



Chair: Cllr Toby Acton
Clerk: Bonnie Jones | Ware Farm, The Street, High Roding, CM6 1NT |
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Meeting of High Ongar Parish Council

WEDNESDAY 12th June 2024 – at 7:30pm
at the High Ongar Village Hall

MINUTES

- Present:** Cllr Toby Acton (Chairman), Cllr John Catlin, Cllr Steve Smith, Cllr Simon Bosworth, Cllr Chris Funnell, and Cllr Burton
- Bonnie Jones (Clerk)
Susan Deluca (previous locum Clerk)
District Councillor Ray Balcombe
1 member of the public
- 2024/25.26 Apologies for Absence**
Apologies received from Cllr Arthur and District Councillor Mary Dadd.
- 2024/25.27 Other Absences**
Cllr Gallicchio
- 2024/25.28 Declarations of Interest.**
None
- 2024/25.29 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
It was unanimously resolved that the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 8th May, were a true record and were signed accordingly. The minutes of Annual General Meeting were noted.
- 2024/25.30 Public Participation Session**
One member of the public asked for an update on the large potholes along Mill Lane, as they are getting increasingly worse. The Clerk confirmed that the potholes had been reported to Highways, and the Clerk had also contacted ECC Jaymey Mclvor to escalate the issue further.
- 2024/25.31 Reports and Members Reports**
a) Chairman's Report –None
b) Vice Chairman's Report. – Cllr Smith advised that he attended the opening of the North Weald Sensory Garden. He thought this would be a great asset to North Weald, and questioned if the moneies obtained from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund could be used for something like this.
c) District & County Councillors Reports - District Councillor Ray Balcombe advised that the planning application for 7 houses at Mill Lane had been approved. However, following the Clerks comments and support from Cllr Balcombe, the S106 moneys have been earmarked for use towards parking provisions in that area. Possible dropped curbs or a designated parking area. Cllr Balcombe also provided an update on County Councillor Jaymey Mclvor.
d) Parish Councillors -
- Ward Councillor Report – Paslow Common – Cllr Bosworth advised that the post removed at Paslow Common had not yet been put back. He confirmed he would be visiting the site to re-instate the post. Cllr Smith advised that there had been chatter between some residents regarding the continuous issue of rubbish burning on Woolmongers Lane. Cllr Balcombe confirmed that officers were aware of this issue.
- Ward Councillor Report - High Ongar - None.

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- Ward Councillor Report- Norton Mandeville - None

e) Highways Report - None

f) High Ongar Village Hall – Cllr Funnell advised that the village hall had purchased 4 outside picnic benches.

g) Police Reports – Police Constable Warren Shepherd provided the current crime statistics, which confirmed that local crime rates have decreased by 52% compared to last year.

2024/25.32

Clerk's Report

The Clerk advised that the 2023/2024 External Audit has been completed and published on the website and notice board.

2024/25.33

Internal Audit Actions

Councillors had reviewed the 2022/2023 audit report attached to the agenda. Councillors were in agreement that all recommendation in the 2022/2023 Internal Audit report had been actioned and continue to be completed.

2024/25.34

Play Area site findings

The Clerk has explored the below possible play area locations, and her findings were:

- High Ongar Primary School – Have advised that the school is not a suitable location.
- The Village Hall – The Charity trustee continues to advice she feels this is not a suitable location.
- Area behind Church – Cllr Bosworth advised that the land behind the church has been placed into a 5 year environmental stewardship, so is unavailable.
- Mulberry House – The Clerk had contacted Mulberry House on two occasions, however, was still awaiting a response. Cllr Acton advised that he would visit Millbury House to discuss the matter.

A detailed discussion occurred where various suggestion were made as to the use of the funds and a possible location. The Clerk confirmed she would investigate if a sensory garden would be covered within the restrictions of the grant funding obtained. It was agreed by members for this matter to be placed on the July agenda where a final decision will need to be made as to the location of the play area.

2024/25.35

2024 Over 60's Christmas Lunch

Cllr Caitlin advised that the 19th December had been provisionally booked with the Village Hall for the over 60's lunch. Cllr Burton suggested approaching the Cucina Italian Restaurant to cater the event this year.

It was agreed that this event will be placed on the July agenda where Cllr Burton will provide an update.

2024/25.36

Play in the Park session

The Clerk has received notification from EFDC regarding play in the park, asking if the Parish Council will fund a two hour session in the school holidays. The following three dates are currently still available: Monday 29th July, 12th August or 19th August from 1:30pm-3:30pm. High Ongar Village Hall have advised they would be happy to facilitate this in the village hall grounds.

All Councillors agreed to fund a play in the park session which will be facilitated in the village hall grounds. The Clerk will liaise with the Village Hall co-ordinator to confirm a date for the event.

2024/25.37

Policies and Procedures

The Clerk has reviewed High Ongar Parish Council's Policies and Procedures that were last looked at when the previous Clerk was in post. The current policies and procedures are out of date and some

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have not been adopted at all. The Clerk has updated the below policies a procedures which were reviewed by Councillors prior to the meeting:

- Complaints procedure
- Financial Regulations
- Freedom of Information
- Health & Safety
- Recording of Council Meetings
- Standing Orders
- Virement Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Policy
- Financial Risk assessment
- Scheme of delegation
- Staff and Member training Policy

Councillors agreed to adopt the above policies with the Clerks recommended changes.

It was agreed that due to a number of errors in the new NALC Financial Regulations, this would be referred to the next meeting for agreement.

2024/25.38

EFDC Plans East Committee

Councillors noted that the Clerk spoke at Plans East regarding the application for 7 proposed dwellings at Mill Lane. Whilst the application was passed, EFDC agreed at the suggestion of the Parish Council that S106 moneys should be put towards further car parking facilities in this area.

2024/25.39

20's Plenty

The Clerk has been investigating the possibility of implementing an advisory 20mph speed along The Street. The Essex County Council speed management strategy states:

A "20's Plenty" scheme is an advisory scheme for 20mph outside the entrance to a school or college and within an existing 30mph speed limit. The limit and signing are advisory and cannot be enforced by the Police. Currently there are no such schemes within Essex. However, in order to judge whether or not these advisory limits are successful it has been agreed by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation to trial four sites. The criteria for site selection is:

- *that the length of road must be in a 30mph limit*
- *the length under consideration must be on a PR2 or local road (advisory limits are not appropriate for the PR1 network)*
- *drivers must be able to identify the school/college entrance to understand the need to slow down.*
- *no school crossing patrol is situated at the location.*

Councillors felt that the above statement is appropriate. The below motion was Proposed by Cllr Acton and seconded by Cllr Burton:

High Ongar Parish Council supports the 20's Plenty for Essex Campaign. High Ongar Parish Council calls on Cllr Jaymey McIvor to implement 20mph in The Street, High Ongar and Mill Lane, High Ongar; and will write to Essex County Council to request 20mph speed limits on the streets throughout High Ongar Village, where people live, work, learn and play.

Police Constable Warren Shepherd advised he had supported a neighbouring village with their 20 is plenty schemes and would be happy to provide support to High Ongar.

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2024/25.40

Website re-design

The Clerk advised that she has been in contact with Skilled Tech Ltd, who host High Ongar Parsh Council's website and provide IT support. Skilled Tech have advised that the current WordPress layout is outdated and suggested that it is updated and redesigned. To update all 14 current pages of the website would come at an estimated cost of £1250.00 + VAT. The Clerk has also been investigating a free website, called voice, which other Parish Councils use. This is completely customisable and user friendly.

Councillors felt that the price provided to update the current website was out of High Ongar Parish Councils agreed budget. Members advised that they would like to investigate eVoice further. The Clerk will draft a new website for members to consider at the next meeting.

2024/25.41

Planning applications for consideration

Councillors considered the below planning applications:

Reference	Address	Description	Details
EPF/2055/23	3 Spurriers Farm Barns, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0LQ	The proposal involves the replacement of an existing outbuilding, single storey extensions to the north and east of the existing property Planning Application: EPF/2055/23 (site.com)	Consultation Deadline: 14 th June
No comment			
EPF/1031/24	11, King Street, High Ongar, Ongar, CM5 9NS	Part-single, part two-storey side and rear extension with front porch Planning Application: EPF/1031/24 (site.com)	Consultation Deadline: 13 th June
No comment			

2024/25.42

Planning applications responded to by way of Clerks delegated powers

Reference	Address	Description
EPF/0630/24	Morgans Farm, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0LQ	Change of Use to a Class E(i) Office, with associated external alterations; and Erection of a Class E(i) Office Building. Link: Planning Application: EPF/0630/24 (site.com)
No comment		
EPF/0598/23	Paslows Field, King Street, High Ongar, Ongar, CM5 9NP	Conversion of a stable building to a dwelling house. Link: Planning Application: EPF/0598/23 (site.com)
High Ongar Parish Council wish to object to this application as they do not wish to set a president for future developments of stables.		

2024/25.43

Planning Updates

The below planning updates were noted:

Reference	Address	Description	Details
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EPF/1066/24	Ashlings Farm, Ashlings Farm Cottage, Ashlings Farm Lane, High Ongar, Ingatestone, CM4 0JU	Application for approval of details reserved by condition7 'Contamination' on planning permission EPF/1859/19 (Proposed demolition of existing house and garage with election of x 3 no. new chalet style dwellings)	Approval of details reserved by a condition
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2024/25.44 Finance

44.1 Councillors noted the bank balance as at 31st May was £59,619.25.

44.2 The Clerk provided a bank reconciliation and current budget breakdown. There was however an error included. The Clerk will reconcile this, and a reconciliation will be provided at the next meeting.

44.3 The following payments were agreed:

Payee	Description	Method	£ (inc VAT)
Bonnie Jones	Clerk Salary - May	PAID	£476.05
TBS Hygiene Ltd	Dog waste collection - May	Online	£36.60
Skilled Tech Ltd	Remote maintenance and monitoring + Microsoft 365	Online	£80.00
High Ongar Primary School	Community Activation Fund donation – School Cycling Programme	Online	£250.00
Npower	May Street Light Electricity	DD	£64.02
Bonnie Jones	June Clerk Salary (Scheduled for last working day of month)	Online	£476.05
MD Landscapes Ltd	Various Grass cutting May	Online	£268.80
High Ongar Village Hall	Reimbursement – 4X Picnic Tables	Online	£927.00

2024/25.45 Outstanding Matters

Clerk Monthly Salary – Councillors agreed for the Clerks Salary to be authorised when the monthly payments are made. This can be scheduled for the last working day of the month.

2024/25.46 Date of the next meeting

It was noted that the date of the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th July.

2024/25.47 Exclusion of the public and the press

There were no matters discussed.

Meeting Close: 20:57