

## Little Easton Parish Council

**IAN BROWN**  
**Parish Clerk**  
**& Responsible Financial Officer**  
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Minutes of the **MEETING OF LITTLE EASTON PARISH COUNCIL** held at the **Memorial Hall** on **WEDNESDAY 26 JULY 2023 AT 7:00PM**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
VACANT	
VACANT	
VACANT	
Cllr Emma Wells	YES
Cllr Simon Benstead	YES
Cllr Peter Bright	YES
Dist Cllr Richard Haynes	NO
Cnty Cllr Martin Foley	YES

06 member(s) of the public  
 Clerk – Mr Ian Brown

<b>23/075</b>	<b>NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Dist Cllr Richard Haynes – other meetings
<b>23/076</b>	<b>WITH REFERENCE TO THIS AGENDA MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO DECLARE ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTRABLE INTERESTS</b> None declared
<b>23/077</b>	<b>APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING 31 MAY AND 07 JULY EGM 2023</b> <b>RESOLUTION</b> – Approve the minutes of the meeting 31 May and 07 July 2023; Proposed Cllr Simon Benstead, Seconded Cllr Emma Wells - unanimous
<b>23/078</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION</b> 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)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bench licence approved – Notices advising motorists to slow down planted in the position of the bench, not public land but owned by Highways for which permission and licence is required; they were eventually removed.</li> <li>➤ Potential hazard at goal mouth on playing-field - Goal being renewed and goal mouth area to be subsequently repaired this Autumn.</li> <li>➤ Organisers have emailed street party attendees, positive response with offers of help for the next street party event.</li> </ul>
<b>23/079</b>	<b>RECEIVE THE DISTRICT &amp; COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS</b> Dist Cllr Richard Haynes (in his absence see report at APPENDIX A) Cnty Cllr Martin Foley Reports at <b>APPENDIX A &amp; APPENDIX B</b>
<b>23/080</b>	<b>NOTE CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE</b>

	Full report <b>APPENDIX C</b>
<b>23/081</b>	<p><b>FINANCE – RECEIVE STATEMENT &amp; AGREE PAYMENTS</b>  <b>RESOLUTION</b> – Approve finance statement and payments; Proposed Cllr Emma Wells; Seconded Cllr Simon Benstead</p> <p>Finance Statement – <b>APPENDIX D</b></p> <p><b>23/081(i) - APPOINT AUTHORISER</b>  Cllr to Authorise Cllr Simon Benstead</p> <p><b>23/081(ii) – COUNCILLORS TO NOTE BANK RECONCILIATION</b>  Noted - unanimous agreement</p>
<b>23/082</b>	<p><b>PROVIDE UPDATE ON INSTALLATION OF MR JACKSON MEMORIAL BENCH – CLERK</b>  Site meeting with Mrs Jackson and contractor to confirm the site, bench to be installed within four weeks</p>
<b>23/083</b>	<p><b>RECEIVE UPDATE ON LOCAL PLAN – CLLR PETER BRIGHT</b>  Local Plan leadership group meeting tonight to include verbal updates, local residents attending to contribute to the discussion</p>
<b>23/084</b>	<p><b>PLANNING – REVIEW AND COMMENT ON ANY CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS OR APPEALS AND OUTCOMES OR PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS</b></p> <p><b>UTT/23/1649/FUL</b>  <b>PROPOSAL:</b> Single storey front extension to form shop.  <b>LOCATION:</b> The Stag Inn Duck Street  <b>Comment date 28 July 2023</b>  APPROVAL - unanimous</p> <p><b>UTT/23/1598/FUL</b>  <b>PROPOSAL:</b> Section 73A Retrospective application for widening of existing gateway and drop kerb.  <b>LOCATION:</b> Street Record Mill End  <b>Comment date 11 August 2023</b>  OPPOSED – Proximity to the junction with the B184, aesthetics of the entrance to the village, field detritus coming onto the road, road narrows due to flooding at Bowers Bridge and in the national speed limit zone.</p> <p><b>FEEDBACK - Easton Park 1200 Homes Inquiry</b>  Findings delayed until 11 September</p>
<b>23/085</b>	<p><b>CONSIDER AMENDMENT TO 1996 MEMORIAL HALL AGREEMENT TO REQUIRE “ONE” MEMBER OF THE PARISH COUNCIL TO SIT ON THE COMMITTEE AND NOT TWO – CLLR EMMA WELLS</b>  Two members will attend where possible but could be just one due to availability – No change required to agreement</p>
<b>23/086</b>  <i>Cnty Cllr Martin Foley left at 8:08pm</i>	<p><b>REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS</b>  <b>MEMORIAL HALL – Cllr Simon Benstead &amp; Cllr Emma Wells</b>  Members attended MHMC meeting, various matters discussed - décor, window blinds, hiring form - suggested adjust wording to clarify field not included in hall hire; push button on disabled door, Xmas tree LED lighting power from the hall, gate operation discussed.</p> <p>PC suggested gate be kept open unless a problem arises indicating it should be closed, trial period agreed.</p>

	<p><b>23/086(i) – CONSIDER IMPLICATIONS FOR SECURITY OF THE HALL GIVEN THAT SO MANY PEOPLE KNOW WHERE THE KEY IS KEPT TO GAIN ACCESS. ALSO CONSIDER BETTER MONITORING OF THE CAR PARK.</b>  Changing key location and pick up requirements, suggested use of a key safe or smart lock to help with the future proofing of the Hall management. Plus the installation of CCTV to monitor car park use. Options and installers to be forwarded to MHMC</p> <p><b>PLAY AREA – Cllr Peter Bright &amp; Cllr Simon Benstead</b>  Visual inspection completed, all seemed in order</p> <p><b>GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE – Cllr Peter Bright</b>  Successful war time opening event  Next open day 20 August</p> <p><b>PARISH MAINTENANCE INCLUDING WAR MEMORIAL– Cllr Simon Benstead</b>  Order awarded to Bakers of Danbury; quote for granite supply from a third party agreed; CLERK to chase start date</p>
<p><b>23/087</b></p>	<p><b>TO NOTE MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING:-</b>  <b>23/087(i) – UPDATE ON COMMUNITY MAILING RE SPEEDING ISSUES, NOTE RESPONSES; CONSIDER ADOPTING 20’S PLENTY CAMPAIGN WITH “in principle” PURCHASE OF SIGNS</b></p> <p>Five people thus far in the CSW email group, the County CSW co-ordinator has sent the office the latest version of the reporting form to be used by the group once active.</p> <p>Residents proposed to approach private land owners for siting 20s Plenty campaign signs. Clerk to seek guidance from EALC on campaign membership.</p> <p>On an associated note the Local Highways Panel has commissioned the placing of wires across the road in Mill End to monitor speed and volume of traffic which should happen within the next few weeks.</p> <p><b>23/087(ii) – RECEIVE UPDATE ON e-MAILING CAMPAIGN RESPONSE TO DATE</b>  83 unique email addresses received the council initial invitation mailing  35 unique email addresses to date have agreed to receive communication from the PC  The associated social media survey – Which social media outlets would you use to access information about the parish – out of 33 responses in total 23 indicated they used the village Facebook page, 7 used Instagram plus 12 people indicated “other” sources too such as parish magazine, the pub and the PC website</p> <p><b>23/087(iii) – RECEIVE UPDATE ON BENCH AND PICNIC TABLE ORDER</b>  Delivery this Friday 28 July</p> <p><b>23/087(iv) – RECEIVE UPDATE ON REPLACEMENT GOAL ORDER</b>  Order and delivery instructions received 7 days ago, now into production and approx. four weeks in total until delivery which is provisionally booked for between 14 August to 21 August</p> <p><b>23/087(v) – CONSIDER ACTION RE. PLANTERS AND GATEWAYS IN LIGHT OF COMMENTS FROM HIGHWAYS OFFICER STATING THE CURRENT PLANTERS COULD BECOME WEAPONS IF HIT BY A VEHICLE AND SHOULD COUNCIL CONSIDER SWAPPING THEM FOR A MOUND OF PLANTED EARTH?</b>  Defer any action</p>
<p><b>23/088</b></p>	<p><b>CONSIDER AMENDMENT TO MEETING DATES FOR THE REMAINDER OF COUNCIL YEAR 23-24 AND UPDATE STANDING ORDERS TO REFLECT THAT CHANGE</b>  Suggested consider meeting once every two months, next meeting 27 September.</p>

	<b>RESOLUTION</b> – Approve proposition to change meeting timings, final arrangements to be confirmed; Proposer Cllr Peter Bright, Seconded Cllr Simon Benstead,
<b>23/089</b>	<b>ITEMS OF REPORT OR FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA</b>  <b>23/089(i) APPOINT CONTRIBUTOR TO 5P MAGAZINE, MARK THE ANNOUNCED RETIREMENT OF EDITOR ANGELA HARBOTTLE</b> Cllr Peter Bright
<b>23/090</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S) – WEDNESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER – CLOSE</b> 8:34pm

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

**APPENDIX A**

**District Councillors’ report – June 2023**

**ELECTIONS**

District Council elections were held on 4th May. In Uttlesford, Residents retained overall control although with a slightly reduced majority. Leaders of both the Lib Dem group and the Conservative group lost their seats. In the Thaxted and Eastons ward Cllr. Dr. Mike Tayler had stepped down in order to stand in the adjoining Sampfords ward where he was elected. Richard Haynes and Martin Foley, the Residents’ candidates, were elected with significant majorities.

In terms of appointments within the administration Martin is a member of the Audit and Standards Committee and is Chairman of the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel as well as being Vice-Chairman of the Council.

Richard is a member of the Planning Committee and the Scrutiny Committee.

**PLANNING**

There has been a lot of focus on the planning service at Uttlesford, the Council having been in special measures for the past year or so. In essence this means that major applications can be referred direct to PINS for determination, by-passing the Council under the s.62a process. It is expected, although by no means certain, that the special measures arrangements will be lifted at some stage during the coming year. Significant improvements have already been made to UDC’s planning service with the appointment of Dean Hermitage as the new Director of Planning. Recruitment of planning officers remains a problem however.

**LOCAL PLAN**

UDC are working towards a Regulation 18 draft of the new Local Plan in the autumn. Few clues have been given as to principal housing allocations. A report was circulated to parish councils last year suggesting that Easton Park was still a preferred option but we are told that this was in error. The only official statements refer to the fact that evidence is being collected, and deficiencies in the evidence base are being rectified. A serious concern with the Local Plan Leadership Group has been the lack of openness with meetings being held in private session. This matter was raised at the Scrutiny Committee meeting last week and I have separately discussed with Cllr Bagnall, chairman of the Group. I expect the deliberations of the Group to be much more in the public domain in the future with much more public disclosure of progress than hitherto.

**Richard Haynes**  
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## APPENDIX B

### Highways

An update from the Local highways Panel will be sent out by separate cover. Money is apparently now very tight at ECC despite Uttlesford residents paying £40m a year in council taxes to ECC to provide services needed to keep our roads in good order. Many of my fellow councillors feel we are not getting good value for money to the extent that there has been a move to ask "that the chairman of the LHP to be replaced by one who is prepared to work to protect residents.

We have at last had a meeting of the Local Highways Panel to go over work to be done for the remainder of this year. The fact is because of lack of resources and people they are very far behind.

In fact most work at ECC Highways had been frozen to lack of resources...I will keep pushing.

Potholes still a major problem in this everywhere ...they are being fixed but slower than they should be and ECC have a massive backlog...despite hundreds being chased up and done in UDC area last year. (I chased up 27 today in this area alone)

I am continuing to work with a cross party group to force better rural road maintenance and face the problem that the current administration are in real terms spending less than they need to maintain our roads to a good standard.

I have just come back from France ...we once used to joke about their poor roads but what I have seen they are now 100 percent better than ours.

Attached is Uttlesford Highways works.

### Recycling Centres

I understand there has been a REDUCTION in recycling looks like an INCREASE in local fly tipping with this system...the trial goes on with some adjustments.

### Final Report- Mental Health Services for Young People

As I mentioned in recent reports , I put a motion to ECC Full Council regarding some worrying trends and issues that had been brought to my attention ( as **chairman of Youth Strategy Group** ) and visiting some schools in UDC area. As a result a Task and Finish Group was set up with the aim of tackling the issues raised the early findings are attached. Sadly the administration at ECC have now stopped the work of all Youth Strategy Groups... but in Uttlesford Youth Initiatives Group will continue and I will work with them as ECC Liaison Councillor UYIG.

### Library

I led a local campaign to keep local libraries open and making them more interesting. The simple truth looking ahead is for everybody to join a library and use it or we may not have some of them long.

### Youth Clubs

As you know I am very keen on Youth Clubs and will support here in any way I can. Whilst I was Chair of Uttlesford Youth Strategy Group we have almost doubled the amount of usage and new clubs are opening in this ECC ward.

In Thaxted for instance we have gone from 37 members to about a hundred over the last year...the new skate park is very popular ...helped with Grants from UDC and ECC. We have had considerably less youth crime/incidents as the youth club has grown. Visiting skaters from all villages welcome with a bit of notice.

Just shows what can be done with a bit of the right investment.

**Martin - Cllr Martin Foley - Member for Thaxted Division- Essex County Council -**

[cllr.Martin.Foley@essex.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.Martin.Foley@essex.gov.uk)

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**APPENDIX C**

**CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE – LITTLE EASTON PC**

26 July 2023

**APOLOGIES – Dist Cllr Richard Haynes**

The insurers have confirmed receipt of payment to cover one calendar year, allowing the council to consider its cover needs and start to seek alternative, competitive quotes around March time next year.

Members have been invited to check their Register of Interest does in fact include the occupation and place of work for their spouse / partner.

The office has received an updated copy of the Electoral register.

The council has renewed its 5 year agreement with the street lighting contractor.

The LHP has commissioned the speed check for Mill End which will see the wires places across the road in the forthcoming weeks.

*\* A hirer of the Memorial Hall has requested use of the playing-field immediately adjacent to the hall to erect a bouncy castle, the company providing the bouncy castle, Evo Inflatables of Felsted, have provided sight of their public liability insurance certificate – Do members have any comments? – Members agreed.*

The office received a complaint re lack of grass cutting of the area opposite the access road to the Manor, Essex Highways have confirmed they cut grass verges twice a year, there are other reasons that may change in particular “special species” found in the grass and or safety and visibility related issues which should be advised to Highways using their report it portal. This has been conveyed to the resident raising the concern although the office has asked Cnty Cllr Martin Foley if he is able to cast any further light via his contacts at Essex.

The MHMC have been advised that a manhole in need of attention as reported to the PC is within their demise and thus their responsibility to repair.

Therefore it remains for me to advise that members have received various communications throughout the month from those bodies and organisations that support this sector and all other matters are covered by the agenda.

**APPENDIX D**

LEPC JULY 2023 Finance Statement							Budget	Net Exp	Diff +/-	
Precept		28,500					43,135	12,873	-30,262	
<b>Opening Balance</b>					63,881.35		0.00		0.00	
10-Jul	HMR&C	Q1 Tax	PAYE	FPO			292.80		292.80	Salary
12-Jul	Activ Web	Web services	9881	DD			42.00	7.00	35.00	Web
14-Jul	Jati Ltd	Benches and fixings	R210603	FPO			2,584.99	430.84	2,154.15	PM
17-Jul	A&J Lighting	Annualised maintenance	37398	DD			24.30	4.05	20.25	Lighting
19-Jul	DRAX Energy	Lighting electricity	3329/3331	DD			46.57	2.22	44.35	Utility
27-Jul	MD Landscapes Ltd	Grass cutting	1237	FPO			168.00	28.00	140.00	Grass
27-Jul	Steves Gardening Serv	Parish maintenance	12/13 of 2023	FPO			280.00		280.00	PM
27-Jul	Memorial Hall	Hire Jan-July 23	Inv No 2	FPO			210.00		210.00	Hire
27-Jul	Activ Web	Update & Mailchimp	9915	FPO			405.60	67.60	338.00	Web
27-Jul	HP Inc - IB	Instant Ink / 7	637233	FPO			3.86	0.64	3.21	Stationery
27-Jul	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO			390.45		390.45	Salary
	Employee	WFH & Expenses	July expenses	S/O-FPO			30.50		30.50	Admin
<b>July</b>					63,881.35		4,479.07	540.35	3,938.71	
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>AUGUST</b>				59,402.28		0.00		0.00	