

- ii. The access is to the south of a blind bend on the A134. The development would significantly increase the likelihood of a vehicle or bicycle that has travelled south along the A134 and is waiting to turn into the site being struck by another southbound vehicle.
- iii. The proposed density is too high. The applicant cites the density in the nearby Tile House Farm development as a precedent but this came about as a trade-off so that more public open space could be given to the village. It has since been recognised as being inappropriate for edge of countryside development and not to be repeated, not least for the difficulties between neighbours that it makes more likely. Furthermore, the proposed development is offering nothing to the village.
- iv. On page 7 of the Design and Access Statement the applicant states “the proposals would provide a sustainable development that would enhance its surroundings and contribute to the vitality and development of the local community”. No evidence to support this has been provided.
- v. The proposed form is urban. The site is in the countryside.
- vi. The site is low-lying and prone to flooding: it is believed that it was once used for growing watercress. It is below the level of the lake in Aldercar Wood. The Black Brook was piped to run under it but the applicant seems unaware of this.

7. Reports from members and officers of other authorities: Cllr Arnold reported that after several of his requests to have leaves swept from various streets in the village including Grantham Road and Barnfield Road had been ignored, he had approached the relevant Head of Service. This had resulted in the necessary visit from the sweeping machine but the traffic islands had not been attended to. He would persevere.

8. Village Hall

- a. Security. During discussion there was agreement that there was little point in spending a significant sum on upgrading the existing system if the authorities would not use the additional data obtained. Cllr Arnold reported that at a recent meeting he had raised the frustration residents felt that the police did not take action when caches of empty nitrous oxide were found in the village hall car park and reported to them. He had been told that these should be reported online because whilst the inhaling of nitrous oxide was not illegal, the community police team was collecting data about where antisocial behaviour was likely to occur in rural areas. Later in 2019 a response team would start operating in Rural Colchester.

It was agreed that the contractor who visited and supplied the quotation should be thanked and told that upgrading the equipment would be considered again once there was a rural police team who could use the data collected.

Cllr Arnold also reported that since he ostentatiously took the registration mark of a vehicle containing youths that was parked in the corner of the car park just before Christmas, no further incidents of public nuisance had been reported to him.

- b. It was noted that two contributions from the ward councillors' Locality Budget had been received: a £500 contribution to the cost of redecorating parts of the new village hall and £300 to pay for replacement landscaping between the hall and car park. Cllr Arnold reported that the BWWS head teacher had shown interest in a

pupils undertaking the planting sometime before the Easter break; he would arrange this. Cllr Harris offered to provide advice on sourcing plants at a competitive price.

- c. It was noted that the main hall curtains had been rehung following repair. Cllr Mead reported that regular users had remarked how good they looked. **It was agreed** to pay £100 for the repairs rather than the £60 previously agreed, the difference being due to the discovery that more repair work was required than had been apparent to the clerk and caretaker.

9. **Village website.**

- a. Cllr Harris reported that after making considerable efforts to engage with staff at Colchester Institute to discover an IT student resident in the village who might be interested in being paid to create a village website she was now convinced that this could not be done. She was also of the opinion that with some tweaking the GHPC website could be made more attractive. **It was agreed** to revisit the matter after the May elections in case they produced a new councillor with the relevant skills who could take a lead on this work.
- b. **It was agreed** that an online village calendar would need to be part of the revamped website so that too should be revisited after the elections. Cllr Mead pointed out that there was already a village calendar in the quarterly Village News magazine but there had been a steady decline in the number of events that residents notified.

10. **ECC Bus consultation.** It was agreed that since the services under review did not operate in the village, no further action would be taken on this.

Cllr Mead reported that a former councillor was successfully lobbying Arriva about various aspects of their service that affected secondary school children from the village and their parents. Arriva would be making a presentation to BWWS Year 6 towards the end of the Summer Term. **It was agreed** that she should be thanked for her continuing work on behalf of the village.

11. **Village Warden**

- a. Cllr Harris reported that she had reviewed the contract which had been given to her and the Chairman when they attended the Highway Devolution session run by ECC at the EALC HQ in Dunmow. In her opinion it contained much that was irrelevant to the limited categories of work the Council would be capable of undertaking in the near future. It would require a substantial amount of reporting back and would create many new liabilities for the Council. She recommended that in view of the comparatively small sum on offer – a little over £1600 – the Council should decline to take part in the first year of the devolution scheme. She also reported that she had discussed the contract with the clerk to St Osyth PC who with his Chairman had also been at the session. Though they had been very keen to participate, they too were not having doubts for the same reasons.
It was agreed to accept Cllr Harris' advice not to participate in the scheme for the time being. **It was also agreed** that Cllr Arnold should put Cllr Harris in touch with Cllr Kevin Bentley, the member of the ECC cabinet responsible for the scheme so that she could discuss her misgivings with him.
- b. **It was then agreed** that even without the funds from the devolution scheme, the Council should recruit a Village Warden as previously discussed. The Clerk was

authorised to take any decision necessary to bring this about, this authority to be exercised in consultation with the Chairman on each occasion.

12. Financial matters

- a. The payments authorised at the last meeting, those made by the clerk under delegated powers since the last meeting and various receipts, all as set out in Appendix B to the meeting agenda, were duly noted.
- b. As set out at 8c above, the payment of £100 for curtain repair was **approved**.
- c. No refunds of village hall deposits were due.
- d. Cllr Mead duly signed the 3rd Quarter budgetary report.
- e. **It was agreed** that until the end of the financial year the clerk be authorised to make such transfers from the Street Furniture budget line to the Street Lighting budget line as may be necessary to street lighting to be maintained. Retrospective approval of one such transfer, made in consultation with the Chairman, was approved.

13. Rural Policing Initiative. In the absence of a substantive response from the CBC Executive Director responsible for the scheme **it was agreed** to defer this until the next scheduled meeting. Cllr Rennie will attend an associated meeting in the Town Hall on 26th February.

14. Keep Britain Tidy Big Clean Up. **It was agreed** in principal that the village should participate in such exercises but also that participation had come so late onto the Council's agenda that there was no chance of making a success of it in March 2019. **It was therefore agreed** that the matter be placed on the agenda for the September 2019 meeting with a view to participating fully in the 2020 Big Clean Up.

15. Clerk's Report The Council noted the Clerk's written report as set out below:

- a. The damaged 'keep left' sign which was lying on the A134 pedestrian refuge near Blackbrook Road was reported to ECC Highways on the 18 June 2018. The sign has since disappeared. The clerk recently chased them up and it was reported the engineer had assessed the matter and the sign will be repaired or replaced. Ref No: 2575845
- b. New regular hirer: a Yoga Class will start on the 28 February 2019.
- c. The contractor has filled and levelled the car park as a number of small holes were starting to form. He is to also cut back the large bushes at the corners of the flower beds to the side of the village hall this week while the village hall is closed.
- d. The clerk will attend a Pensions Workshop on the 27 February 2019 at the Town Hall

16. Parish Councillors' reports

a. Highways:

- i. Cllr Arnold reported that two requests had been received from people living in The Crescent for additional lighting along the A134. He had inspected the footway on the eastern side of the road and found that there were several electricity supply poles to which street lamps could be attached. After discussion during which members generally expressed the view that such systematic lighting was inappropriate in a village, **it was agreed** that the matter would not be placed on an agenda for a future meeting.

- ii. Cllr Arnold reported that he had attended a meeting of the BWWS governors' Resources Committee meeting at which road safety outside the School was discussed. It seemed that there was a feeling amongst parents that a 20 mph was necessary. That meeting felt that the problem is probably not speed because there is a speed table at the junction outside the school which works pretty well. The schools that have a 20 mph limit are generally those on roads where there cannot be 'physical measures'. The Governors will do some work to try to define the problem and collect evidence. The problem may be too many drivers insisting on driving through rather than stopping to let children cross leading to crowds of children accumulating on the footways and then spilling into the road, especially on the south side which is quite narrow. One governor has a drone and is going to do some aerial monitoring. Cllr Arnold reported he had explained how the LHP system works and the Governors thought they would like to put in a bid themselves in due course rather than have the PC do it for them; he offered to help with this.

b. Footpaths: Cllr Baker reported that Footpath 36, which links Tile House Lane to Old House Road, has been reinstated.

c. Speed watch: Cllr Rennie reported that he was once more fit to manage the team which had been out working on the A134 again.

17. Publicity. It was agreed that the following matters be the subject of posts on the village community website:

dates for the village calendar;

call for candidates for the parish council elections;

advertisement for Village Warden;

extra meeting on 6th March to discuss planning application 190302.

18. Training. No new training needs had been identified.

19. Preparations for forthcoming elections. It was agreed that in the light of the Chairman's article in the front of the latest Village News, no further actions need be taken other than those which the Clerk was already empowered to undertake.

20. Forthcoming meetings. In addition to items set out in these minutes, **it was agreed** to ask County Councillor Anne Brown to provide a report for the meeting scheduled for Tuesday 19th March detailing the progress made by Essex County Council in persuading the owner of the Geantree site to remove the waste that had been dumped there without the necessary planning consent and Environment Agency licence.

21. Personnel matters

[No members of the public having attended the meeting, it was not necessary to pass the resolution to exclude press and public from the room. The details of these decisions being personal, they will appear only in the printed record of the meeting approved by the Council and retained by the Clerk.]

a. It was agreed that the clerk's salary should be increased with effect from 1st April in line with the recommendations provided by NALC.

b. It was agreed that the Booking Manager's salary should be increased with effect from 1st April.

Financial Payments & Receipts**Appendix B**

Account Dates: 3 January 2019 – 31 January 2019				
ID	TO/FROM	DETAILS	REF:	PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS
83	Information Commissioners Office	Annual Registration	Bacs	£35.00
84	A & J lighting	Repair to the Manor PL	Bacs	£139.02
85	Local Council Public Advisory Service	Rights of Way Programme	Bacs	£40.00
86	Colchester Borough Council	Electricity for Parish Lights	Bacs	£136.97
87	EALC	Local Council Services Fund Grant		£4,000.00
88	Contractor	Bus Shelter Maintenance	2484	£30.00
89	EE & T Mobile	Mobile Phone	DD	£23.76
90	HMRC	Tax & NI Contributions	Bacs	£221.17
91	Essex Pension Fund	Contributions	Bacs	£369.33
92	Clerk	Salary & Expenses	Bacs	Left Blank

Duly approved at the parish council meeting held on the 19 March 2019

Chairman's signature.....