

12th October 2023

TO: ALL Members of the High Ongar Parish Council

NOTICE OF MEETING & AGENDA

You are summonsed to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council which will be held on **WEDNESDAY 18th OCTOBER 2023 at 7.30 pm** to transact the business shown in the Agenda below. This meeting will be held in the High Ongar Village Hall.

Susan De Luca

Locum Clerk to the Council

Members of the Public and Press are Invited to attend this meeting

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DAY AND DATE OF THE MEETING

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 🖐

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence.

2. OTHER ABSENCES

To **NOTE** any absences for which no apology has been received.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To **RECEIVE** any Declarations of Interest by Members.

A Member with a personal interest in a matter must consider whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Non Pecuniary or Other Pecuniary Interest, and declare it accordingly. A Member who is unsure as to how to declare their interest should seek independent advice

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 🖐

📄 To **APPROVE**, as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th September 2023 as attached at *Appendix 1*.

5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public for a period determined by the Chairman of the Meeting.

Please NOTE the Clerk may have to note questions and respond to them after the Meeting.

6. REPORT OF THE CLERK

Members are asked to **NOTE** that the Locum Clerk has been working on all items within this Agenda. Various information items have been received electronically and forwarded on to Councillors, who can ask for further details of these items if so required. Any Councillor who wishes further information on any item please do not hesitate to contact the Locum Clerk for further updates. In particular work has been carried out on the following matters:

- Administrative Matters
- Land Ownership & Charity Commission Matters in relation to the Village Hall
- Village Hall Accounts & Administrative Items

7. REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS 🖐

a) Chairman's Report – verbal report

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- b) Vice Chairman's Report –
- c) District & County Councillors Reports - District Councillors are invited to submit a written report if they are unable to attend the Parish Council Meeting
- d) Parish Councillors - verbal reports will be received if no written report has been submitted
- Ward Councillor Report – Paslow Common
 - Ward Councillor Report - High Ongar
 - Ward Councillor Report- Norton Mandeville
- e) Highways Report – Members are asked to NOTE that ECC have recently issued an electronic link for Highways Updates the Clerk will advise Members of this at the meeting.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

To approve the current statement of accounts and list of payments (to be tabled).

9. COUNCIL ASSETS

At the last meeting one of the land assets that the Clerk was asked to look at is in a field within an area of land (*A Strip*) close to Paslow Common Farm. Members were advised that the land had been purchased by a German consortium over 40 years ago and that the land is currently being contract farmed by Gaymers. Members were also advised that the land had some concrete boundary posts however over the years they have been dislodged by the farm machinery. We had run a check at the Land Registry and this area of land was designated as un-registered, however Members felt that the land belonged to the Parish Council. Members agreed at the last meeting that further research would be necessary to be presented to Council to see whether or not Members would wish to pursue registering ownership. The cost of registering land for transparency purposes is approximately £2000, per parcel. However we need to ensure that we have the relevant evidence, this evidence could include Statutory Declarations stating that the land is in the ownership of the Parish Council. Members are asked to CONFIRM if they wish to move ahead in this matter.

10. HIGH ONGAR VILLAGE HALL

Members are advised that the locum clerk is continuing in the research, she now believes that the following is correct, and this is an interim Report:

- There was a S106 agreement by Braces Wood Yard where land was given to the Parish Council who in turn allowed the new High Ongar Village Hall to be built on the land, together with a Green Area (attached to the Hall)– research is still continuing within the accounts of the Village Hall to ascertain what financial sums are determined to have been spent
- In the paperwork and documentation that I have seen so far, The Parish Council is deemed to be the Custodian Trustee of the High Ongar Village Hall, which means that if the hall failed, either financially or administratively, for whatever reason, the Property & Land would be under the 'control' of the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee as it holds the 'land in trust' for the Charity, however it would not be able to materialise its assets, as it is simply a 'holding body' for the asset, therefore it could not sell it to raise funds
- However, The Old Village Hall was sold and money from that Village Hall, which was a Charity was put towards the building of the New High Ongar Village Hall, I have seen documentation that clearly states that the Parish Council could determine what uses those monies were put to, in a letter from the Charity Commission.
- Money was clearly sourced from Other Funders – Including Wren Environmental, the Parish Council, as the New Village Hall would have cost a considerable sum to have been constructed.

Members are asked to **NOTE** the above, and that investigation is still continuing, and it may take a while to 'marry the documentation together and deduce a conclusion.

The Locum Clerk has collected all the files and paperwork from the Village Hall and has boxed up all of the accounts from 1999 – 2021. She has made a start on some of the correspondence with regard to the Village Hall and its construction. A further update will be given at the meeting.

11. PRINCESS DIANA GARDEN

At the last meeting Members were unsure as to who maintained this area or as to who it was registered to especially as the land had previously seemingly been maintained. The locum clerk had spoken to a contact at EFDC, and they thought that some years ago this area had previously been maintained by EFDC, however as the land was unregistered it seems that EFDC no longer have this on their work schedules. As this would be a maintenance project, grant funding could not be applied for. Members are asked how they would now feel it appropriate to move forward in this matter.

12. WEBSITE & IT

The Website is now in operation changes are gradually being made. It is expected to see this more up to date over the next few months.

13. ROLLING PROGRAMME FROM AUDIT

New NALC Model Standing Orders/Financial Regulations were circulated at the last meeting and Members were asked to contact the Clerk if they had any queries, otherwise confirmation that these would be ADOPTED at this meeting, would be placed on the Agenda.

14. RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND (MANAGED BY EFDC)

The Locum Clerk has made 2 Enquiries relating to this fund – (Capital Projects).

- Joint Storage With The School
- Outside Social Area for The Village Hall.

Confirmation as to whether or not a bid can be made for these 2 projects is still awaited.

15. PLANNING

To consider the following matters in relation to the following Planning Applications:

- A) There are currently NO PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM EFDC
- B) Future Development – Chelmsford Road- Border of High Ongar and Ongar/Shelley the site is designated in the EFDC Local Plan as:

ONG.R4 Land North of Chelmsford Road, Ongar, CM5 9LX.

Site Address: Land North of Chelmsford Road, Ongar, CM5 9LX

Settlement: Ongar

Proposed Use: Residential

Size (Ha) 4.30

Site Description: The site comprises agricultural land and scrubland. It is bounded by residential Development to the West, North West and South, playing fields to the North East and agricultural land to the East. Indicative Development Area (Ha) 4.28 Indicative Net Density (DpH) 43

Approximate Net Capacity 163 (Dwellings)

A Verbal Report will be given by The Locum Clerk.

- C) Update on Sunak Restaurant – If Available

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

In the event that the Agenda contains Exempt (pink) pages, or an item needs to be discussed confidentially, to **CONSIDER** the following motion to be proposed by the Chairman:

“That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business

about to be discussed.”

There are currently **NO** confidential items to be considered