

Little Easton Parish Council

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Minutes of the **Little Easton Parish Council Meeting** held at the **MEMORIAL HALL** on **WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7PM**

Present: Cllr Sarah Sidgwick (Chair) Cllr Katy Rodwell Cllr Stephen Sidgwick
 Cllr Rebecca Fowell
 Dist Cllr Michael Tayler
 01 member(s) of the public

21/146	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cnty Cllr Martin Foley offered his apologies – other meeting commitments
21/147	DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING No interest declared
21/148	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2022 RESOLUTION – Approve the minutes as an accurate record: Proposed Cllr Stephen Sidgwick, Seconded Cllr Rebecca Fowell– unanimous agreement
21/149	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION Members of the public may raise questions about and comment on items on the Agenda OR of import. Session is limited to 15 minutes (3 minutes per person with no repetition of a previous question) No public participation during this session
21/150	RECEIVE THE DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS Dist Cllr Michael Tayler- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commented on the latest change in status for UDC Planning department with certain applications having the choice to now be assessed by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and not the UDC Planning department; it is noted that either route does still allow the PC its Statutory Consultee status although with reduced time to comment if an application is submitted for assessment by PINS. ➤ Local Plan - even more important to be completed and approved. Cnty Cllr Martin Foley – Reports at APPENDIX A
21/151	NOTE CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE Full report at APPENDIX B
21/152	AGREE DATE FOR THE CLERK'S ANNUAL APPRAISAL Date agreed as Thursday 10 March at 11am, venue to be agreed
21/153	FINANCE – RECEIVE STATEMENT & AGREE PAYMENTS – APPOINT AUTHORISER RESOLUTION – Approve the finance statement and payments: Proposed Cllr Sarah Sidgwick, Seconded Cllr Katy Rodwell – unanimous agreement Appointed Authoriser – Cllr Sarah Sidgwick Finance statement – APPENDIX C

21/154	<p>PLANNING – REVIEW AND COMMENT ON ANY CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS OR APPEALS</p> <p>UTT/21/1708/OP Site Address: Land East Of Highwood Quarry Little Easton Description of development: Outline planning application with the details of external access committed. Appearance, landscaping, layout (including internal access), scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: between 1,000 and 1,200 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 21,500 sq m gross of additional development for Use Classes: C2 (residential institutions care/nursing home); E(a-f & g(i)) (retail, indoor recreation, health services and offices); F1(a) (Education); F2(a-c) (local community uses); car parking; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings, routes, open spaces and public realm and landscaping within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; and engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans. Application reference: UTT/21/1708/OP Appellant's name: L S Easton Park Development Ltd Appeal reference: APP/C1570/W/21/3289775 Appeal start date: 02.02.2022 RULE(6) STATUS COMMENT SUBMISSION DATE - 04 MARCH 2022</p> <p>Parish Council, in conjunction with support from the PC Planning advisor, agreed that there was no new evidence to be submitted under Rule6 but that the PC confirm to the Inspectorate that their initial objections and support for UDC's arguments objecting to the application still remain.</p> <p>CLERK to copy in Mr William Allwood, Planning, UDC</p> <p>Update on proposed development - Land rear of The Stag PH (NOTE - Stag PH has been added to the District Council register of Assets of Community Value for five years)</p> <p>Owner of the Stag PH has appealed against the nomination as an Asset of Community Value.</p> <p>Cllr Stephen Sidgwick has expressed concerns to UDC CEO Mr. Peter Holt reference the approval for the development at the land rear of the Stag PH, requesting confirmation as to how the decision to approve was arrived at and sight of the video recording minuting a side meeting that occurred during the application's planning meeting; no response received at time of these minutes.</p>
21/155	<p>CONSIDER PROVISION OF GREEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE FROM UDC AT A COST OF £73.50 PER HOUR, FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION REQUIRED AND SITE FOR VEHICLE Defer provision until option for the service is advertised in the 5P magazine and other routes such as social media, to assess interest and possible take up of the service.</p>
21/156	<p>AGREE APPOINTMENT OF TREE WORKS CONTRACTOR, OPTION 1 £6,100 + VAT AND OPTION 2 £9,670 NO VAT RESOLUTION – Approve Option 1 Contractor be appointed: Proposed Cllr Sarah Sidgwick, Seconded Cllr Stephen Sidgwick – unanimous agreement</p> <p>CLERK to ACTION</p>
21/157	<p>CONFIRM DECISION ON WHETHER TO REPLACE BEACON POLE OR PURCHASE GAS FIRED MOBILE VERSION WITH SUITABLE STORAGE UNIT AND LOCATION</p>

	<p>RESOLUTION – Approve the purchase of a gas fired Beacon: Proposed Cllr Sarah Sidgwick, Seconded Cllr Rebecca Fowell– unanimous agreement CLERK to ACTION – to advise landowner of original beacon site and place order for gas fired Beacon and offer to remove original beacon pole stump.</p> <p>Item 21/163 Confirms outline plans for Jubilee celebrations and site for Beacon.</p>
21/158	<p>CONFIRM DECISION ON WHETHER TO REPAIR THE PLAY AREA FENCING OR CONTINUE TO PURSUE UPDATED PRICING TO RENEW ENTIRELY WITH A COATED METAL ALTERNATIVE Safety inspection report to be reviewed to ensure repair rather than replacement is an option. If OK to proceed with a repair council agreed to invite parish maintenance contractor to replace one known rotted fence post and advise on action to ensure play area gate closure speed is reduced as advised by safety report.</p> <p>CLERK to ACTION</p>
21/159	<p>APPROVE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS – PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED TO MEMBERS 21/159(i) – RETENTION POLICY 21/159(ii) – EMAIL POLICY 21/159(iii) – HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY RESOLUTION – Approve the adoption of the three Policies with one proviso that the Health & Safety policy working document be reviewed by an experienced individual and or the local authority sector support bodies, such that it may require amendments: Proposed Cllr Katy Rodwell, Seconded Cllr Stephen Sidgwick – unanimous agreement</p>
21/160	<p>AGREE ACTION ON REMAINING LEAVES ACCUMULATING ALONG THE PLAYING-FIELD EAST BOUNDARY Leaves currently scattered by the recent storms, have unearthed a metal pole with concrete attached to eon end. Request to grass cutting contractor to mow over the leaves during their regular visits to help the material mulch into the ground.</p> <p>CLERK to ATION</p>
21/161	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON SOLICITOR APPOINTMENT TO REVIEW MEM HALL LEASE DOCUMENTS Lease review completed to date, document circulated to members. Further review if required requires additional information to be supplied by the PC which is in hand.</p>
21/162	<p>REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS WAR MEMORIAL – pending appointment of a new councillor MEMORIAL HALL – Cllr Katy Rodwell & Sarah Sidgwick – Next meeting 08 March PLAY AREA – Cllr Rebecca Fowell – Safety report highlights Zip line/Goal mouth proximity, consider options to remedy. Play area fencing covered under Item 21/158 PARISH MAINTENANCE – Cllr Rebecca Fowell – Storm damage inspection PLANNING - LOCAL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Cllr Stephen Sidgwick – Resigned from working group due to personal commitments, NP group requires more members GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE – Cllr Katy Rodwell – Snowdrops open days well attended COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES – Confirm Cllr to adopt responsibility - TBC STANSTED AIRPORT – TBA HIGHWOODS QUARRY – Cllr Katy Rodwell – Next meeting due in March FOOTPATHS & HIGHWAYS – Cllr Rebecca Fowell – Nothing further to report at present</p>
21/163	<p>AGREE PLANNING FOR THE QUEEN’S JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS – APPOINT RESPONSIBILITIES</p>

	Suggestion for the Church, Little Easton Manor and PC to collaborate on a joint event for the parish to be held at the Manor grounds; to include siting the gas fired mobile Beacon, possibly a street party along the Manor driveway. Noted the PC can apply for limited funding towards a Jubilee event, PC required to notify UDC and ECC of celebration intentions once finalised.
21/164	ITEMS OF REPORT OR FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA Update on Jubilee celebrations, Play Area and playing-field maintenance 21/164(i) APPOINT CONTRIBUTOR TO 5P MAGAZINE Cllr Sarah Sidgwick to submit article
21/165	DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S) – COUNCIL MEETING 30 MARCH 2022 – 7pm – CLOSE – 9:08pm

Signed.....Date.....

APPENDIX A

PRECEPT LEVELS

The following precept levels have been received. Essex County Council met on 10 February 2022 and set their precept at £53,853,028. This results in a 2022/23 County Council Band D Council Tax of £1,401.12, an increase of £60.21(4.49%). This comprises a 1% increase for the 2022/23 adult social care precept, 1.5% 2021/22 deferred adult social care precept and a 1.99% increase for the general county fund.

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority met on 3 February 2022 and set their precept at £2,895,361. This results in a 2022/23 PFCC Fire and Rescue Authority Band D Council Tax of £75.33, an increase of £1.44 (1.95%) on the previous year.

The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex – Policing and Community Safety set their precept on 3 February 2022 at £8,398,969. This results in a 2022/23 PFCC Police Authority Band D Council Tax of £218.52, an increase of £9.99 (4.79%) on the previous year.

The Town & Parish Councils' precepts are detailed in Annex 1 and total £3,998,069. This results in an average Town/Parish Council Band D Council Tax of £104.02, an average increase of £4.24 (4.25%) on the previous year.

The Cabinet of Uttlesford District Council met on 14 February 2022 and decided to recommend a Council Tax Requirement of £6,403,772.

Approved by the UDC Council on 22 February 2022, this results in a District Council Band D Council Tax of £166.61, an increase of £5.00 (3.09%) on the previous year.

The total of all precepts levied is therefore £75,549,199. This results in an average total Band D Council Tax of **£1,965.60, an increase of £80.88 (4.29%) on the previous year**

Martin

Cllr Martin Foley
Chair - Youth Strategy Group

Cllr Foley - Parish Council Note: Major planning applications to be determined by the government

You may have read that the **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)** has decided to take control of major planning application decisions away from UDC. Our MP is a minister in that department.

The new process means that developers of Major Applications (either of 10 homes or more, or sites of 1 hectare or more) may bypass UDC and seek approval directly from the Planning Inspectorate, which is an agency of DLUHC. They are not obliged to do so and can decide to make their application to UDC. If they go via the Planning Inspectorate route, then in effect, our MP's department gets to decide what gets built in Uttlesford and where, not locally elected representatives.

The reason for this according to DLUHC is that UDC is refusing too many applications which end up being overturned on appeal. UDC's published rate for this is 16.5%. That shows that we have got planning refusals right most of the time but it seems it is not good enough for the DLUHC. Each of these refusals is a poor development that has been stopped.

The fact that DLUHC has seized control seems at odds with the data that shows that there are other authorities with higher appeal overturn rates where the government hasn't intervened in the same way. Amongst that group, it is interesting to note that UDC is the only authority controlled by an independent residents group.

What we do know is that Uttlesford has been one of the largest housebuilding districts in the country for more than the last 10 years. Without doubt this is due to our proximity to London and Cambridge, high profit margins for developers, and 3 failed Local Plans put together by the previous UDC administrations.

This administration at UDC is not apologetic for turning down poor developments that are overrunning our villages and towns. In fact holding developers to account is part of what residents elected us to do. UDC Leader, Cllr Petrina Lees said yesterday "We don't 'dance with [tycoon property] donors' – we stick up for residents. But for a decade Boris Johnson and his predecessors have said 'build, build, build'. Residents have repeatedly said 'no' to unsustainable development and locally voted the last administration out. So now they've decided that instead they want to be able to approve 1,000s of new houses via the back door. It is an appalling betrayal of local democracy." You can read more here: <https://wp.me/p4Mgx7-5Up>

We feel this is a politically motivated move that is designed to stifle local voices and concerns. However at UDC we are working with the DLUHC to understand what process they want to use and what it takes for local residents to be able to decide for themselves again.

What does this mean for parish councils? There is now real fear that their actions will open the door to more large developments overrunning our rural district. We all know that the previous UDC administration proposed new towns on the outskirts of Great Dunmow, Great Chesterford, and Stebbing, and large extensions to Saffron Walden, Elsenham and other places. These big-business developers can now go right to government for approval, and those submitting Local Plan proposals as part of the Call for Sites may also decide to apply immediately.

As parish councils, you should continue to respond to future planning applications and look out for guidance from UDC as the DLUHC makes it clear how they will require the new process to work. However, a key point about these procedural rules on the government website is that all consultees, including town and parish councils and residents only get 21 days to respond to applications and to make their representations. That is less than the usual month between parish council meetings, so you will need to be prepared and move fast. Again these moves will stifle local voices although we understand that town and parish councils and district ward councillors will have the opportunity to make additional representations if the Planning Inspector were to call an oral hearing. The only good news is that if a developer applies directly to the Planning Inspectorate and their application is refused, I understand that they cannot appeal.

I believe that this removal of local decision-making is an unwarranted and cynical political move and we will work hard to agree procedures which will protect residents' interests as much as is possible, continuing to respond to the communities' needs and wishes. Please stay tuned for updates from UDC.

Martin

APPENDIX B

CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE LEPC

23 February 2022

The Tree Survey has now been placed on the website.

The schedule of bench maintenance works has been started.

The office received the monthly update from the Policing team who cover Uttlesford along with the weekly crime data report.

Cricket Club removal of the broken roller from behind the Pavilion, it requires a trailer to remove from site.

The archive document relating to the railings installation from the 2015/16 project has been retrieved and supplied as requested by a member of the public.

Members were circulated correspondence from Essex, which, to summarise, explained their reviewing the Sand and Gravel needs and are mounting a Call for Sites for which there is a website linked from the ECC website.

EALC have advised the S137 power to spend has been lifted to £8.82 per registered elector – I am awaiting an update electoral register from UDC to confirm that amount but it would be in the region of c. £3,000.

Members have been sent details on the Ride London event this May received from ECC, some of the events are due to pass through a section of Dunmow, including Chelmsford Road and down Braintree road. There is a dedicated website for the event.

The office received a complaint of fly tipping from a member of the public, it is on PC land, the office has approached the neighbouring property to ask whether they had the resources to help the council and the community to remove the materials, they have agreed to look and advise whether they can assist.

The office submitted a request to Finchingfield PO for their considering extending their mobile PO service to this parish, yet to receive a response.

The council received details of a grant available from UDC for up to £700 towards Platinum jubilee celebrations, such as street parties and events around beacon lighting.

Post recent storms Cllr Stephen Sidgwick and Cllr Rebecca Fowell visited the playing-field to inspect any damaged or fallen trees/branches, some were temporarily partly sawn and moved away from footpaths and fences; pending full review of necessary works to remove from site.

Members have received various communications from the District and County Council plus other bodies who support this sector, such as the Police, the remainder of the items are covered by this Agenda.

APPENDIX C

LEPC February 2022 Finance Statement											
Precept		27,355									
								Budget	Net Exp	Diff +/-	
								27,355	14,116	-13,239	
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	FPO	Min Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	Net	Centre
Opening Balance							44,978.42	0.00		0.00	
09-Feb	DRAX	Lighting Electricity	66980/66981	DD		Y		48.11	2.29	45.82	Utility
10-Feb	ActivWeb	Web services	6630	DD		Y		42.00	7.00	35.00	Web
15-Feb	A&J Lighting	Lighting maintenance	35921	DD		Y		24.30	4.05	20.25	Lighting
24-Feb	Steve's Garden Servs	Parish maintenance	Inv 1 of 22	FPO				80.00		80.00	Maintnce
28-Feb	Employee	WFH	N/A	SO				26.00		26.00	Admin
24-Feb	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO							Clerk
24-Feb	Employee	Travel expenses	N/A	FPO				4.50		4.50	Admin
Feb							44,978.42	224.91	13.34	211.57	
Opening Balance	March						44,350.56	0.00		0.00	

DRAFT