



GREAT HORKESLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.greathorkesley-pc.gov.uk

Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting of Great Horkesley Parish Council held at 7:30pm on Tuesday 14 May 2019

Members Present: Councillors Arnold (Chairman)
Baker, Harris, Mead & Williams

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr Baker proposed that Cllr Arnold should be appointed as Chairman; motion seconded by Cllr Harris.

Cllr Williams proposed that he should be appointed as Chairman; motion seconded by Cllr Mead.

The matters being put to the vote, Cllr Williams' motion was **lost** by two votes to three. Cllr Baker's motion was **carried** by three votes to one (Cllrs Baker, Harris and Arnold voted **FOR**, Cllr Mead **ABSTAINED**, Cllr Williams voted **AGAINST**).

Cllr Arnold was thus appointed Chairman of the Parish Council for the Municipal Year 2019-20 and duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

2. Chairman's opening remarks

Cllr Arnold welcomed those present to the meeting and the start of the new council year. He confirmed that as Chairman he would continue to put the interests of the Parish Council first and in the event of an apparent conflict of interest, he would rely on Borough Cllr Chapman to provide support at the higher level.

3. Apologies and reasons for absence

All members of the parish council were present.

4. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared in respect of any items on the agenda.

5. Election of Vice-Chairman, establishment of committees, appointments to outside bodies

a. Election of vice- chairman. Cllr Arnold proposed that Cllr Mead be appointed; motion seconded by Cllr Baker. Motion **APPROVED** unanimously.

b. Establishment of committees. It was **agreed** that the Village Hall Management Committee and Finance Committee would operate as before and that there should be a Human Resources Committee to manage the terms of employment of the Council's employees.

c. Appointments to committees. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council would sit on all committees as per the Council's procedure Rules. The following additional appointments were **agreed**:

Village Hall Management Committee: all other members of Council

Finance: Cllr Baker

HR: Cllr Harris

d. Appointment to Colchester Association of Local Councils (CALC). It was **agreed** that Cllr Mead would continue to act as the Council's representative on CALC and that Cllr Williams would also attend.

e. Appointment of member to attend Colchester & Tendring Parish Transport Representative's meetings. It was **agreed** that Cllr Mead should attend.

f. Appointment of trustee to the Committee of Management of the (old) Village Hall. It was noted that Cllr Mead was already a trustee and **agreed** that no separate appointment would be made.

g. Review of A – Z list of who does what. Following discussion an updated version of the list to be published on the Council's website and elsewhere was **approved** (copy attached to these minutes).

h. Internal Auditor. It was **agreed** that Jan Stobart be appointed for the Financial Year 2019/2020.

6. Minutes of the last meeting

It was **agreed** that the published draft of the minutes of the meeting of 16 April be adopted as a true record.

7. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

It was **agreed** that the published draft of the minutes of the **Annual Parish Meeting** that took place on 19 March be adopted as a true record.

8. Clerk's equipment

a. Mobile phone. The Clerk reported that the changes to her telephone contracts as reported to the March meeting (MINUTE 19) had resulted in an unexpected increase in the cost of her official mobile phone. She had therefore renegotiated the contract, bringing the cost down to £11.67 per month. Whilst this new contract would produce an annual saving, there would be a higher cost for the two months before it came into effect. The Council **noted and approved** the action taken by the clerk under her delegated powers.

b. New laptop. Alternatives having been considered, **it was agreed** that a replacement for the Council's now-unreliable laptop computer should be purchased from Amazon at a cost of £599.98 including VAT. It was further agreed that the Chairman would use his Amazon account to make the purchase provided that prior confirmation was obtained that this would not affect the VAT reclaim. He would then claim the cost back from the Council.

9. Village Hall

a. Use of Hall as a Polling Station. The Council considered a letter from Mr Andrew Weavers of Colchester Borough Council setting out reasons for the use of the hall as a polling station to be regarded as a community use rather than a business use. The cost to CBC would be considerably higher than the maximum that could be reclaimed from the Cabinet Office so CBC would be forced to look elsewhere.

It was agreed that with immediate effect and until agreed otherwise, the use of the hall as a polling station would be treated as a community (non-residential) hire and charged at the prevailing rate for such a use.

b. Heating system. The chairman reported that the caretaker had arranged for the system to be inspected by an engineer from Blueflame Services. Blueflame was the only company who had been prepared to undertake the inspection. It was confirmed that the thermostat in the main hall had failed and along with the matching control unit in the services cupboard would need to be replaced. The council considered a quotation from Blueflame Services on

which were set out all the elements of the work which would need doing; the cost would be £898.00 including VAT.

The engineer had also inspected the heat recovery system in the main hall. He had agreed with the caretaker that it should be operating continuously at a low level so that the humidity and temperature of the hall were monitored. He confirmed that to provide the rapid response sometimes required by hall users a 'boost' button could be installed outside the chair store and connected to a currently unused circuit in the control system. This should prevent users trying to alter the settings on the panel inside the chair store. The council considered a quotation from Blueflame Services on which were set out all the elements of the work which would need doing; the cost would be £558.00 including VAT.

It was agreed

- that single tenders would be accepted because no other company was prepared to undertake the inspection;
- that Blueflame Services be appointed to carry out the work at a combined cost of £1456.00 including VAT;
- that because the expenditure was unforeseen this amount be transferred from the village hall reserve to the village hall budget for 2019-20.

c. Damage to fire doors. The council considered the damage caused to various fire doors by wedges and poorly-installed closers. **It was agreed** that acoustically-operated closers be installed to deter the use of wedges on the doors into the main hall from the lobby and the doors to the chair store (but not the kitchen door) **provided that** any necessary power supply could be provided at an acceptable cost and unobtrusively. **It was also agreed** that kick panels could be installed at low and high levels on doors that required reinforcement.

d. Car park security. After discussion of various mechanically-operated gates, **it was agreed** that a simple, manually-operated gate should be installed. It should address the shortcomings of the chain currently in use, namely that some users find it difficult to close, it is hard to see in the dark and vulnerable to bolt-cutters. Cllr Baker suggested a design similar to the gate on the car park for St John's Church. **It was agreed** that Cllr Harris would investigate and circulate details and estimates prior to the next meeting.

e. Emergency exits. Discussion focussed on whether the lobby needed to be kept permanently clear of flammable items – including coats and paper notices – and obstructions such as tables and push chairs because it was a designated emergency exit route from the building. The Council was unable to reach agreement on the matter but **it was agreed** that a fire officer should be invited to inspect the building and give advice.

10. Annual Report

It was agreed that the draft Annual Report for 2018-19, which included the accounts for the year and the Chairman's Report to the APCM, was now ready to be passed to the auditor.

11. Planning Applications

It was agreed that the Council did not need to make representations on the three applications considered:

- 190994 – Joscelyns, Water Lane, Little Horkeley
- 190884 – Orchard House, Boxted Road, Great Horkeley
- 190982 – 33 Braeburn Road, Great Horkeley)

It was noted that two further applications had been referred to the Council for comment after the agenda was published

191184 – The Limes, Nayland Road, Great Horkesley

191171 – Newlyn, Nayland Road, Great Horkesley

The clerk would consult members about these and decide how to respond. However, the Newlyn application, which was retrospective, prompted a discussion of the visual impact of gradual replacement of hedges along the main road with high fences. Whilst residents' desire to improve security could be understood, it was felt that in a village setting hedges were more appropriate, particularly when highly visible to the general public.

Cllr Arnold agreed to refer members' concerns to the planning authority for comment.

12. Reports from visiting councillors

No members of other authorities were present. Cllr Arnold reported that Cllr Brown was pursuing the matter of **Geantree** with ECC Planning Enforcement and would present the result to a future meeting.

13. Reports from Parish Councillors

a. Highways. Cllr Arnold reported that published ECC Local Highways Panel minutes showed that the LHP bid to make changes to the mini-roundabouts at Tile House Lane, Ivy Lodge Road and Blackbrook Road had been successful but the detail had not yet appeared on the ECC website; he would continue to pursue this. He was also pressing ECC Highways to deal with the spring-water flowing down the A134 near the A12 bridge before the delayed resurfacing got that far.

b. Footpaths. Cllr Baker reported that the Council's application to register the Barnfield Road – Brick Kiln Lane link as a Public Right of Way was under way.

c. CALC/Clerk's Forum. Cllr Mead and the Clerk reported that it had been decided that meetings between parish councillors, clerks and CBC representatives should continue despite poor attendance at the Forum from some local councils – though not Great Horkesley. In future joint meetings with CALC representatives would take place.

14. Report from Parish Clerk

- The **Internal Audit** will take place on 22 May.
- The failed **parish street lamp** next to the Yew Tree car park will be replaced early in June. The conifers currently obscuring it will be cut back while the Yew Tree is closed for decoration.
- CBC have reinstated the **dog waste bin** outside the Bishop William Ward School.
- ECC Highways have promised Cllr Anne Brown that the **damaged 'keep left' sign** on the pedestrian refuge in the A134 near Black Brook Road will be replaced 'within three weeks'.
- The **seat in the bus shelter** opposite the Half Butt is reportedly broken – **Cllr Baker** agreed to investigate.
- There had been no response to the advertisement for a **Village Warden** placed in the Village News but through liaison with West Bergholt's parish clerk a candidate had been found. Members would be sent details shortly.

15. Financial matters

a. The Council noted without comment the following payments made between 16 and 30 April:

ID	To/From	Details	Ref	Payments
5	Viking	Stationery	Bacs	£84.17
6	EALC	Annual Subscription	Bacs	414.26
7	NALC	Annual Subscription	Bacs	142.46
8	Contractor	Bus Shelter Maintenance	Bacs	£30.00
9	1 st Great Horkesley Scouts	Grant	2516	£280.00
10	Great Horkesley Parochial Church Council	Grant	2517	£600.00
11	Great Horkesley Friendship Club	Grant	2518	£240.00
12	Suffolk County Council	AONB Grant	2519	£100.00
13	EE & T Mobile	Mobile Phone	DD	£41.60
14	Clerk	Salary & Expenses	Bacs	Left Blank
15	Essex Pension Fund	Contributions	Bacs	£380.48

b. **It was agreed** to approve refunds of hall hire retainers and make other payments as set out in the schedule sent to members only for reasons of confidentiality. The relevant cheques were signed by members present.

16. Agenda items for next meeting.

The Chairman reminded members that the Council could only conduct business at any meeting which had appeared on the duly published agenda. To ensure that meetings did not become over long, discussion of other matters would not be permitted. Members should notify the clerk of any matter for inclusion on an agenda at least one week before the relevant meeting.

The Chairman asked that introduction of a progress monitor to enable tracking of parish council and village hall business be considered at the June meeting.

17. Meetings in 2019-20

a. Parish Council.

It was agreed that parish council meetings would continue to be held on the third Tuesday of each month other than August. Meeting dates would therefore be

18 June 2019	17 December 2019
16 July 2019	21 January 2020 (Budget meeting)
17 September 2019	18 February 2020
15 October 2019	17 March 2020
19 November 2019	21 April 2020

b. Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Parish Council Meeting 2020.

It was agreed that the APM would take place on 19 May 2020 at 1900h, to be followed by the APCM which would start no earlier than 1930h.

Cllr Baker regretted that he would be unable to attend the June meeting.

18. Motion to exclude members of the public

Item withdrawn - no members of the public were present.

19. Village Hall – new regular hirer

The Council considered an application from a new hirer to use the main hall on a weekly basis for the next twelve months. It was agreed to approve the application subject to the hirer agreeing to pay the hire charge agreed by the Council.

Duly approved at the parish council meeting held on the 18 June 2019

Chairman's signature.....