

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held in the Clavering Christian Centre, Stortford Road, on Monday 8th January 2023 at 7:30pm called by the Chairman

The meeting was opened at 7.30 pm

In attendance:

Councillors: Cllr S. Gill (Chairman), Cllr F Bullen, Cllr R Couchman, Cllr K Elliston, Cllr F Smither & Cllr M Ryan

Clerk to the Council /RFO: Miss Louisa Kwame

Three members of the public and District Councillor Edward Oliver

181 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and informed all that she had attended the 'Tea and Chat' in Wicken Bonhunt on Thursday 14th December.

182 Apologies for absence

None

183 Declaration of Interest

Cllr Smither declared a non-registerable interest which could be prejudicial for Agenda Item 189 as a member of the Parish Church. Cllr Elliston declared a disclosable pecuniary interest for Agenda Item 189 as a tenant of the Christian Centre/Parish Church.

Cllr R Couchman made a statement that at this meeting and any future meetings his connection with the Balaam family is to be regarded as an acquaintance rather than a close acquaintance. The Chair reminded that Cllr Couchman that following his training she expected him to act as advised by the trainer on the Code of Conduct and the Monitoring Officer and that it is the Public's perception of this interest.

184 Public Participation Session

The Chair introduced the new Clerk to the Council/ RFO

Representatives of Keep Clavering Rural (KCR) reminded the Council there is a list of community volunteers willing to help on the Neighbourhood Plan. KCR will be attending the Planning Appeal hearing on 30th January and had evidence on flooding they would share with the Parish Council. An objection letter has been submitted to UDC regarding Clatterbury Lane East.

A representative from the cricket club spoke on a request submitted in December regarding the mowing of the cricket pitch and a contribution/grant towards diesel and detailed further financial information of refurbishment/machinery replacement being undertaken.

185 District and County Councillors Reports

The County Councillor was not in attendance and had not sent in a report. Cllr Oliver had provided a report which had been circulated to councillors.

Two members of the public arrived, having attended the Village Hall in error. With the permission of the Council, the Chair allowed them to speak if they wished. One parishioner asked if an email they had sent to the Clerk on a planning application on the agenda had been received and this was confirmed.

186 To approve and sign minutes of the previous meetings

Full Council Meeting 11th December 2023:

Proposal to approve and sign the minutes. **P:** Cllr Elliston **S:** Cllr Smither **In Fav:** Unanimous.

187 Clerk's Report

A written report of works undertaken by the Chairman for purposes of business continuity in the absence of an appointed Clerk was received.

Cllr Couchman noted correspondence regarding the Neighbourhood Plan. Chair to arrange summaries to be sent.

He asked for information on correspondence on a Planning application and was advised this would be covered in an agenda item to follow.

He asked have any letters from parishioners from Stickling Green concerning cutting of the green in the past few months been received – if so, a copy has been requested. Chair confirmed that she has no knowledge of any letters.

He asked if there were any letters from a named parishioner that month. The Chair was unaware of any

188 Planning

The chair apologised for her incorrect advice regarding the definition of a Section 73 planning application; It is a 73A that is retrospective.

188.1 To be commented on

Planning Ref	Location	Proposal	Comments
UTT/23/3135/FUL Response by 18 th Jan	Land East Of Clatterbury Lane	Proposed erection of 5 no. single storey dwellings with associated cart lodge parking, landscaping and new vehicular access	
UTT/23/3155/CLP	Russets Honey Lane	Proposed roof mounted solar PV	
UTT/23/3158/HHF	Skylarks Wicken Road	Erection of double garage	

UTT/23/3135/FUL: After discussion it was agreed that vehicle access is dangerous due to location and is a potential danger for pedestrian access and the development is not in keeping with Clavering. CPC would usually object to a development that far away from all amenities as not sustainable. CPC could ask UDC to restrict height of buildings and keep the single storey of the houses as proposed.

Proposed to object, with response referencing the UDC Local Plan and also NPPF as required of the Council, using the objection template for housing in this area of the village and a request for the heights to be restricted if permissions granted.

P: Cllr Smither S: Cllr Bullen In Fav: Unanimous

UTT/23/3155/CLP: No comment to be made

P: Cllr Gill, In Fav: 3, Abst: 1

UTT/23/3158/HHF: A previous application has already been approved for a similar build, however a comment will be submitted to UDC with a request that, if the permission is granted, there are no allowed permissions to convert the premises into a 2 storey building

P: Cllr Gill S: Cllr Smither. In Fav: Unanimous

188.2 Uttlesford District Council (UDC) Decisions

Planning reference	Address	Proposal	Decision
UTT/23/2602/FUL	Brices Farm Butts Green Valance Road	Proposed erection of agricultural barn for the storage of straw. Retrospective surfacing of agricultural track and hardstanding. Proposed additional hardstanding.	Approved with conditions

UTT/23/2613/HHF & 2614/LB	Elm Cottage Further Ford End Road	Proposed internal alterations and extension including removal of existing derelict conservatory	Refused
UTT/23/2615/FUL	Rowan Unit Funstons Commercial Centre Arkesden Road	Section 73A Retrospective application for extract fan for processed warm air	Refused
UTT/23/2626/LB	Wakefares Hill Green	The removal of part of a section of a 20th century softwood timber partition wall dividing the end room and middle room.	Refused
UTT/23/2801/HHF	Casa Mia Stortford Road	Raising of roof at rear to create a first floor. Rear extension including raised pitched roof, side dormers, rooflights, solar panels and rear and side fenestration. Demolition of existing rear chimney	Refused

188.3 UDC Planning Committee Meeting 13th December 2023 – S62A/2023/0025 Land to the North of Eldridge Close Outline Planning for 28 houses. Cllr Gill reported on her attendance at UDC's Planning Committee (see Meeting Documents Appendix 1)

188.4 Appeals:

APP/C1570/W/23/3322904: Land West of Colehill Close, Middle St. (UTT/22/1718/FUL) The date of the hearing will be 30th January 2024. Cllrs Gill and Smither will attend to make representation and/or answer questions on behalf of the Parish Council.

188.5 Land off Stickling Green Road – Land West of Clatterbury Lane

It was noted that the developer responded to the email sent by CPC advising that CPC would meet 'without prejudice to the outcome' under the UDC Community Involvement Protocol, stating developer had already submitted a Section 62A application directly to PINS which was in process of validation, but that they would contact UDC directly as no PreApp had taken place.

Cllr Elliston and Cllr Smither left the room at this point.

189 Motion from Cllr Couchman

The motion was received from Cllr Couchman. "The Clavering Parish Council reinstates an annual donation of £640 towards the maintenance of Clavering Parish Churchyard and makes provision for this in the 2024/5 budget" (see Meeting Documents December 2023 Appendices 8a (Epson 0065) and 8b)

Councillors have been made aware of the recent NALC Legal Briefing L02-23 and Legal Topic Note LTN 31E. In discussion, it was noted that the Parochial Church had not made grant request and their financial affairs were unknown. It was acknowledged that that the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is required to be considered in the 2024-25 budget which is high.

A grant could be can be factored into next year's financial plan (2025-6) when more grant information about the NP was known

The motion was proposed – P: Cllr Couchman S: Cllr Bullen, in Favour – 2, Against – 2

The Chair exercised her casting vote against the motion. The Chair observed that it does not stop the church from coming to the PC in the year to apply for a grant as there may be monies available in reserves.

Cllr Elliston and Cllr Smither returned to the room.

190 Clavering Cricket Club Grant Request

A request from Clavering Cricket Club for a grant in respect of the costs of cutting the cricket pitch at Upper Hill Green was considered (See Meeting Documents Appendix 2a & 2b-Epson.0001). After discussion Cllr Ryan proposed £350 was granted to the cricket club for grass cutting costs. There was no seconder, the motion failed. The Chair expressed an opinion that she hoped the cricket club understood that the PC has to write and fund the Neighbourhood Plan for next year and the CPC was not yet fully aware of costs or the grants available

As a PC, the Chair felt that a 5-year finance plan would be beneficial to organise finances for a specific reserve so that the community could access this for local yearly projects.

191 Writing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Clavering

Fact finding was carried out by Chairman in absence of an appointed Clerk re costings for the writing of a Neighbourhood Plan and the grants currently available (see Meeting Documents Appendix 3) Documentation was received before Christmas from the RCCE providing guidance to create a concise plan concentrating on certain areas. KCR may be able to offer an existing professional Landscape Assessment for a fee. Three quotes should be sought in future for the Planning Consultant required.

Cllr Bullen left the room for a few minutes and returned before the vote.

Proposal to set up a working party to investigate the next steps of the plan, setting up a questionnaire and determine the method of setting up a steering group. P: Cllr Smither. S: Cllr Bullen F: Unanimous Agreed that Cllrs Smither, Ryan and Gill plus a representative from KCR would form the working party. DC Oliver declined an invite to join the group.

192 Finance Part 1

- a. The draft budget was received, 2024-2025 (see Meeting Documents, appendix 4 Tabs v. 4 and Reserves 31.12.23) Adjustments made to the draft budget: Payments: Removed grant to PCC, removed grant to Clavering CC. Grant to Jubilee Field reduced from £950 to £350 Total payments figure reduced from £32,836 to £31,246 .Proposal to agree the Budget for 2024-25 P: Cllr Bullen S: Cllr Gill In Fav Unanimous
- b. Proposal to accept and set the parish precept at £30,576.00 This is an increase 37.41% on a Band D therefore the Band D actual will be £45.03 which is an increase of £ 12.26 per month.
P: Gill. S: Ryan. F: unanimous.
The Chair and the Clerk signed the precept demand form.

Cllr Couchman exits the room

193 Allotments

- a. Chair provided an update on the signs for the gates – these have arrived.
- b. Chair noted that two parishioners have expressed an interest in taking on plots.
- c. Allotment rents - Six holders have yet to pay. Invoices were sent late October 2023, with payment requested by 7th December. Reminder letters will be sent at the end of January.

194 Village Green, Parish Land and Parish Assets

- a. Tree Survey – a verbal update was given on the tree survey status – yet to be determined
- b. No quotes have been tabled for the refurbishing the metal bench at Hill Green and the two in Dick Ball Meadow.
- c. To note that workmen parking has ceased on the track to the Grain Barn at Hill Green, the hazardous black piping and that the owner of the Grain Barn has given his written undertaking to make good all damage caused to the edge of the green and the access track. The final car has been removed
- d. Village Green beside Hillside – A verbal report was received from Cllrs Smither and Bullen. The owners of Hillside have given permission for access to their land if needed and then asked that the PC hedge is to be taken down by approx. 2 meters to the same as their hedge
It was proposed to instruct the Clerk to get quotes for reduction of the hedge height. P: Cllr Smither. S: Cllr Gill. F: unanimous
- e. Quotes to remove Lime boles on Hill Green – Quotes being chased
- f. Footpath 16- Report received from Cllr Ryan that she is unable to do the work. Clerk to seek quotes as authorised in last month's meeting.

As it was 9.35 pm the Chairman proposed that Standing Order 3x was suspended to allow the business of meeting to continue P: Cllr Ryan S; Cllr Bullen IN Fav Unanimous

195 Risk Assessment Book

- a) Defibrillators – defibs 'rescue ready' 23rd December

- b) Other matters for Noting: Pothole outside Greenlands – depth is damaging cars.
 Cllrs noted that the Stansted main road is closed next week and the diversion route will be through Clavering and Wicken Bonhunt. Cllr Bullen to contact Wicken Parish Chair to ascertain status report back to Cllr Gill, Cllr Gill will phone ECCH urgently to escalate to get it sorted. It will be reported to ECC Cllr Gooding. P: Cllr Ryan S: Cllr Bullen In Fav: Unanimous

196 Representative Reports

- a. **Footpaths** – Cllr Elliston reported that the bridleway from Ford End to Roastose Green had a fallen tree which has now been cleared. There is now another tree which is completely blocking the way.
 b. **Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)** – It was noted that Exec. Finance Sub Committee Meeting 18th January, Exec Meeting 1st February.

197 ‘Carols on the Green’ Tuesday 19th December 2023 6.30pm

It was noted that Revd P. Cable was unfortunately unwell, so Cllr Smither led the opening prayer. Over 70 people in attendance and £167.37 was collected for Clavering Care & handed over directly to Jill Young. The expenses were approved for the disposable cups (£9.40 incl. VAT) and bulbs for light lanterns (£16.47 incl. VAT) (Budgeted Item: Community Carols £150. Mulled Wine purchase approved November Meeting Item 142)

P: Cllr Elliston S: Cllr Smither, In Fav: Unanimous

Cllr Gill thanked those councillors who attended for the provision of mince pies and savouries

198 Training

Noted

Noted that Cllr Smither undertakes New Councillor Training at EALC in March

All remaining members of the public left the meeting.

199 Finance - Part 2

- a. Bank Mandates – Cllr Elliston and Ryan have validated themselves with Saffron Building Society. Cllr Gill to check that it has all been done.
 b. The full accounts analyses, budget, bank reconciliations and reserves for the quarter ended 31st December 2023 (see Meeting Documents Appendix 5) have been received. No questions were raised. The chair asked Cllr Couchman when he would oversee these as this was outstanding from the previous quarter. Cllr Couchman stated he would do so once the new Clerk/RFO was settled in the role.
 c. A verbal update was given as all funds due to Castle Water have been settled and the payment charges they have levied for late payments and interest are not due.
 d. Proposal to suspend Financial Regulation (6.4) as expenses for the CPC’s Carols on the Green are due to Cllr Gill and as there are currently only two authorised signatories on the NatWest account, she would be a beneficiary of cheque n. 2175 and its signatory. P: Cllr Elliston S: Cllr Smither In Fav Unanimous
 Proposal that all cheques be approved: P: Cllr Elliston S: Cllr Ryan In Fav: 4 Abst: 1 as beneficiary of cheque

Credit Received	a/c 16513215 Business Reserve 29.12.2023 £0.14 interest a/c 67217796 Business Current 27.12.2023 £75.00 Allotments a/c Saffron B/S 31.12.23 £285.14 interest
Wages s/o	None
Balance at NatWest Bank current account 31st December 2023	£21,069.34
Balance of Clerk’s Expenses Account 31st December 2023	£196.80
Balance of NatWest Reserve Account 31st December 2023	£118.16
Balance of Saffron B/S Account 31st December 2023	£30,801.72

Clerk's Expenses Account	Detail	Amount	Total	VAT
11.12.23	Force 36	18.00	£21.60	£3.60
8.12.23	Corsto	£29.00	£34.80	£5.80
Total			£56.40	

Cheques to approve:

Cheque	Detail	Amount	Total	VAT
002173	Clavering Village Hall Replacement cheque as Bank refused to process cheque number 002163. Cheque returned by CVH and cancelled		£40.00	
002174	Saffron Signs		£152.00	
002175	Mr B & Mrs SM Gill Expenses for Carols Mulled Wine: £30.00, 100 x disposable cups: £9.40, 3 light bulbs £16.47	£51.56	£55.87	£4.31
002176	Transfer to Clerk's Account		£56.40	
002177	Clavering Christian Centre Hall Hires 28 th Nov & 4 th Dec 2023		£60.00	
Total cheques to be paid			£364.27	
Total cheques outstanding	2124 – Letchwood (beneficiary chased, expires 4.1.24) 2161 – P Abrahams 2164 - P Abrahams 2165- EALC 2168 – P Savic	£140.00 £250.00 £1,000.00 £228.00 £100.00	£1,718.00	
Balance after cheques			£18,987.07	

200 To advise the Clavering Parish Council Meetings until June 2024

12th February, 11th March, April 8th, 13th May (Annual Council Meeting), 20th May Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Gill is waiting for 13th May for Annual Council Meeting venue to be confirmed.
Apologies from Cllr Smither received for the meeting to be held on 12th February.

201 Items for the next agenda

NP Working Party and Steering Group
Grass cutting around the seat in Valance corner.

202 Planning Enforcement Update

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and in accordance with 3d pursuant to Standing Order 11 and 20, It is resolved that the Public are excluded from any discussion on this item as it concerns confidential information. P: Cllr Gill S; Cllr Ryan In Fav: \$ Abst: 1
A letter from UDC was received.

203 Access Licence Agreement over a Registered Village Green

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and in accordance with 3d pursuant to Standing Order 11, it is resolved that the Public are excluded from any discussion on this item as it concerns a legal matter. P: Cllr Gill S; Cllr Ryan In Fav: 4 Against 1
A verbal update was received. The Parish Council to wait on contact from the landowner.
Clerk given further instructions.

204 Close of Meeting and announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Full Council will be held at the Clavering Village Hall on Monday 12th February 2024 at 19:30.

The meeting was closed at 21.55pm

DRAFT