

## LITTLE EASTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>h</sup> May 2016 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall

Present: Cllrs Chris Audritt (Chairman), Doug Wyatt (Vice-Chairman), Jess Rush, Andy Dodsley, Chris Hindley. Also present were Jackie Deane (Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

1. Annual election of Chairman – Chris Audritt was elected as Chairman.
2. Annual election of Vice-Chairman – Doug Wyatt was elected as Vice-Chairman.
3. Apologies for absence were received from Simon Walsh (ECC). There were no declarations of interest on agenda items.
4. Minutes of the last meeting and the Annual Parish Assembly were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
5. Public Forum – Overgrown hedges in Duck Street and Park Road were reported along with potholes and water settling on the road. The Clerk advised that highways defects can be reported by members of the public on the County Council website. The Clerk was asked to contact the Highways Rangers and the agent of a rented property in Park Road regarding hedge and ditch maintenance issues.
6. **Representatives:**
  - Footpaths** – Jess Rush will organise an annual walk of paths. Throughout the year any reports of obstructions or other queries will be investigated, contacting landowners, wherever possible, and reporting back to the next meeting or notifying the Clerk if urgent. All footpaths and the parish boundary can be viewed on the Essex County Council website and faults or obstructions can be reported on the ECC website by members of the public.
  - Playground** – Nigel Holden carries out a weekly inspection of play equipment.
  - Finance** – Chris Hindley oversees the procedure for managing the financial affairs, reviews are carried out in February and October with the Clerk/RFO to include insurance, risk assessment, budgets, Clerk's pay and financial agreements. Only one representative is needed until the Council changes to online banking.
  - Village Hall** – Chris Audritt is a trustee and attends Memorial Hall meetings, reporting back to the next Parish Council meeting and making representations at the Memorial Hall meetings on behalf of the Parish Council when required.
  - Gardens of Easton Lodge** – Andy Dodsley - attending meetings and updating the PC on relevant matters and their fundraising activities.
  - Gravel Pit** – Chris Audritt and Chris Hindley - attending annual meetings and a site visit in September, keeping the council, landowners and residents updated on any matters advised during the year and passing on any questions or concerns to the County Council. Additional meetings can be arranged with the County Council if required.
  - Stansted Airport** – Chris Audritt - attending quarterly SSE Parish meetings and passing on any updates.
  - Website** – Andy Dodsley - monitoring and adding content as required
  - Charities** – Jess Rush (including Alexia Wilson Trust representative) - keeping up to date on the local charities, reporting any fundraising or other news and making recommendations for charity donations (usually at the end of the financial year).

**Staffing** - Note: There will be no staffing committee and staffing matters will be addressed by the full council.

7. **Contracts and agreements:**

**Memorial Hall** – The Parish Council pays £10 hall rental for each meeting. This is paid in January to the Memorial Hall Committee for the 8 meetings planned for the year and additional meetings are paid at the same rate as required.

**Memorial Hall** – Annual rent of £25, is paid to the Parish Council in January, by the Trustees.

**Village beacon** - Annual rent of £25 is paid to Mr Roger Board who has the village beacon on his land.

**Cricket Club** 10-year agreement – May 2007-2017 - stipulates that half of the annual grass cutting costs will be reimbursed by the Club.

**Street light maintenance contract** – A&J Lighting, 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2013 to 31st Aug 2018 is £230pa plus an annual inspection and replacement of parts as required.

**Electricity** for street lights – unmetered tariff with E-ON.

**Grass cutting** – MD Landscapes on agreed price per cut, no contracted terms and will be reviewed when a change is proposed to the specification or pricing.

**Grounds maintenance** – SNH Garden Services – rough grass, planters and general grounds maintenance is managed by the Clerk up to a monthly limit of £200.

**Website** – The website was set up in 2014 by Activ Web Design – an annual maintenance fee of £150 will increase to £180 for 2016.

**Tree maintenance** – the 3-year programme has just been completed and a survey should be carried out in 2017.

8. Finance:

1) An annual report was given by the Clerk with an explanation of the expenditure compared to the previous year and the amount kept in general reserve by the Council.

2) External Audit and Annual Return – The internal audit has been completed with no items for attention. The Council resolved for the Chairman to complete the relevant page of the Annual Return.

3) Insurance – It was agreed to renew the Aon policy.

4) Monthly finance – The balance on account on 1<sup>st</sup> May was £17,864.56.

Payments: R Blackwell £984 (basketball concrete base), J Deane £755.53, Post Office (HMRC) £280, Acorn Services £864 (paving cleaning and play surface repair), E-On £29.42 and A&J Lighting £23.10, MD Landscapes £234.

9. Community events – The litter pick will take place in mid-June, organised by Chris Hindley. The Parish Council would support any event put on at the pub for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. A family fun sports day will be held on 14<sup>th</sup> August and a family Christmas party will be held in the Memorial Hall.

10. Representatives' reports – Chris Audritt reported on plans for a rededication of the war memorial to take place on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> May. The Gardens of Easton Lodge will hold its AGM with a barbecue to follow on 9<sup>th</sup> June. A report was received from the County Councillor.

11. Clerk's report and correspondence – The councillor vacancy will continue to be advertised in the parish magazine and on the website but members should actively encourage interest in a new councillor to be co-opted as soon as possible.

12. Planning – UTT/16/1407/HHF – Erection of 2 front and 2 rear dormers to serve converted roof space – the application was circulated after the agenda notification. No comment was made at the meeting and councillors were invited to forward comment to the Clerk after the meeting.

An appeal against a refused application UTT/16/0069/HHF was lodged on 04.05.2016 for Margaret's Cottage, Park Road APP/C1570/D/16/3149145. The appeal will be determined on the basis of written representations.

There was no update on the UDC Local Plan Consultation and Call for Sites Assessment.

Public Inquiry update - a letter was received from the Department of Communities and Local Government regarding the Land Securities West of Great Dunmow appeal, inviting comment on recent legal rulings. The District Council will be required to give an update on the current status of housing supply and any progress on the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that there was no relevant information to be given by the Parish Council.

13. Items for the next agenda – Assets of Community Value - The Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground have a restriction on sale registered at Land Registry after being identified by the Parish Council as assets of community value. Assets have been listed nationally as assets of community value (community centres, parks or facilities for children, and privately owned facilities such as pubs and shops considered to be valuable for the wellbeing of communities) under the Right to Bid legislation. For the next agenda, other local assets will be considered.

14. Date of next meeting - 20<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall  
Meeting closed at 9.30pm.