



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 March 2025 – at 7:30pm
at the High Ongar Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Acton, Cllr Funnell, Cllr Catlin, Cllr Burton, Cllr Smith and Cllr Howlett

Bonnie Jones (Clerk)
*District Councillor Ray Balcombe
7 Members of the public

**For part of the meeting*

2024/25.163 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Arthur. District Councillor Mary Dadd has also offered her apologies.

2024/25.164 Other Absences

Cllr Gallichio.

2024/25.165 Co-option of Councillor

There were 3 members of the public who put themselves forward for co-option. Cllr Burton advised that she also knew of someone who was very interested in being considered for co-option, however was unable to attend this meeting. Councillors agreed to co-opt two councillors at this meeting and consider further co-option at the next meeting to allow the other individual the same opportunity. A vote was taken on all 3 candidates present, the result of which is that Cllr Smith was coopted onto Norton Manderville ward and Cllr Howlett was coopted onto Paslow Common ward. The result of the vote was unanimous on both counts. Cllr Smith and Cllr Howlett joined the meeting.

2024/25.166 Declarations of Interest

None.

2024/25.167 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was unanimously resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2025 were a true record and were signed accordingly.

2024/25.168 Public Participation Session

One member of the public raised concerns surrounding the lack of information given to residents, highlighting that there is currently no notice board located along Millfield, even though this has been requested in the past. The resident also felt that there was a lack of connection between the Parish Councillors and residents. He also questioned what was currently being done about the residents parking at the Mill Lane lay-by. A short discussion occurred, however the member of the public left the meeting before Council could respond to his concerns.

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A second member of the public raised concerns about the public safety and traffic at Mill Lane. She advised her daughters car, along with another residents car, had been badly damaged by a passing vehicle when parked on the pavement. She felt that the 30MPH speed signs needed to be more visible. The Clerk confirmed she would report the non-visible 30MPH speed sign to Essex Highways. District Cllr Ray Balcombe also requested that the images of the damaged cars be sent to him as he may be able to look further into this. The Clerk also advised that the matter of speeding in the village would be discussed later in the agenda.

2024/25.169 Reports and Members Reports

- a) Chairman's Report – None
- b) Vice Chairman's Report – None
- c) District & County Councillors Reports – District Councillor Mary Dadd was unable to attend, however had provided a written report which had been emailed to Councillors prior the meeting.

District Councillor Ray Balcombe advised that the new blue recycling bins will be rolled out in June/July. TVS are currently in their sixth month of waste service operation with a clean up rate of 99.8%. He also provided an update on devolution.

d) Parish Councillors -

- Ward Councillor Report – Paslow Common – None
- Ward Councillor Report - High Ongar – Cllr Funnell advised there has been no fly tipping in the last few weeks.
- Ward Councillor Report - Norton Mandeville – Cllr Bosworth advised that the large pothole along Norton Lane had reappeared. The Clerk confirmed she would get this reported. He also advised that there had been lots of burning rubber at the travellers camp. Cllr Ray Balcombe provided the Clerk with an EFDC contact.

e) Highways Report - None

f) High Ongar Village Hall – Cllr Funnell highlighted his disappointment surrounding an unfortunate altercation that took place last month between a potential hall hirer and a Parish Councillor. The Chairman reminded all Councillors of the code of conduct that all Councillors are bound by.

g) Police Reports – PC Warren Shepherd was unable to attend however his written report was read out by the Clerk.

2024/25.170 Clerk's Report

The Clerk provided a verbal report which included the below matters:

- Update on waste lorry sited in High Ongar.
- The Woolmonger Lane pothole that the Clerk reported has been inspected by Highways however no further action will be taken. Cllr Catlin raised frustration that no action will be taken on this. District Councillor Ray Balcombe advised that he may have more luck with getting further action if he calls the out of hours phone number that is provided.
- The Clerk confirmed that she had previously sent an email to all Councillors requesting their thoughts on the Chelmsford City Local Plan consultation. Only the

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Chairman responded, who felt that no response on the consultation was needed from the parish council.

- Update on High Ongar fly posting.
- National Planning Policy Framework – there has been an update which included new designation of grey belt land. The Clerk will provide an update on this at the April meeting.

2024/25.171 VE Day Commemorative Event

At the previous meeting Councillors discussed the possibility of holding a VE Day Event with a number of different suggestions and ideas having been made. The Clerk has looked into the logistics of closing the road for a possible street party and unfortunately with the short time frame this is not possible. Councillor agreed that a working group would be put together to begin the organisation of the event, and will include Cllr Gallichio, Cllr Smith and Cllr Howlett. An update will be provided at the next meeting. The Clerk advised she was able to provide logistical support for any event, however it should be community led and managed by residents with the support of the Parish Council.

2024/25.172 Information Commissioners Office Registration

The Parish Council is a public body which processes personal data, and as such it is required to be registered with the Information Commissioners Office, the cost of which is £40 per year. This was unanimously agreed by all Councillors.

2024/25.173 Speeding in High Ongar

On 21st February the Clerk sent an email to all Councillors regarding speeding issues in High Ongar, however no Councillors had responded to this. The email contained useful information and guidance as to how to proceed, including setting up a community speed watch, a Facebook page, and identifying the locations which are of most concern. Councillors confirmed that the entrance to Millfield and Mill Lane were hotspots for speeding.

Speeding sign

Councillors had expressed interest in a vehicle activated sign (VAS), and possibly funding this sign from Parish Council funds. Councillors noted that even if they fully fund the sign (which had not currently been budgeted for), they would still need to apply to the Local Highway Panel to put this project through as a scheme. They would also need the support of their County Councillor to progress this scheme to the LHP.

All councillors were in agreement that they would like to investigate the possibility of a speed sign in High Ongar, funded by the Parish Council. The Clerk confirmed that she would email councillors with a brochure of the speed signs discussed. If Council was able to agree or suggest a site location, the Clerk will request support from County Councillors Jaymey McIvor and apply to LHP.

2024/25.174 High Ongar Grass Cutting

As previously advised the previous grass cutting contractors is no longer available to complete the required cuts in High Ongar. Cllr Bosworth had met with Thornwood Grounds Maintenance and visited the sites that would require regular cutting. Based on this, a quote of £140 per cut was provided. The cutting would take place every 2 weeks from March – October. Cllr Bosworth had also received another 2 quotes from other companies however they were significantly more expensive. Councillors felt that fortnightly cuts may not be

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necessary. It was requested that the Clerk advise Thornwood Ground maintenance of the Councils budget and ask if he is able to provide cuts around this. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

2024/25.175 Street Light – Electrical Testing

Following the recent testing of the 19 street light units within High Ongar, one unit has been identified as having several very significant structural defects that affect the units continuing performance, and it has been recommend that the unit is replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable. The report received was emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting. A quote of £2,292.96 has been received for the recommended works. It was noted that the average cost to replace a street light is between £4,000-£8,000. Councillors felt they would like to inspect the streetlight prior to a decision being made.

2024/25.176 Planning applications for consideration

There were no planning applications to consider.

2024/25.177 Planning Applications responded to by way of delegated powers

Reference	Address	Description	Comments
EPF/0278/25	The Coach House, Willingale Road, Fyfield, Ongar, CM5 0PY	Grade II listed building application for replacement of all windows and doors on the south and east facing elevations.	Councillors had no comments
EPF/0283/25	Stanlea, 170 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0JY	Proposed garage conversion, two storey rear extension and new roof over.	Councillors had no comments.

2024/25.178 Planning Updates

To below planning matters were noted:

Reference	Address	Description	Note
EPF/0374/25	Paslow Common Farm, Nine Ashes Road, Blackmore High, CM4 0JY	Application for approval of details reserved by condition 15 'Surface Water Disposal' on planning permission EPF/1597/21 (Redevelopment of commercial site to provide 9no. dwellings with associated access, hardstanding, landscaping and parking). Planning Application: EPF/0374/25	The Parish Council is not able to comment on this application.
EPF/0397/25	Little Acre Farm, Norton Lane, Norton Mandeville, High Ongar, CM4 0LN	Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3'Foul and Surface Water disposal' and condition 4 'Contamination' on planning permission EPF/1225/19 (Construction of a detached bungalow dwelling with associated garden area after the	The Parish Council is not able to comment on this application.

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		demolition of existing stables and container buildings). Planning Application: EPF/0397/25	
EPF/0154/25	Former Larkins Farm, 199 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Ongar, CM4 0JY	Non Material Amendment to EPF/2601/18 (Demolition of an existing structure and replacement with 2 x detached dwellings with associated new vehicle crossover, garages, landscaping and other associated works) Planning Application: EPF/0154/25	Approved with Conditions
EPF/0148/25	Ashlings Farm, Ashlings Farm Cottage, Ashlings Farm Lane, High Ongar, Ingatestone, CM4 0JU	Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 'External finishes' on planning permission EPF/2166/24 (Variation to condition 2 'Plan no's' on planning permission EPF/1859/19 (Proposed demolition of existing house and garage with erection of x 3 no. new chalet style dwellings) Drawing JAN 025 002 showing external finishing to EPF/2166/24 condition 3. Planning Application: EPF/0148/25	Partially approved.

2024/25.179 Finance

179.1 Councillors noted the bank balance as of 28th February 2025 being £49,395.96.

179.2 No bank reconciliation was provided this month. The Council has requested some changes be made to the bank rec to provide further detail. These changes will be made accordingly to the next bank reconciliation.

179.3 It was noted that all moneys from the Lloyds account have now been moved to Unity Trust Bank. The Lloyds account is no longer in use. Council requested for this account to be closed.

179.4 The below payments were agreed:

Payee	Description	Method	£ (inc VAT)
Bonnie Jones	Clerks Salary (February)	PAID	£499.30
Electrical Testing Ltd	Electrical and structural testing of all 19 High Ongar street lights	Online	£1556.40
Skilled Tech Ltd	Microsoft 365 Subscriptions and Support (February)	Online	£87.13
Bonnie Jones	Use of Office (included in budget)	Online	£312.00
TBS Hygiene Ltd	Dog waste bin collection (February)	Online	£29.28
High Ongar Village Hall	January – Main Hall hire February – Meeting room hire	Online	£64.00
Bonnie Jones	Essex Record Office photo copies	Online	£8.55

2024/25.180 Outstanding Matters

The below agenda items for the April meeting were requested:

- Co-option
- Update from Cllr Catlin about Speeding

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- Millfield parking update
 - VE day

2024/25.181 Date of the next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th April.

2024/25.182 Exclusion of the public and the press

Land Adjacent to 202 Nine Ashes Road, Blackmore

The Clerk updated the Council on her findings at the Essex Records Office. A further update will be provided at the next meeting.

Meeting close: 21:05